

**To: The Deputy Leader and Members of the
Community and Environment Board**

**(Councillors Bell, Chambers, Gosling,
M Humphreys, Jenns, Jordan, Parker,
H Phillips, Macdonald, McLauchlan, Rose,
L Smith, S Smith and A Wright)**

For the information of other Members of the Council

For general enquiries please contact Democratic Services, on 01827 719221/719237 or via e-mail democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk.

For enquiries about specific reports please contact the officer named in the reports.

The agenda and reports are available in large print and electronic accessible formats if requested.

COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD AGENDA

14 MARCH 2022

The Community and Environment Board will meet in The Chamber, The Council House, South Street, Atherstone on Monday 14 March 2022 at 6.30 pm.

The meeting can also be viewed on the Council's YouTube channel at [NorthWarks - YouTube](#).

AGENDA

- 1 **Evacuation Procedure.**
- 2 **Apologies for Absence / Members away on official Council business.**
- 3 **Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

4 **Public Participation**

Up to twenty minutes will be set aside for members of the public to put questions to elected Members.

Members of the public wishing to address the Board must register their intention to do so by 9:30am two working days prior to the meeting. Participants are restricted to five minutes each.

If you wish to put a question to the meeting, please register by email to democraticservices@northwarks.gov.uk or telephone 01827 719221 / 01827 719237.

Once registered to speak, the person asking the question has the option to either:

- a) attend the meeting in person at the Council Chamber;
- b) attend remotely via Teams; or
- c) request that the Chair reads out their written question.

If attending in person, precautions will be in place in the Council Chamber to protect those who are present however this will limit the number of people who can be accommodated so it may be more convenient to attend remotely.

If attending remotely an invitation will be sent to join the Teams video conferencing for this meeting. Those registered to speak should dial the telephone number and ID number (provided on their invitation) when joining the meeting to ask their question. However, whilst waiting they will be able to hear what is being said at the meeting. They will also be able to view the meeting using the YouTube link provided (if so, they may need to mute the sound on YouTube when they speak on the phone to prevent feedback).

5 **Minutes of the meeting of the Board held on 17 January 2022** – copies herewith, to be approved and signed by the Chairman.

PUBLIC BUSINESS (WHITE PAPERS)

- 6 **Leisure Facilities: Service Improvement Plan** – Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

Appended to this report, for Members' consideration, is a copy of the Service Improvement Plan (SIP), detailing activity through to the end of January 2022, through which the Board has agreed to monitor the operational performance of the leisure facilities at each of its meetings. In addition, a draft SIP for the 12 months period commencing from April 2022 has been appended for Members' consideration and approval.

The Contact Officer for this report is Russell Simkiss (719257)

- 7 **Financial Assistance to Outside Organisations** – Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

Borough Council support for outside organisations is provided in many ways, including through its Annual Grants scheme and through wider partnership agreements. Requests for assistance through the provision of an annual grant have been received from Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA), North Warwickshire Citizens Advice (NW CA), Live & Local, the North Warwickshire Allotments' Federation and North Warwickshire First Responders. This report considers these requests. Members, however, are aware of the need to make significant savings in the Authority's revenue budget and, therefore, the report also addresses a need to reduce the Annual Grants programme by £20,000.

The Contact Officer for this report is Becky Evans (719346).

- 8 **North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies – Progress Report** – Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

This report informs Members of the progress made in respect of delivery against the priorities set out in the North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033) and the adopted Playing Pitch Strategy (2018 to 2031).

The Contact Officer for this report is Becky Evans (719356)

- 9 **Leisure Facilities: Local Authority Trading Company** – Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Summary

This report provides information in relation to the establishment of a Leisure Facilities Local Authority Trading Company and seeks the Board's approval for the undertaking of such a course of action.

The Contact Officer for this report is Simon Powell (719352)

- 10 **Climate Change Update** – Report of the Corporate Director – Streetscape

Summary

Following the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency, this report updates Members on progress and next steps.

The Contact Officer for this report is Richard Dobbs (719440)

- 11 **Minutes of the Health and Wellbeing Working Party** held on 15 February 2022 – copy herewith.

STEVE MAXEY
Chief Executive

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE BOROUGH COUNCIL

MINUTES OF THE COMMUNITY AND ENVIRONMENT BOARD

17 January 2022

Present: Councillor Bell in the Chair.

Councillors Chambers, D Clews, Gosling, Hancocks, M Humphreys, Jenns, Jordan, Parker, H Phillips, McLauchlan, Rose, S Smith and A Wright.

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Macdonald (Substitute Councillor Hancocks) and L Smith (Substitute Councillor D Clews)

23 **Disclosable Pecuniary and Non-Pecuniary Interests**

None were declared at the meeting.

24 **Minutes of the Meeting of the Board held on 11 October 2021**

The minutes of the meeting held on 11 October 2021, copies having been previously circulated, were approved as a correct record and signed by the Chairman.

25 **General Fund Fees and Charges 2022/23**

The Chief Executive, Corporate Director – Streetscape and Director of Leisure and Community Development reported on the fees and charges for 2021/22 and the proposed fees and charges for 2022/23.

Resolved:

- a **That the schedule of fees and charges for 2022/23, as set out in Appendix A of the report of the Chief Executive, Corporate Director – Streetscape and Director of Leisure and Community Development be approved, subject to the correction of the Queen Elizabeth School Sports Village - indoor sports hall adult fee from £25.00 to £35.00; and**
- b **That the Director of Leisure and Community Development review the 2022/23 charges proposed for the artificial grass pitch at the Queen Elizabeth School Sports Village, Polesworth sports hall and the hall hire at Atherstone Memorial Hall.**

26 **General Fund Revenue Estimates 2022/23**

The Corporate Director – Resources reported on the revised budget for 2021/22 and an estimate of expenditure for 2022/23, together with forward commitments for 2023/24, 2024/25 and 2025/26.

Resolved:

- a That the revised budget for 2021/22 be approved; and**

Recommendation to Executive Board:

- b That the Estimates of Expenditure for 2022/23, as submitted to the Board, be included in the budget to be brought before the meeting of the Executive Board on 14 February 2022.**

27 **Capital Programme 2022/23 to 2024/25**

The Corporate Director – Resources identified proposals for schemes to be included within the Council’s capital programme over the next three years.

Resolved:

That the schemes previously approved within the Council’s three-year capital programme be supported.

28 **Leisure Facilities – 2022/23 Bank Holiday Closures**

The Director of Leisure and Community Development sought the Board’s approval of a schedule of Bank Holiday closures of leisure facilities during the 2022/23 financial year.

Resolved:

That the schedule of leisure facility closures, as set out in paragraph 4.1 of the report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development, be approved.

29 **Leisure Facilities: Service Improvement Plan**

The Director of Leisure and Community Development sought consideration of the Service Improvement Plan (SIP), which detailed activity through to the end of November 2021, through which the Board had agreed to monitor the operational performance of the leisure facilities at each of its meetings.

Resolved:

That the progress made against the requirements identified in the approved 2021/22 Leisure Facilities Service Improvement Plan, through which operational performance is monitored, be approved.

30 Rationalisation of Grounds Maintenance & Street Cleaning Services

The Corporate Director – Streetscape set out various measures designed to reduce service costs in the areas of street cleaning and grounds maintenance and asked Members to reduce the budgets in those service areas to deliver ongoing revenue savings.

Resolved:

- a That an investigation into a permanent reduction in the overall number of staff employed across Grounds Maintenance and Street Cleaning services be carried out;**
- b That an investigation into a more cost effective way of mechanised sweeping be carried out; and**
- c That further reports be brought back to future meetings of the Board to set out ways in which the services can be provided differently to reduce costs and avoid significant falls in service standards.**

31 Update on Green Bin Service

The Corporate Director – Streetscape updated Members on the results of introducing chargeable green bin collections from 1 April 2021.

Resolved:

That the contents of the report be noted.

Margaret Bell
Chairman

Agenda Item No 6

Community and Environment Board

14 March 2022

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Leisure Facilities: Service Improvement Plans

1 Summary

- 1.1 Appended to this report, for Members' consideration, is a copy of the Service Improvement Plan (SIP), detailing activity through to the end of January 2022, through which the Board has agreed to monitor the operational performance of the leisure facilities at each of its meetings. In addition, a draft SIP for the 12 months period commencing from April 2022 has been appended for Members' consideration and approval.

Recommendation to the Board

- a That the Board notes and comments upon the progress made against the requirements identified in the approved 2021/22 Leisure Facilities Service Improvement Plan through which operational performance is monitored.**
- b That Members approve or otherwise amend the appended draft Service Improvement Plan through which the operational performance of the leisure facilities will be monitored through to 31 March 2023.**

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Members and any comments received will be reported verbally at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 In order to continue to provide a focused approach to service delivery, at its meeting held in March 2021, the Board approved a Leisure Facilities Service Improvement Plan (SIP), which was intended to guide activity through until the end of March 2022. A copy of the adopted Plan, which details the key actions, work programmes and improvements to be achieved by March 2022, is attached at Appendix A. The Plan seeks to highlight those matters that the Board has determined are important in order to enhance the quality and sustainability of the service delivered through its leisure facilities.

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4 **Service Improvement Plan: Progress**

- 4.1 The SIP attached at Appendix A evidences the progress made by the Leisure Facilities section through to the end of January 2022. Members are invited to comment on that progress, which has obviously been made in very challenging times. Any significant changes and / or progress made in February and early March will be reported verbally to the Board at its meeting.
- 4.2 As agreed with Members, this report does not seek to provide detailed commentary on the progress being made in respect of each action identified within the SIP. Instead, it aims to update the Board on the key areas of recent progress made within the leisure facilities. Members, however, are invited to comment and advise on any areas of activity upon which they wish Officers to focus in order to improve the operational viability of the facilities.
- 4.3 A brief summary of performance evidences a very similar trend to that reported to the Board in January 2022.
- Leisure courses (gymnastics and swimming) continue to maintain a good performance, with membership levels nearly 5% better overall than those achieved in 2019 (pre-pandemic). As the Board will be aware, membership levels on the swimming lesson programme have been particularly encouraging
 - School swimming, Queen Elizabeth Academy and Polesworth Sports Centre bookings continue to perform well, with each enjoying an occupancy rate above 90%
 - Parties are selling well at Coleshill Leisure Centre and the increased provision at Atherstone Leisure Complex is also proving to be popular. A further awareness campaign is due to take place in March to promote the increased service availability in Atherstone
 - As with all leisure operators, health and fitness memberships remain at a level below that experienced prior to the first lockdown in March 2020. Despite increasing memberships by over 430 since re-opening, memberships still sit at 72% of the performance levels achieved in 2019. This is comparable with performance nationally across all sectors of the health and fitness industry, with data also suggesting an average visitor recovery rate of 70%. Evidence is additionally suggesting that newer, urban facilities are recovering more quickly than rural and older facilities. This area of work, however, continues to be a priority for the Leisure Facilities team

- 4.4 Health and fitness promotions that ran through December and January across the three sites had a positive uptake, achieving 238 new membership sales. To help attract new members in February and March, a free “Seven Day Pass” has been promoted to allow the public to try out the facilities and hopefully thereafter take out a personal membership. Alongside this offer, a short Valentine’s Day promotion ran from 12 to 14 February, offering the public an opportunity to join and “pay nothing until March”. A verbal update on these promotions will be provided to the Board at its meeting.
- 4.5 Through changes made to the configuration of the gym at Atherstone Leisure Complex; a medium sized studio / function room space has been created in the Memorial Hall. Booking enquiries have started to be taken for this space, given that it is also ideal for groups, clubs, meetings and small activity sessions. It is anticipated that this change will generate additional revenue for the Leisure Complex.
- 4.6 To ensure that the leisure facilities keep in touch with the needs of facility users and the wider public, surveys and customer forums are planned to take place at each site in late March. This cycle of engagement activity will focus on sports and activities services. The feedback received will be used to better shape action plans on future service quality and new service initiatives across the centres.
- 4.7 The leisure facilities are constantly looking to create stronger pathways into employment in the leisure industry. In February, members of the team attended a Jobs Fayre in Nuneaton, with the aim to promote leisure jobs to more people. This work is building on existing links with the Job Centre in Atherstone and consideration is currently being given to the potential of funding for courses to support future employment opportunities. Additionally, the sites have started to accept requests for work experience and are reviewing the current scheme programme to ensure that a more meaningful and realistic experience is received by those students that attend.
- 4.8 Leisure Facilities staff have continued to try to engage customers and the wider public in different ways with the aim to improve people’s understanding of their own health and wellbeing. A number of examples of these initiatives are identified below:
- A “Couch to 5k” eight weeks running course is programmed to launch in March at both Atherstone and Coleshill, with the aim for participants to complete a 5k Park Run at the end of their course
 - A Comic Relief “Silly Cycle”, led by Group Exercise Instructors, will be hosted at Coleshill Leisure Centre. This event will raise money for charity

- For the first time ever, a comedy event is due to take place at Coleshill Leisure Centre on 30 April. The evening has been organised by the Centre staff working with local comedians. It will take place in the sports hall and bookings are already being taken for the event
- Public and customers are being encouraged to share their healthy recipes on Shrove Tuesday (Pancake Day – 01 March), with the aim of providing the public with some healthy ideas and eating options
- A Swimming Teacher course is being hosted at Atherstone Swimming Pool during the Easter holidays
- Les Mills instructors will be launching the new routine across sites in mid-March
- Holiday activities that include Bike-ability Level 1 and Level 2 courses, bouncy castle sessions, swimming and other activities will take place over the February half-term holiday. An update on performance will be provided to the Board at its meeting

4.9 The period covered by the current SIP draws to a conclusion at the end of March 2022. Accordingly, a draft Improvement Plan for the progressive delivery of the service has been prepared for the next 12 months. The Board is invited to consider, approve or otherwise amend this draft Plan, which is attached at Appendix B. The updated Service Improvement Plan focuses on many of the same areas of activity as in the current year but aims to build on the progress made on community engagement and increasing leisure opportunities for the public. Subject to Members' approval, Officers will commence work against the provisions of the new Plan with effect from April 2022.

4.10 The Leisure Facilities Business Development team, in conjunction with relevant colleagues throughout the Authority, will continue to manage and monitor the implementation of the requirements of the SIP on a regular basis and to report accordingly to each meeting of this Board, including to its next scheduled meeting to be held in May 2022. This process will continue to afford Members an opportunity to both understand and direct relevant aspects of the performance of the Borough Council's leisure facilities.

5 Report Implications

5.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

5.1.1 Whilst there is no financial implication arising directly out of this report, the SIPs will enable the Board to monitor the performance of the leisure facilities at each of its meetings and to advise on activity that would improve operational sustainability.

5.2 Safer Communities Implications

5.2.1 The Authority's leisure facilities contribute to community safety by providing well-managed services that afford opportunities for positive activity and, therefore, a creative alternative to potential criminal and / or anti-social behaviour.

5.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

5.3.1 There are no direct legal, data protection or human rights implications arising from this report.

5.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

5.4.1 Leisure facilities have a positive impact on the physical and mental wellbeing of individuals and the sustainability of local communities by providing opportunities for formal and informal recreation and by contributing to an improved quality of life.

5.5 Human Resources Implications

5.5.1 There are no human resources implications arising from this report, other than those to which reference is made in the appended Service Improvement Plans and upon which commentary is provided therein.

5.6 Risk Management Implications

5.6.1 There are no direct risk management implications arising from this report. The activity that is included within the Service Improvement Plans, however, will be risk assessed and appropriate controls put in place, where appropriate.

5.7 Equalities Implications

5.7.1 The activity identified in the Service Improvement Plans is intended to advance the Borough Council's commitment to ensuring equality for all members of the community across its portfolio of service provision.

5.8 Links to Council's Priorities

5.8.1 The Service Improvement Plans have direct links to the following corporate priorities:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

5.8.2 Additionally, the Borough Council's leisure facilities contribute directly to the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy to:

- Raise aspirations, educational attainment and skill levels
- Develop healthier communities
- Improve access to services

The Contact Officer for this report is Russell Simkiss (719257).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	Director of Leisure and Community Development	Report to Community and Environment Board (Leisure Facilities: Service Improvement Plan)	January 2022

North Warwickshire Leisure Facilities Service Improvement Plan - April 2021 – March 2022

Aim: To improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Borough Council's Leisure Facilities

Responsible Officers Key:

D: Director

LFM: Leisure Facilities Manager

SSRO: Service, Sales and Retention Officer

SAEO: Sports, Activities and Events Officer

OO: Operations Officer(s)

LMT: All of the above

Last Updated: 24 February 2022

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
Recover and Reinvent Optimise the return to leisure facilities	To safely return leisure services to the public. Where necessary, reinvent the delivery of existing leisure services and introducing new services opportunities	Respond to the latest Government guidelines and plan to safely and effectively re-open services	April / May 2021 and ongoing	Provision made within the revenue budget	OO	↑	Leisure facilities have responded safely and effectively to adapt services promptly in line with Government guidance
		Adapt to deliver services differently or to create new services in their place with the goal to keep the community engaged, more active and living healthier, happier lives	April / May 2021 and ongoing		LMT	↑	Exercise classes, gymnastics and exercise referrals were delivered online whilst restrictions prevented face to face provision during lockdown. Through community networking and 'doing things differently', services have adapted or evolved to better engage the community (examples are provided throughout the SIP)
		Support members, clubs and groups across the service to adapt to return to leisure activities promptly, with confidence and within Government guidance	April / May 2021 and ongoing		OO	↑	Current groups have been supported to return successfully, whilst improved networking has attracted new external groups and bookings that are now hosted at the facilities
	Review pricing and packages	To review fees, charges and packages to meet the demands of a post-COVID environment	September 2021	To identify within the review process	LMT	↑	Leisure facilities fees and charges were approved by the Board in January 2022
Explore the opportunity of optimising use of space at Coleshill Leisure Centre	Review the opportunities to optimise the use of space in reception, the viewing gallery and in other areas of the facility to increase services, attendance and improve financial performance		March 2022		SAEO / OO (CLC) / LFM	↑	Plans previously reported are in place and delivery had begun. Once delivered, these changes are projected to generate extra

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
							revenue of approximately £17,500+ per annum
Connecting with Communities Be more outward looking and community focused	Actively consult and seek feedback to understand what communities want and to shape current and future services	Continue to ask questions and gain feedback on current and future services throughout the year. To feedback to the Board regularly about surveys, forums, mystery visits and reviewing verbal and written feedback	March 2022	Provision made within the revenue budget	OO	↑	Surveys, forums and written and verbal feedback have been responded to promptly and used to shape and improve future service. Forums and Surveys planned in March will provide valuable insight to continue improving in 2022/23
		Explore Net Promoter Score (NPS) as a feasible measure of performance				↓	Not complete this financial year, this task will carry through to 2022 / 23
	Focus on delivering services more tailored to the wants and needs of the community	Collaborate with Community Development, Public Health, community groups and other appropriate partners on the development and delivery of services, events and community projects.	Revised to March 2022	Identify within the review	OO	↑	Facilities have become far more engaged with communities this year, regular meetings are taking place with various stakeholders through the year. with the aim to be more community focused in developing and delivering services
		Engagements with new groups ongoing may further enhance the annual plan, which outlines the delivery timescales	Ongoing until March 2022		SAEO / SSRO	↑	
	Optimise service delivery within / by communities, through securing external support for activity programmes. To update the Board at each meeting		Ongoing until March 2022		SAEO / SSRO	↑	Various links throughout the year, including with Atherstone Library, community groups (e.g. to develop walking sports, Atherstone Family Fun), Bike-ability links, Job Centres, GFS and many others have helped offer both one off and repeat services to the community. Funding has been secured on occasions to deliver projects

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	Successfully introduce the leisure App to customers and the wider community	Plan to ensure the successful introduction of the leisure App to improve booking services, communication and service awareness	June 2021	Provision made within the revenue budget process	LMT	↑	through Think Active to support new projects The Leisure App has been successfully introduced. With over 1600 downloads and high usage figures at each spot-check, the App also received positive feedback from customers at front desk and through surveys / forums
Positive Experiences for the community, with a particular focus on: - Children and Young People - Active Ageing - Disabled, Disadvantaged and Special Education Needs (SEN)	Optimise opportunities for the community, with a particular focus on services for children and young people to be more physically active	Holiday Activities Create new coaching / activity roles to improve the quality and quantity of future services	June 2021	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	SAEO	↑	New coached roles have been advertised and new coaches recruited. These coaches supported the delivery of current and new activities across sites in October
		Re-establish and further develop the holiday activities offering to the community to achieve levels at or above that in 2019 (prior to Coronavirus closures).	April / May 2021 and ongoing		SAEO	↑	Summer holiday activities were delivered by both NWBC staff and external providers at Coleshill, Atherstone and Polesworth. Activities overall achieved both an improved attendance and profit versus performance in 2019
		Parties - Reinvent the use of the parties space during closure	June 2021 or earlier		SAEO / OO	↑	During the pandemic, whilst parties were not allowed to return, sites made best use of sports hall space through temporarily increasing club bookings and opening the opportunity for casual pay and play

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-introduce the existing parties service offering at the facilities 	Sept 2021 or earlier	Provision made within the revenue budget process	SAEO / OO	↑	Party bookings have re-started across sites with good uptake to date
		<p style="text-align: center;">Schools</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Retain existing and attract new schools and groups of all ages and abilities to the Pool (most schools are expected to return in September / October 2021) 	October 2021		SAEO	↑	School swimming from September 2021 has made a full recovery versus pre-pandemic, with new schools starting to use Atherstone Pool
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-introduce work experience schemes and explore opportunities around the development of training and volunteer experiences that may lead to employment 	August 2021		LMT	↓	Although schools do not appear to have been operating the scheme this academic year, work experience has already started to be booked for summer 2022
		<p style="text-align: center;">Sports and Coaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain a remote gymnastics service offering during Lockdown 	April 2021		SAEO	↑	Zoom gymnastics sessions continued delivery through April and returned back to sites in May 2021
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Optimise the number of junior coached and activity sessions hosted within the facilities, both through increasing the in-house offering, and recruiting new groups (restore previous and create new opportunities). To report progress to the Board: comparing occupancy / attendances versus 2019; and informing of changes 	March 2022		SAEO	↑	<p>Lots of new groups have started up across facilities this year e.g:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Aston Villa's junior coaching • A triathlon club • Atherstone Family Fun • Increased dance and cheerleading • Weekly School gym bookings

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		<p style="text-align: center;">Swimming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Restore and where possible enhance the number of swimmers on the Learn to Swim scheme versus 2019 / 20 by January 2022 - Understand the Pool timetable and plan changes to optimise the use of the Pool whilst better representing the needs of the community - Start to implement changes in service and timetabling 	<p>September 2021</p> <p>Revised to February 2022</p> <p>March 2022</p>		<p>SAEO / OO (ALC)</p> <p>SAEO</p> <p>SAEO</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p> <p>↑</p>	<p>Swimming lessons have exceeded pre-pandemic performance and the team has ambitions to grow the scheme further</p> <p>A 'health and wellbeing' model of pool timetable review has been adopted from Swim England. Initial changes are due to take place for 1 April 2022, with more adjustments likely to take place through 2022/23</p> <p>The Pool timetable has been adapted through lockdown based on Government and NGB guidance. Having taken a staggered approach to the easing of restrictions the timetable has been updated ongoing</p>
		<p style="text-align: center;">Health and Fitness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Re-establish the Junior Gym and Fitness offering and aim to expand this market with targeted campaigns around educational terms - Explore the opportunities and demand for offering family fitness activities periodically or permanently 	<p>Sept 2021 and Jan 2022</p> <p>February 2022</p>		<p>SSRO / OO</p> <p>SSRO</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↓</p>	<p>'Junior fitness' has returned well since re-opening. Further networking with schools and groups will continue through 2022/23</p> <p>Family based activities have been offered at holiday times in October and February. Although early in the year 'Sweaty Mama's' were engaged, since re-opening post pandemic, 'Family Fitness' has</p>

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	<p>Explore the opportunity and start to action the improved service offering for the “active ageing” populations within in North Warwickshire</p>	<p>Engage community groups and with Community Development to create an action plan for the increase in service for active ageing populations with short, medium and long term goals; and; Start to implement plans with the aim to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Understand the opportunities to expand this service in future years - Enhance current service quality - Increase the in-house service offering - Increase the number of groups and organisations hosted at the leisure facilities - Work with and support those community groups offering services to the active ageing population - Create a better awareness and signposting of all of these services delivered within North Warwickshire 	<p>November 2021</p> <p>March 2022</p>		<p>LFM / SAEO / SSRO</p> <p>SAEO / SSRO</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p>	<p>not since been added as a regular service offering on timetables</p> <p>Bowls and walking football sessions have successfully re-started across facilities, with funding secured and projects set to increase walking sports provision</p> <p>Sessions such as Strictly Dancing and ‘Active Living’ have re-branded activities to help improve engagement in the existing leisure offer</p>
	<p>Enhance the Leisure Facilities service offering to the disabled, disadvantaged and Special Educational Needs (SEN) populations of North Warwickshire</p>	<p>When making service updates to plan to accommodate opportunities for disabled, disadvantaged and Special Educational Needs (SEN) populations</p>	<p>March 2022</p>		<p>LFM / SAEO / LFM</p>		<p>Fitness equipment purchased across sites considered how the facilities could better accommodate a varied membership base</p> <p>An external review of the service through a ‘poverty proofing’ lens is currently taking place and will provide valuable feedback and recommendations to improve accessibility to services</p>

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		<p>Secure funding for and deliver services in the community around tackling inequalities, to ensure a more diverse and inclusive service offer</p> <p>Use the “We are Undefeatable” Sport England campaign to promote the service offer and encourage participation</p>	<p>March 2022</p> <p>March 2022</p>		<p>LFM / SAEO / SSRO</p> <p>SAEO / SSRO</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p>	<p>The Pool ‘Health and Wellbeing review’ expects to find learnings across the service to improve the service offering</p> <p>Further qualifications and opportunities are being scoped to further improve inclusive provision</p> <p>Tackling Inequalities funding opportunities are shared with groups within facilities and the community to provide the opportunity to bid through Think Active for funding</p> <p>Atherstone Family Fun has continued to host at the Memorial Hall having secured further funding to run sessions in Summer, October and February</p> <p>A campaign is planned to take place in March using stories from existing customers about the facilities with the aim to promote an inclusive environment and encourage increased participation</p>
Connecting with Health and Wellbeing	To increase awareness of the importance of health and wellbeing within the community	Report to the Health and Wellbeing Working Party on the Leisure Facilities-related actions within the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan	<p>Ongoing</p> <p>March 2022</p>	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	LFM	↑	Regular updates have been provided to the H&WWP throughout the year

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	To recover and further develop the choice of health and wellbeing services to strive to improve physical and mental wellbeing within the community	<p>Deliver Health and Wellbeing events and campaigns throughout the year, joining up working with other groups and organisations where possible and linking to charities to enhance the impact where appropriate</p> <p>Working with Everyone Health, re-establish and optimise the offering around Exercise Referral, including programmes for those who have had health conditions or have been inactive as a result of the coronavirus pandemic.</p> <p>Working with corporate and local businesses, create a "Workplace Wellbeing" pack and service offering, targeting corporate and local / high street businesses</p> <p>Explore the opportunity to introduce Mental Health First Aiders within the service, to identify concerns, signpost to support and enhance the opportunity for suicide prevention within the community</p> <p>Periodically gain feedback on the impact existing and new services are having on the physical and mental wellbeing of the community and thereafter to improve the focus and impact of the service offer</p>	<p>July 2021</p> <p>February 2022</p> <p>Revised to Corporate timescales (tbc in 2022)</p> <p>September 2021 and March 2022</p>		<p>SEAO / SSRO</p> <p>SSRO</p> <p>SSRO</p> <p>LFM</p> <p>OO</p>	<p>↑</p> <p>↑</p> <p>↓</p> <p>↓</p> <p>↑</p>	<p>Campaigns have been held throughout the year to increase awareness of health and wellbeing, the most recent being engagement activity at 'Pancake Day', Comic Relief, Mothers' Day and a planned campaign around stress awareness month is being organised for April</p> <p>Exercise referral is available across the three gym facilities. Plans are in place and to increase both the capacity (number of staff qualified to deliver) and the service offering (link into social prescribing and into other non-gym based activities)</p> <p>Workflow demands have meant that this action has been pushed forward into the 2022/23 SIP</p> <p>Project work will commence in line with wider corporate timescales, likely to be next financial year</p> <p>In October, 94.2% of those that completed the survey said taking part in activities has had a positive impact on their mental health. The question will</p>

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
							be asked to public again at the end of March
Active Environments	Complete a review of opportunities to increase services in environments outside of the leisure facilities	To create a three-year development plan that identifies how the Leisure Facilities team will expand its services utilising outdoor space and community environments	October 2021	To identify within the review process	LFM / SEAO / SSRO	↑	A development plan has been drafted identifying short, medium and long-term opportunities that aim to increase participation in alternative environments through working with schools, parks, clubs, community venues and other stakeholders. Plans will feed into future service plan actions and targets
	Start to deliver more activities, events and services in alternative environments outside of leisure facilities	To work with Community Development on the planning and delivery of the Borough's Cycling Plan	Ongoing	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	LFM / SAEO	→	Although plans have been discussed and some progress made, this remains an agenda item for Leisure and Community Development. Learn to ride sessions were delivered in February half-term at TQEA. A closer relationship with cycling partners aims to bring more cycling opportunities to the Borough
		Work with Community Development to include the leisure facilities as hubs for walking, running and cycling groups	Revised to March 2022		LFM / SSRO	→	Although plans have been discussed and some progress made, this remains an agenda item for Leisure and Community Development

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		Start to increase the use of parks and outdoor spaces in the delivery of services and events	Revised to March 2022	To identify within the review process	SAEO / SSRO	↑	Couch to 5K will launch at Coleshill and Atherstone in March. The opportunity to deliver more outdoor provision is still in discussion with the Coleshill School Conversations continue to take place with Warwickshire County Council's Country Parks, with a view to increasing participation opportunities within parks
	To explore digital technology in supporting service delivery	To scope digital and technological opportunities within the service. Action plan to introduce opportunities to enhance the service offering and reduce barriers to participation (cost, time, access, other)	July 2021		LMT	↑	Opportunities to improve service have been identified and reviews are scheduled through the year. Already having brought in the leisure App and Keiser Intelligent cycling, opportunities around health testing and other customer retention management systems are being considered
Health and Fitness	Improve the quality of the health and fitness service across the facilities, focusing on re-engaging members, improving retention, increasing sales, and providing a positive customer experience	Review the member journey in a post-COVID-19 world and plan that journey from the point of finding out about the service to becoming a loyal member	Revised to February 2022	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	SSRO	→	Progress has been made to improve the member journey for exercise classes. A more detailed review will take place later in the year to review and improve the gym and front of house journey

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		Through consultation with staff and the community, introduce new equipment and technology to facilities to enhance the service offering	August 2022		SSRO / LFM	↑	Keiser group exercise bikes and class technology were introduced in June The leisure App was introduced at the end of July 2021 Capital investments have been made to replace some of the older equipment, whilst some new items of gym equipment have also been introduced to improve the service offered across all sites. Although some equipment is yet to be delivered, these changes will have a positive impact on our service and help to both retain existing and attract new members to the leisure facilities
		Ensure the delivery of health and fitness marketing campaigns throughout the year to achieve sales targets	Ongoing until March 2022		SSRO	↑	Campaigns in May, July, October, November, December and January were delivered and ensured an increase in memberships through the year
		Deliver regular member engagements, incentives and service developments to optimise retention			SSRO	↑	Gym engagement and group exercise events have taken place through the year to improve community engagement and motivation to stay active
		Group Exercise - Optimise the impact of the new Les Mills and group studio cycling service enhancements	Ongoing until March 2022		SSRO		Les Mills launches have taken place every quarter since launching

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Review the group exercise programme to ensure occupancy levels are proactively managed 	Ongoing until March 2022				The group exercise programme is well attended and proactively managed ongoing to ensure timetables are current
		Review the opportunity for funding and cost / benefit of procuring hi-tech biometric health testing scales	February 2022	To identify within the review process	SSRO	↑	The cost benefit exercise started in February and will be completed in March, including an understanding of service and member journey benefits and any income forecasts or 'value added' to service. Outcomes will be pursued as appropriate to the conclusion of the review
Health and Safety / Operations	To ensure appropriate levels of skilled staff are available to maintain service	Ensure staffing levels and development opportunities are appropriately managed through the year	Ongoing until March 2022	Divisional and Corporate Training Budget	OO	↑	Recruitment, selection, staff induction and training has been maintained to ensure appropriate staffing levels across facilities
	To ensure all staff are engaged and have a clear role in maintaining service	Ensure appraisals are completed and communication structures are maintained at all levels through the year	Ongoing until March 2022		OO	↑	Appraisals took place at the start of the year. mid-year and through Q4 to plan for the upcoming financial year
	Ensure health and safety is maintained at all times within leisure facilities	Continue to review, update and improve facility health and safety. To feedback progress and outcomes of health and safety and building audits	Ongoing until March 2022		OO	↑	Risk assessments have been reviewed and updated at each stage of the pandemic to ensure adherence to the latest guidelines Building Audits have continued at facilities The Operations team meets regularly to discuss the best practice and operational management

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		Continue to monitor and audit health and safety knowledge and compliance. To feedback training updates and spot check results to the Board	Ongoing until March 2022		LFM	↑	Internal audits have taken place to ensure compliance and create action plans to improve safety. Scores of 80%+ have been recorded to date, the latest took place in February / March across sites Staff knowledge spot checks have taken place across sites
Marketing and Promotion	Ensure effective marketing to the public to optimise engagement and potential return on investment	Create an updated Marketing Plan to be proactive in service campaigns, to include events scheduled throughout the year	April 2021	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	LFM	↑	Plans have been created outlining marketing throughout the year
		To update the Board on campaigns and marketing activity through the year	Ongoing until March 2022		LFM	↑	Latest campaign updates have been updated to Board at each meeting
		Optimise web engagements (at or above that of 2020 / 21) and increase social media followers (Facebook 200+, Twitter 50+)	Ongoing until March 2022		LMT	↑	Facebook followers are currently up 685 across sites since April
		Deliver quarterly internal and external leisure bulletins	Ongoing until March 2022		LFM	→	Only one bulleting was circulated externally this year in Quarter 4 (January to March), however schedules are now in place to include updates from both Leisure and Community Development every three months moving forward
Monitoring, Review and Evaluation	Report on performance against the actions identified in this Service Improvement Plan to each meeting of the C&E Board		Every Community and Environment Board		D / LFM	↑	Reports made to each meeting of the C&E Board

North Warwickshire Leisure Facilities

Service Improvement Plan - April 2022 – March 2023

Aim: To improve the operational efficiency and effectiveness of the Borough Council's Leisure Facilities

Responsible Officers Key:

D: Director

LFM: Leisure Facilities Manager

SSRO: Service, Sales and Retention Officer

SAEO: Sports, Activities and Events Officer

OO: Operations Officer(s)

LMT: All of the above

Last Updated: 25 February 2022

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
<p>Recover and Reinvent ‘Optimising the return to an active lifestyle’,</p> <p>‘Continue to re-invent to be relevant to the evolving community needs.’</p>	<p>To be pro-active in encouraging more people to return to; or take on a more active lifestyle</p> <p>To continue to understand what communities want / need and be re-active to adapt current or invent new services; and work collaboratively to encourage a ‘leadership community’ to do the same</p> <p>Review pricing and packages</p> <p>Explore the opportunity of optimising use of space across facilities</p> <p>Become ‘greener’ and improve the facilities carbon footprint within the context provided by the corporate Climate Change Action Plan</p>	<p>Respond to the latest Government guidelines to maintain a safe environment for all</p> <p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Complete a ‘health and wellbeing’ review of programmes with the aim to improve inclusivity and remove barriers to participation Work with external professionals to understand the service through a ‘poverty proofing’ lens <p>Adapt to deliver services differently or to create new services in their place with the goal to keep the community engaged, more active and living healthier, happier lives</p> <p>To review fees, charges and packages to ensure affordable services in alignment with the local and wider market</p> <p>Review the opportunities to optimise the use of space in facilities to increase services, attendance and improve financial performance</p> <p>Within the context provided by the corporate Climate Change Action Plan, consider climate change in the operation of service and plan to do things differently and to be “greener”</p>	<p>April 2022 and ongoing</p> <p>Updated programme June 22, then ongoing till March 2023</p> <p>June 2022</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>January 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p>	<p>To identify within the review process</p>	<p>OO</p> <p>LFM/SAEO</p> <p>LMT</p> <p>SAEO / SSRO</p> <p>LMT</p> <p>LFM/SSRO/SEAO</p> <p>LMT</p>		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
<p>Connecting with Communities</p> <p>Continue to be outward looking and community focused</p>	<p>Actively consult, engage and seek feedback to understand what communities want and to shape current and future services</p> <p>Focus on delivering services more tailored to the wants and needs of the community</p>	<p>Continue to ask questions and gain feedback on current and future services throughout the year. To feedback to the Board regularly about surveys, forums, mystery visits and reviewing verbal and written feedback</p> <p>Explore Net Promoter Score (NPS) as a feasible measure of performance Collaborate with Community Development, Public Health, community groups and other appropriate partners on the development and delivery of services, events and community projects. Engagement with new groups may further enhance the annual plan, which outlines the delivery timescales</p> <p>Optimise service delivery within / by communities, through securing external support for activity programmes. To update the Board at each meeting</p>	<p>March 2023</p> <p>Revised to March 2023 Ongoing until March 2023</p> <p>Ongoing until March 2023</p>	<p>Provision made within the revenue budget</p> <p>Identify within the review</p> <p>Provision made within the revenue budget process</p>	<p>OO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>SAEO / SSRO</p> <p>SAEO / SSRO</p>		
<p>Positive Experiences for the community, with a particular focus on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Children and Young People - Active Ageing - Disabled, Disadvantaged and 	<p>Optimise opportunities for the community, with a particular focus on services for children and young people to be more physically active</p>	<p>Holiday Activities</p> <p>Continue to offer holiday activities through the year (and where possible increase the quality and diversity of the programme). To achieve levels at or above that in 2021/22</p> <p>Parties</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Optimise party sales to achieve levels at or above that in 2019/20 - To complete a party review and shape a plan to consider how to improve the quality, choice, packages on offer and timelines for achieving this <p>Schools</p>	<p>February 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>October 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p>	<p>Provision made within the revenue budget Process</p>	<p>SAEO</p> <p>SAEO</p> <p>SAEO</p>		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
Special Education al Needs (SEND)	Continue to improve the service offering for the	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Maintain or improve the performance of the school swimming service - Network with schools to understand if / how leisure services could offer more to support the curriculum / health and wellbeing / positive experiences for children and young people - Re-introduce work experience schemes and explore opportunities around the development of training and volunteer experiences that may lead to employment <p style="text-align: center;">Sports and Coaching</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Optimise the number of junior coached and activity sessions hosted within the facilities, both through increasing the in-house offering, and recruiting new groups (restore previous and create new opportunities). To report progress to the Board: comparing occupancy / attendances versus 2019 and informing of changes <p style="text-align: center;">Swimming</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Continue to enhance the number of swimmers on the Learn to Swim scheme versus 2019 / 20 - Review the pool timetable through a 'health and wellbeing' lens and make positive changes considering the diverse needs of the community <p style="text-align: center;">Health and Fitness</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Network with schools and communities to increase awareness of junior fitness services, with the aim to increase junior membership sales <p>Engage with more community groups and with Community Development to continue to understand what public want / need within leisure facilities and</p>	<p>February 2023</p> <p>July 2022</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>June 2023 and March 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>September 2022</p>	<p>Provision made within the revenue budget process</p>	<p>SAEO / OO SAEO</p> <p>OO</p> <p>LMT</p> <p>SAEO SAEO</p> <p>SSRO</p> <p>SAEO</p>		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	<p>“active ageing” populations within in North Warwickshire</p> <p>Enhance the Leisure Facilities service offering to the disabled, disadvantaged and Special Educational Needs (SEN) populations of North Warwickshire</p>	<p>communities; to feed into current action plans to improve services for active ageing populations. Using action plans, to continue to develop and deliver services that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance service quality - Increase the in-house service offering - Increase the number of groups and organisations hosted at the leisure facilities - Work with and support those community groups offering services to the active ageing population - Create a better awareness and signposting of all of these services delivered within North Warwickshire <p>Engage with community groups, schools and other stakeholders to shape action plans to improve services provision for disabled, disadvantaged and Special Educational Needs (SEN) populations. Using action plans, to continue to develop and deliver services that will:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Enhance service quality - Increase the in-house service offering - Increase the number of groups and organisations hosted at the leisure facilities - Work with and support those community groups offering services to the active ageing population - Create a better awareness and signposting of all of these services delivered within North Warwickshire <p>Secure funding for and deliver services in the community around tackling inequalities, to ensure a more diverse and inclusive service offer</p>	<p>March 2023</p> <p>July 2022</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p> <p>March 2023</p>		<p>SAEO</p> <p>SAEO</p> <p>SSRO</p> <p>LFM / SAEO / SSRO</p>		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
		Use the “We are Undefeatable” Sport England campaign to promote the service offer and encourage participation			SAEO / SSRO		
Connecting with Health and Wellbeing	To increase awareness of the importance of health and wellbeing within the community	Report to the Health and Wellbeing Working Party on the Leisure Facilities-related actions within the Health and Wellbeing Action Plan	Ongoing		LFM		
		Deliver Health and Wellbeing events and campaigns throughout the year, joining up working with other groups and organisations where possible and linking to charities to enhance the impact where appropriate	March 2023		SEAO / SSRO		
	To further develop the choice of health and wellbeing services to strive to improve physical and mental wellbeing within the community	Working with Everyone Health, social prescribers and other stakeholders, to increase the capacity and options available on the referral scheme and through social prescription into services; to increase participation, physical activity, physical and mental health and wellbeing of the public	August 2022	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	SSRO		
		Working with corporate and local businesses, create a “Workplace Wellbeing” pack and service offering, targeting corporate and local / high street businesses	November 2022		SSRO		
		Explore the opportunity to introduce Mental Health First Aiders within the service, to identify concerns, signpost to support and enhance the opportunity for suicide prevention within the community	Revised to Corporate timescales (tbc in 2022)		LFM		
		Periodically gain feedback on the impact existing and new services are having on the physical and mental wellbeing of the community and thereafter to improve the focus and impact of the service offer	September 2022 and March 2023		OO		
Active Environments	Continue to network and increase opportunities to	To increase the use of parks and outdoor spaces in the delivery of in-house services and events	October 2022	To identify within the	SEAO / SSRO		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
	improve health and wellbeing in alternative environments	To work with groups and organisations to improve participation opportunities delivered externally in alternative environments	October 2022	review process	SEAO / SSRO		
		To work with Community Development on the planning and delivery of the Borough's Cycling Plan	November 2022	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	LFM / SEAO		
		Work with Community Development to include the leisure facilities as hubs for walking, running and cycling groups	November 2022		LFM / SEAO		
	To explore digital technology in supporting service delivery	To scope digital and technological opportunities that will enhance the service offering and reduce barriers to participation (cost, time, access, other)	March 2023	To identify within the review process	LFM		
Health and Fitness	Improve the quality of the health and fitness service across the facilities, focusing on re-engaging members, improving retention, increasing sales, and providing a positive customer experience	Further develop the 'Member Journey' for health and fitness members across leisure facilities.	July 2022	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	SSRO		
		Ensure the delivery of health and fitness marketing campaigns throughout the year to achieve sales targets	Ongoing until March 2023		SSRO / LFM		
		Deliver regular member engagements, incentives and service developments to optimise retention	Ongoing until March 2023		SSRO		
		Review the group exercise programme to ensure occupancy levels are proactively managed	Ongoing until March 2022		SSRO		
		Review the opportunity for funding and cost / benefit of procuring hi-tech biometric health testing scales	July 2022	Identify in the review process	SSRO		

Theme	Action	Target	Timescale	Resource / Cost	Lead Officer	RAG and DOT	Comment / Progress
Health and Safety / Operations	To ensure appropriate levels of skilled staff are available to maintain service	Ensure staffing levels and development opportunities are appropriately managed through the year	Ongoing until March 2023	Divisional and Corporate Training Budget	OO		
	To ensure all staff are engaged and have a clear role in maintaining service	Ensure appraisals are completed and communication structures are maintained at all levels through the year	Ongoing until March 2023		OO		
	Ensure health and safety is maintained at all times within leisure facilities	Continue to review, update and improve facility health and safety. To feedback progress and outcomes of health and safety and building audits	Ongoing until March 2023		OO		
		Continue to monitor and audit health and safety knowledge and compliance. To feedback training updates and spot check results to the Board	Ongoing until March 2023		LFM		
Marketing and Promotion	Ensure effective marketing to the public to optimise engagement and potential return on investment	Create an updated Marketing Plan to be proactive in service campaigns, to include events scheduled throughout the year	April 2022	Provision made within the revenue budget Process	LFM		
		To update the Board on campaigns and marketing activity through the year	Ongoing until March 2023		LFM		
		Optimise web engagements (at or above that of 2021 / 22) and increase social media followers and engagements	Ongoing until March 2023		LMT		
		Deliver quarterly internal and external leisure bulletins	April, July, October, January		LFM		
Monitoring, Review and Evaluation	Report on performance against the actions identified in this Service Improvement Plan to each meeting of the C&E Board		Every Community and Environment Board		D / LFM		

Agenda Item No 7

Community and Environment Board

14 March 2022

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Financial Assistance to Outside Organisations

1 Summary

- 1.1 Borough Council support for outside organisations is provided in many ways, including through its Annual Grants scheme and through wider partnership agreements. Requests for assistance through the provision of an annual grant have been received from Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA), North Warwickshire Citizens Advice (NW CA), Live & Local, the North Warwickshire Allotments' Federation and North Warwickshire First Responders. This report considers these requests. Members, however, are aware of the need to make significant savings in the Authority's revenue budget and, therefore, the report also addresses a need to reduce the Annual Grants programme by £20,000.

Recommendations to the Board

- a That Members note the work undertaken by the organisations funded in 2021/22 through the Annual Grants scheme; and**
- b That Members determine the level of funding, if any, to be awarded to the five organisations that have requested funding for 2022/23.**

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Members and any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 Through its provision of financial assistance to voluntary and outside organisations, the Borough Council seeks to ensure cost effective support for a broad range of services for the community of North Warwickshire. In pursuance of this objective, this report considers applications for assistance through its Annual Grants to Outside Organisations scheme.
- 3.2 Requests for funding support for 2022/23 have been received from five organisations, WCAVA, NW CA, Live & Local, the North Warwickshire Allotments' Federation and North Warwickshire First Responders.

3.3 Over the last two financial years, the Community and Environment Board has made the following annual grant awards:

	2020/21	2021/22
NW CA	£34,807	£34,000
WCAVA	£11,875	£11,000
Live & Local	£2,000	£2,000
Allotments' Federation	£500	£500
NW First Responders		£4,100

4 **Warwickshire Community and Voluntary Action (WCAVA)**

4.1 WCAVA is the local voluntary community sector (VCS) infrastructure organisation, supporting volunteers, groups, organisations, enterprises and charities to strengthen communities throughout the county. Activity undertaken by WCAVA from April to December 2021 is highlighted in Appendix A. This report provides detailed information on that work and will help Members to consider the request to provide funding support for 2022/23. Since the start of the Coronavirus pandemic, there has been a rise in community activism and WCAVA has provided infrastructure support by:

- Supporting existing groups and organisations in adapting and responding to COVID-19
- Working with new groups to meet and respond to the needs generated by COVID-19, for example “mutual aid” and other community-led initiatives
- Supporting groups with funding
- Volunteer recruitment
- Providing a befriending service for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable individuals

4.2 Towards the end of 2021, Warwickshire County Council (WCC) completed the process of re-commissioning its Voluntary, Community and Social Enterprise Sector Support Service Infrastructure Contract, through which WCAVA had been receiving a significant level of financial assistance (£447,130 in 2020/21, including Restricted Fund support of over £154,000). The contract is divided into four parts:

- Volunteering Infrastructure
- Social Action
- Social Enterprise Development
- Collaboration, Partnerships and Development

- 4.3 Through the tendering process, Warwickshire County Council has awarded the contract to WCAVA for three years, with an option for an extension for a further two years. The contract has a value of over £330,000 in 2022/23. WCAVA will be working with Grapevine to deliver the “Social Action” commission and with the Coventry and Warwickshire Co-operative Development Agency to deliver the “Social Enterprise Development” work.
- 4.4 Due to the different level of financial support provided by each borough and district, there has not previously been an equitable split of support provided by WCAVA across the county. North Warwickshire Borough Council has been contributing less financial support than the other authorities and, as a consequence:
- Less officer time has been dedicated to North Warwickshire (for group development and volunteer co-ordination)
 - Fewer North Warwickshire groups have been supported to access funding
 - There has been reduced representation at partnership meetings
- 4.5 In its submitted report, WCAVA has requested an increase in funding from the Borough Council in order to maintain its current level of support in North Warwickshire. A grant reduction from the Authority will result in a further dilution of service within the local community, principally in the areas of activity outlined above.
- 4.6 In 2021/22, the Board awarded an annual grant of £11,000, excluding VAT, to WCAVA, which was paid in two equal instalments, in April and October. The award provided financial assistance towards the organisation’s core functions in delivering infrastructure and development support to the third sector in North Warwickshire.

5 North Warwickshire Citizens Advice (NW CA)

- 5.1 Members will be familiar with the nature of the request from NW CA and the need to link any annual grant award to the negotiation of an approved annual Service Level Agreement (SLA). Through the Agreement, the Borough Council seeks to ensure the delivery of mutually compatible outcomes in return for its investment. Wherever possible, these outcomes are linked to the objectives and priorities of the Borough Council and of the North Warwickshire Sustainable Community Strategy (2009 to 2026), which sets out three key priorities for improving local quality of life.
- 5.2 In late December 2021, Warwickshire County Council completed the recommissioning of its Advice Service contract, which has been awarded to NW CA for a period of three years, again with an option to extend the contract for a further two years. The contract has a value of just over £530,000 in its first year.

- 5.3 NW CA is monitored through the production of a report that details the support work that has been provided to the residents of North Warwickshire. The April 2021 to January 2022 review report is attached at Appendix B. In brief, the report outlines that, in this period, NW CA dealt with over 1,400 separate client cases, which, on average, required the consideration of more than four issues per case. The most common issues related to benefits claims, Universal Credit, debt and employment. This equated to an annualised value of more than £173,000 in benefit increases, reinstatements or new awards.
- ...
- 5.4 Prior to the pandemic, advice and support was predominantly delivered face to face. Understandably, from March 2020, much of this activity has had to be delivered remotely through CA's dedicated team of staff and volunteers. Nevertheless, NW CA is providing a range of services that continue to be valued within the local community. Since the start of the pandemic the service has seen an increase in the number of individuals seeking advice and support. The number of issues presented by each individual has also increased, so case requirements are becoming more complex. It is predicted that this trend will continue in the immediately foreseeable future, not least due to the rise in energy prices. Unfortunately, however, this heightened demand for CA support will coincide with the loss of important funding streams after 31 March 2023, partly as a consequence of the loss of funding through the European Union.
- 5.5 In 2021/22, the Board awarded the organisation an annual grant of £34,000 towards its core functions. This sum was paid in two half-yearly instalments, with the second payment being made further to a review and satisfactory completion of work in the first six months and with the prior agreement of the Chairman and Vice-chairman of the Board. If Members determine to make an award to NW CA in 2022/23, it is recommended that payment is made through a similar process and that the Chairman and Vice-chairman additionally approve the content of the SLA before any award is made. Any reduction in support from the Borough Council is likely to result in a reduced support service for local residents and less face-to-face contact for people in need of specialised advice.
- 5.6 For the Board's information, the Borough Council was able to offer CA an additional £40,000 in 2021 through COMF funding to support the employment of an additional member of staff to help with short-term capacity issues during the pandemic. A further offer of COMF support, in the sum of £40,000, has been made, and accepted by CA, for work to be undertaken during 2022 / 23. Subject to application, the Authority also provides financial support to CA through the Discretionary Rate Relief scheme.

6 **Live & Local**

6.1 Live & Local works with voluntary groups and professional artists to create new audiences for the performing arts, with a view to enabling the development of stronger communities. In previous years, the organisation has achieved this by co-ordinating professional, good quality performances in a network of non-mainstream venues, such as community halls, and by working in partnership with voluntary and other organisations.

6.2 Members will recall that, at its meeting held in March 2021, the Board approved an annual grant of £2,000 towards the core functions of Live & Local, although the Key Client Contract required the delivery of a certain number of “live” performances (minimum of 10) in the Borough. This commitment was met through the provision of a mixed programme of activity across the Borough, which combined live and virtual performances within small communities. Live & Local’s end of year report is attached in two parts, . . . in Appendices C and D. Subject to support from the Board, Live & Local will again provide a mixed programme of activity across North Warwickshire.

6.3 Live & Local’s core costs are covered by Arts Council England. In the report it has submitted, Live & Local has requested an allocation of £2,250 for 2022/23. Without funding, Live & Local will still exist, but there would almost certainly be a reduction in the number of shows in North Warwickshire and the cost of attending those shows/performances may increase.

7 **North Warwickshire Allotments’ Federation**

7.1 The North Warwickshire Allotments’ Federation, which is run by volunteers, seeks to bring together representatives from allotment associations and groups across North Warwickshire. The Federation is monitored on several outcomes, which include the number of entrants to the Annual Allotment Awards and an up-to-date allotments website.

7.2 Understandably, during the pandemic, the Federation had to cancel a number of its annual events and shows, although its annual judging of allotment sites was able to proceed. The Federation, however, has supported its member associations in complying with the Government’s pandemic restrictions and guidelines.

. . . 7.3 A summary of the Federation’s work can be seen in Appendix E. Over the next 12 months, its committee is planning a number of improvements to encourage engagement. These improvements will include an improved website, which will act as an information point for exchanging tips, ideas and recipes for the gardening community, as well as those people with an allotment.

7.4 In 2021/22, the Board awarded the Allotments' Federation an annual grant in the sum of £500, a level of funding that has remained consistent for a number of years. The Borough Council's annual grant to the Allotments' Federation is relatively small. Its loss to the Federation would probably result in a reduction in the number of events organised on behalf of the separate allotment associations.

8 North Warwickshire First Responders

8.1 North Warwickshire First Responders is a group of local volunteers who are trained to respond, in conjunction with the West Midlands Ambulance Service, to emergency calls through the 999 system. The volunteers provide immediate care to patients in cases where the prompt arrival of an ambulance may be delayed. Its members are trained to deliver care in a range of emergency situations, including basic life support, defibrillation in cardiac arrest situations and oxygen administration.

8.2 Community First Responders normally operate within a three to five miles radius of their home address, although the North Warwickshire volunteers respond to incidents across the Borough, as well as to incidents in Nuneaton, Bedworth and Tamworth, where they are the closest available resource.

8.3 North Warwickshire First Responders additionally support local events, such as Dicken's Evening, Big Day Out and events held in towns and villages across the Borough, and the group provides awareness sessions for basic first aid, CPR and in the use of defibrillators. The organisation also works with the local community to place and maintain community defibrillators.

8.4 North Warwickshire First Responders relies on donations and fundraising to support its annual running costs, which include insurance, car maintenance, first aid equipment and kit, uniforms and training costs. First Responders, therefore, is requesting financial assistance, through the Annual Grants scheme, to support its work. In 2021/22, the Board made its first annual award to First Responders in the sum of £4,100. In the report it has submitted to the Borough Council, First Responders has requested more funding (amount unspecified), which will be used to support the work currently taking place around defibrillators (Appendix F). Without the funding, First Responders will still exist and will probably need to continue to raise funds as it has done in previous years.

9 Possible Approach to Funding for 2022/23

9.1 Given the need to make savings within the revenue budget, consideration has been given to a possible reduction of £20,000 in the provision made available for Annual Grants. This would reduce the corresponding budget to maximum provision of £31,600 through which to support voluntary organisations. This would require reductions to be made to the level of awards to be allocated in 2022/23. This sum could be awarded in a number of ways, three of which are as follows:

Option 1

9.2 Delete the relatively small grants to Live & Local, the NW Allotments' Federation and First Responders, thereby leaving a saving of £13,400 to find between NW CA and WCAVA. A proportional split between these two organisations would result in a reduction of £10k in the grant to the CA and a reduction of £3,400 from WCAVA, which would result in the following awards:

- NW CA £24,000
- WCAVA £7,600

Option 2

9.3 Support either NW CA or WCAVA in the entire sum of £31,600.

Option 3

9.4 An alternative approach would be to reduce the grant allocation for all five organisations in proportion to the amount of funding each received in 2021/22, which would result in the following awards:

	% of Overall Funding Received in 2021 / 22	Possible Pro-rata Allocation in 2022 / 23
CA	66%	£20,856
WCAVA	21%	£6,636
Live & Local	4%	£1,264
Allotments' Federation	1%	£316
First Responders	8%	£2,528

9.5 There are, of course, other ways in which the budget could be allocated and it is for Members to determine those organisations that it wishes to support and in what sum. The Board, therefore, is asked to determine the level of annual grant support, if any, that it wishes to award to the five organisations that have made requests for assistance through this scheme.

10 Report Implications

10.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

10.1.1 The financial implications associated with the 2022/23 Annual Grants scheme are addressed in the main body of the report.

10.1.2 Supporting community and voluntary sector work is a cost-effective way for the Borough Council to maintain service provision for the residents of North Warwickshire. If, however, financial support to voluntary organisations is not reduced, then the Council will need to find further savings from the services it provides directly.

10.2 Safer Communities Implications

10.2.1 There is no direct safer communities implication arising directly from this report, although the activities that are supported by Live & Local provide positive diversions from anti-social and/or nuisance behaviour. NW CA's work, particularly with regard to the provision of financial advice, can also help to prevent people from resorting to criminal activity to resolve their personal problems.

10.3 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

10.3.1 Providing financial assistance to community and voluntary sector organisations is a cost-effective way of increasing local service provision and helping to enhance individual and collective quality of life.

10.3.2 The Allotments' Federation provides support to local Allotment Associations, supporting their sustainability, which is, in turn, having a positive impact upon the local environment. Similarly, Live & Local supports communities in their endeavours to ensure the on-going sustainability of local venues.

10.3.3 The activities of each of the organisations identified in this report positively impact upon people's health and wellbeing. WCAVA and NW CA support groups and individuals in a wide variety of ways that positively impact on personal and community wellbeing. Live & Local's support enables promoters to provide good quality arts productions in local venues, which positively advance people's mental health and wellbeing. The Allotments' Federation's work supports allotment gardening, which has the potential to improve both physical and mental health, whilst North Warwickshire First Responders work is entirely focused on looking after the health and welfare of the local community.

10.4 Risk Management Implications

10.4.1 There is no change to the risk management implications previously reported to the Board consequent upon the content of this report.

10.5 Equalities Implications

10.5.1 An Equality Impact and Needs Assessment has previously been undertaken, which did not highlight any negative impact consequent upon the proposed financial awards. The advice offered by NW CA helps to provide equality of opportunity and address inequality within the local community. By helping local promoters to provide professional arts productions in local venues, Live & Local is increasing access to art and entertainment services for all members of the community.

10.6 Links to Council's Priorities

10.6.1 The provision of financial assistance to community and voluntary sector organisations has positive and direct links to the corporate priorities in respect of:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

10.6.2 The provision of financial assistance to community and voluntary sector organisations also has a positive impact upon the Sustainable Community Strategy objectives to:

- Raise aspirations, educational attainment and skill levels
- Develop healthier communities
- Improve access to services

The Contact Officer for this report is Becky Evans (719346).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	Director of Leisure and Community Development	Report to Community and Environment Board (Financial Assistance to Outside Organisations)	March 2021

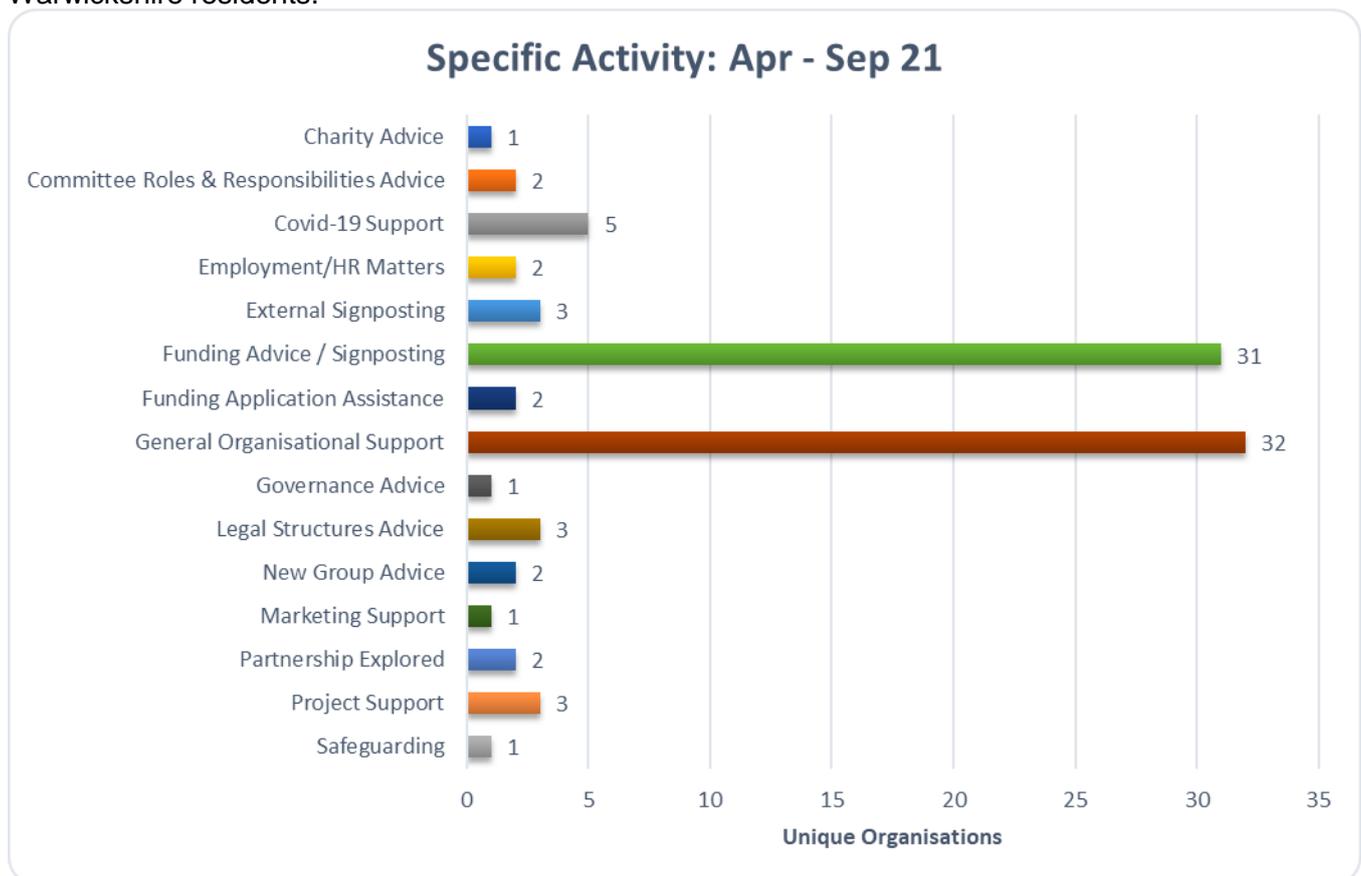
KPI 1. Infrastructure Support to the Sector

We want to see an increase in the volume and quality of organisational support provided to the third sector (e.g. support with funding applications, support with policy development etc.)

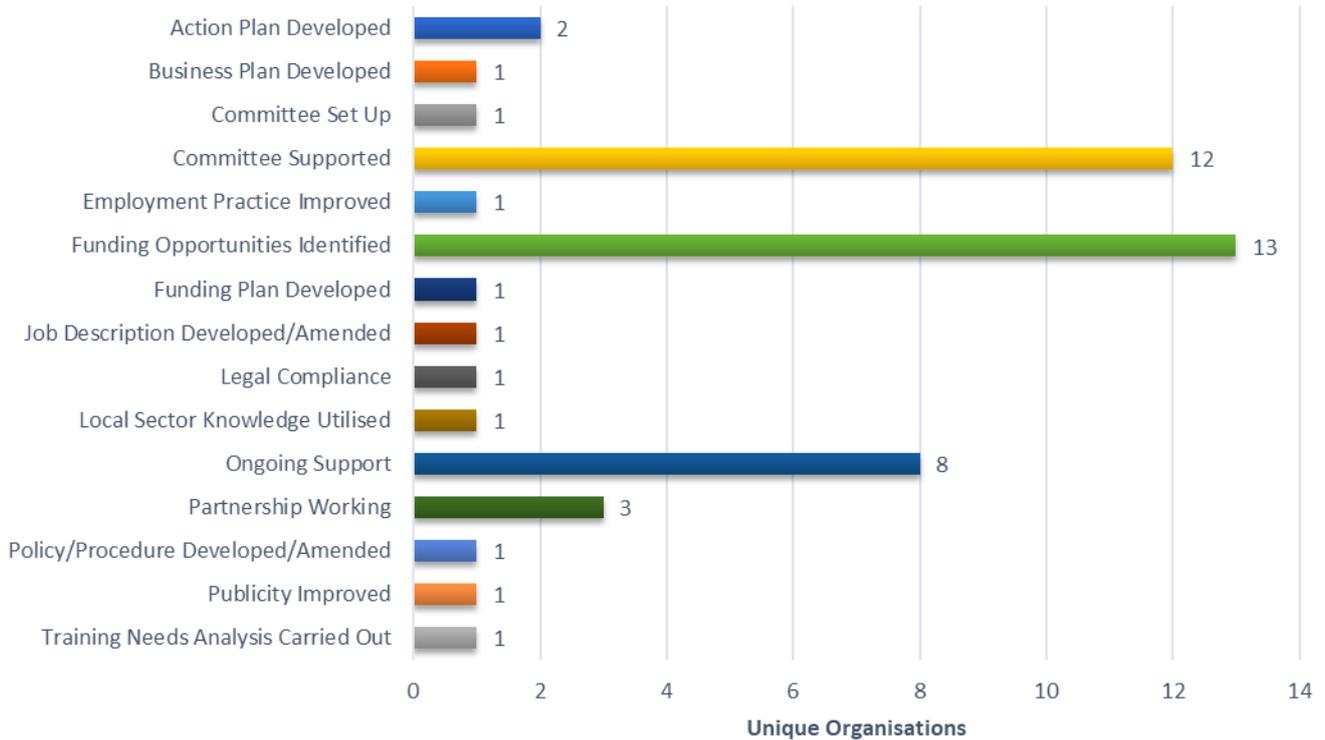
	Organisations Supported	Interventions	
Quarter 1: Apr – Jun 2021	48	68	
Quarter 2: Jul – Sep 2021	48	69	
Total	96	137	We worked with each organisation on 1.4 issues

We anticipate similar levels of engagement and support over the rest of the year, so would estimate that throughout 2021-2022 we would support nearly 200 organisations with 260 difference interventions or types of support.

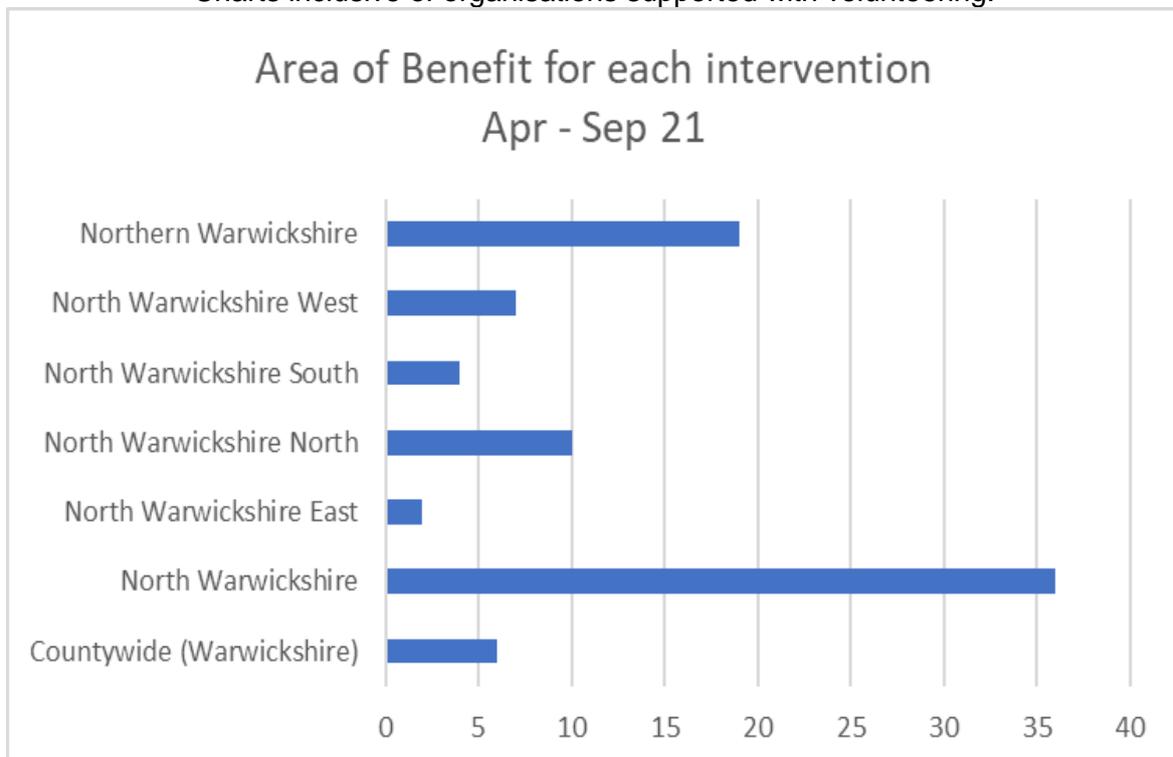
Our most often activity is organisational support and funding advice and guidance; we would expect this to continue, working with volunteer committee members and staff to stabilise, develop and grow their organisations and operations. We will continue to offer an open access service, utilising face to face, online, over the phone and support via email to any groups operating for the benefit of North Warwickshire residents.



Outcomes of Support: Apr - Sep 21



Charts inclusive of organisations supported with volunteering:



Some examples of the work undertaken have been:

- Organisation development, project planning support & HR support for Oldbury Care Farm, social enterprise based in Hartshill
- Funding application assistance to Arley Community Centre for building improvements
- Guidance looking for funding opportunities for children's riding activities with Baddersley Ensor Bike Park

- Covid resilience support for the Phoenix dementia support group, helping them to restart safely, including risk assessment development
- Capital funding plans, funder searches and application support with Polesworth Memorial Hall
- Funding application assistance with Piccadilly Community Association for a Severn Trent bid for a sensory garden
- Variety of support to Atherstone Town Football Club, including funding searches & application guidance, as well as legal structures advice
- We are always keen to support fledgling community activity that is not yet fully formed; examples of this include meeting with a councillor wanting to initiate and develop community activity around the Queens Platinum Jubilee celebrations next year, email support to individuals wanting to set up a new social enterprise to reduce loneliness and isolation.

KPI 2. Effective Conduit

We want to be an effective conduit between the Third sector and the Council.

Apr – Sep 2021	
No. Events/Training Held	25
No. Events/Training Contributed to	15
No. People Reached (approx.)	860
No. Orgs Supported/Trained at Events	202

Summary of events this quarter:

Date	Event Held	Approx. No. Attendees
01/04/2021	National Lottery Community Fund – Meet the Funder	16
April 21 x4	Safeguarding Awareness	42
May 21 x3	Digital Skills Surgeries	21
07/07/2021	Northern Warwickshire Volunteer Celebration Event	100
15/07/2021	Meet The Funder - Groundwork WM - ESF & Tesco Community Grants	11
08/09/2021	Meet The Funder - HS2 Community Fund	21
21/09/2021	Volunteer Recruitment Event (Health and Wellbeing Focus)	28
14/04 & 30/09/2021	Severn Trent Community Fund Workshop - NB & North x2	34

We anticipate running fewer events over Q3 & Q4 as some of the above were additionally (one-off) funded by Warwickshire County Council. We will continue to run specific fund/funder-themed events; we record these and make them available on our YouTube channel so groups can have open access to the information if they cannot make live events.

Case Study

The team planned, organised and ran a networking event for organisations, community groups and agencies in North Warwickshire. The aim of the event was for this to be the first of potentially three over 2021 that would provide a conduit for WCAVA to connect with existing members, reach out to new potential members and users of our services and provide a platform for the voluntary and community sector to network.

The objective being to not only promote the support WCAVA can provide but also to reconnect with organisations after the last year as groups start working towards operational work again. The event also provided a platform to air views, share learnings, make partnership links and ask questions on specific topics and needs that are key in going forward. This interaction could then assist and direct WCAVA work, planning, knowledge, support requirements etc for the sector.

The event ran for an hour and a half with the first 20 minutes being a presentation on WCAVA and some current information around governance, funding and volunteering. This was followed by a discussion and sharing of thinking, issues and general information. The event was predominately informal allowing for flexibility of content and unplanned conversations which worked really well with the group that we have.

Being the first virtual networking event we were unsure as to who would attend, delightfully though the agencies and community groups who attended came from a varied range of support and delivery approaches and although not large in number the mix of attendees certainly vindicated the process we set out. The mix, process and the people involved made for a very interactive discussion time which made for a good expression of thinking and views.

Feedback from all concerned was positive with the view that further ones should be organised with a specific topic or theme. There was an exchange of contact details between agencies/community groups with the view to follow up on for mutual benefit

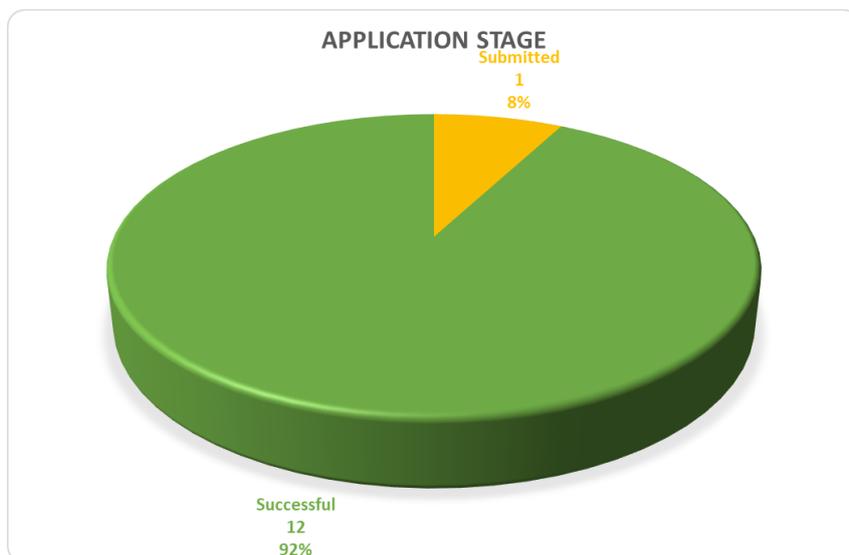
It was certainly proved that the event and process is needed in North Warwickshire and will take on board feedback in organising and delivering a further two events in 2021.

WCAVA have also embarked on its bi-annual State of the Voluntary and Community Sector survey; the results will be ready in the New Year, but early analysis shows that sector income has continued to decline, as has their financial reserves, whilst expenditure has risen.

KPI 3. Vibrant Third Sector

We want to effectively support the sector to maximise the opportunities to secure funding (both inside and outside of local authority funding).

Cumulative Totals 21/22		
	Applied for	Awarded
Total	£143,610.19	£123,360.19
Local	£129,310.19	£109,310.19
National	£14,300.00	£14,050.00



Successful funding applications:

Organisation	Funder	Amount	Purpose
Aim Educational	ESF Community Grants		
Ex-Mining Villages Partnership	WCC Youth Work Fund	£51,310.19	Expansion of youth work delivery
Atherstone Football Club	Football Foundation	£5,000.00	Club recovery
Atherstone Football Club	Arnold Clark	£500.00	Club recovery
Atherstone Football Club	Papa Johns	£2,000.00	Club recovery
Ruby's Yard	Canoe Foundation	£5,000.00	Develop canoeing opportunities

			from Yard
Ruby's Yard	WCC Green Shoots Fund	£5,000.00	Solar lighting and native hedging
Kingsbury Youth and Community Centre	WCC Green Shoots Fund	£25,000.00	Double-glazing
(Ansley PC) Re-treeing Ansley	WCC Green Shoots Fund	£25,000.00	Re-treeing
Atherstone Football Club	Green Innovation Fund	£750.00	Football equipment
Atherstone Football Club	Football Foundation	£3,300.00	Summer maintenance and development
Atherstone Football Club	WCC County Councillors' Grant Fund	£500.00	Mentoring and upgrading skills of disadvantaged

We continue to work with a number of organisations to seek suitable funding, but also explore a range of fundraising alternatives, including trading. It is often not just the funding application itself, it is support around being funding ready and fund monitoring & evaluation that is needed.

Larger funding applications often take longer to come to fruition, from application development and also panel judging, so whilst some applications will have been developed in Q1 & Q2, groups may not know the outcome until Q3 or Q4. A conservative annual income for the sector on bids we have supported is £250,000.

WCAVA has also spent a significant amount of time leading on a collaborative bid to the Arts Council's Creative People and Places programme, the bids' value is £1m and will benefit residents from across northern Warwickshire, increasing participation in arts and cultural activities for the next 3 years.

KPI 4. Volunteer Recruitment

We want to see more volunteers actively supporting local services and particularly services it considers 'priority' (health and social care (HSC) services).

	Volunteers Registered/ Recruited	Volunteer Involving Organisations Registered	New Volunteering Opportunities Advertised
Quarter 1: Apr – Jun 2021	8	0	38
Quarter 2: Jul – Sep 2021	21	3	29
Total	29	3	67

Overall, it is estimated (from a feedback sample) that **21** of the **29** volunteers registered/recruited were placed.

The economic value of volunteering that WCAVA has brokered equates to approx. **£52,413*** a year. Our State of the Sector survey estimates that the overall value of volunteering across Warwickshire is over £94,000,000 per year.

Case Study

Volunteers Week 2021 had to be a virtual celebration and thank you to volunteers for their amazing contribution during the past year. We marked this event with the first Northern Virtual Volunteer Recruitment Event, which we held on Zoom. We began with a general presentation about volunteering – what is involved, rules for those who may be on benefits and how much people gain from being a volunteer – from new skills to increased self-esteem.

The organisations taking part spoke about what they do and what volunteer roles they had to offer. This was diverse and covered roles ranging from Ebay experts, befrienders, advice workers, protecting the environment and many more opportunities. Many groups are starting up again and are keen to recruit or they may have operated throughout the pandemic and volunteers may be going back to work after furlough. Whatever the reason, volunteers are needed now across almost all organisations. The groups themselves also found out more about each other and some useful networking and connecting took place.

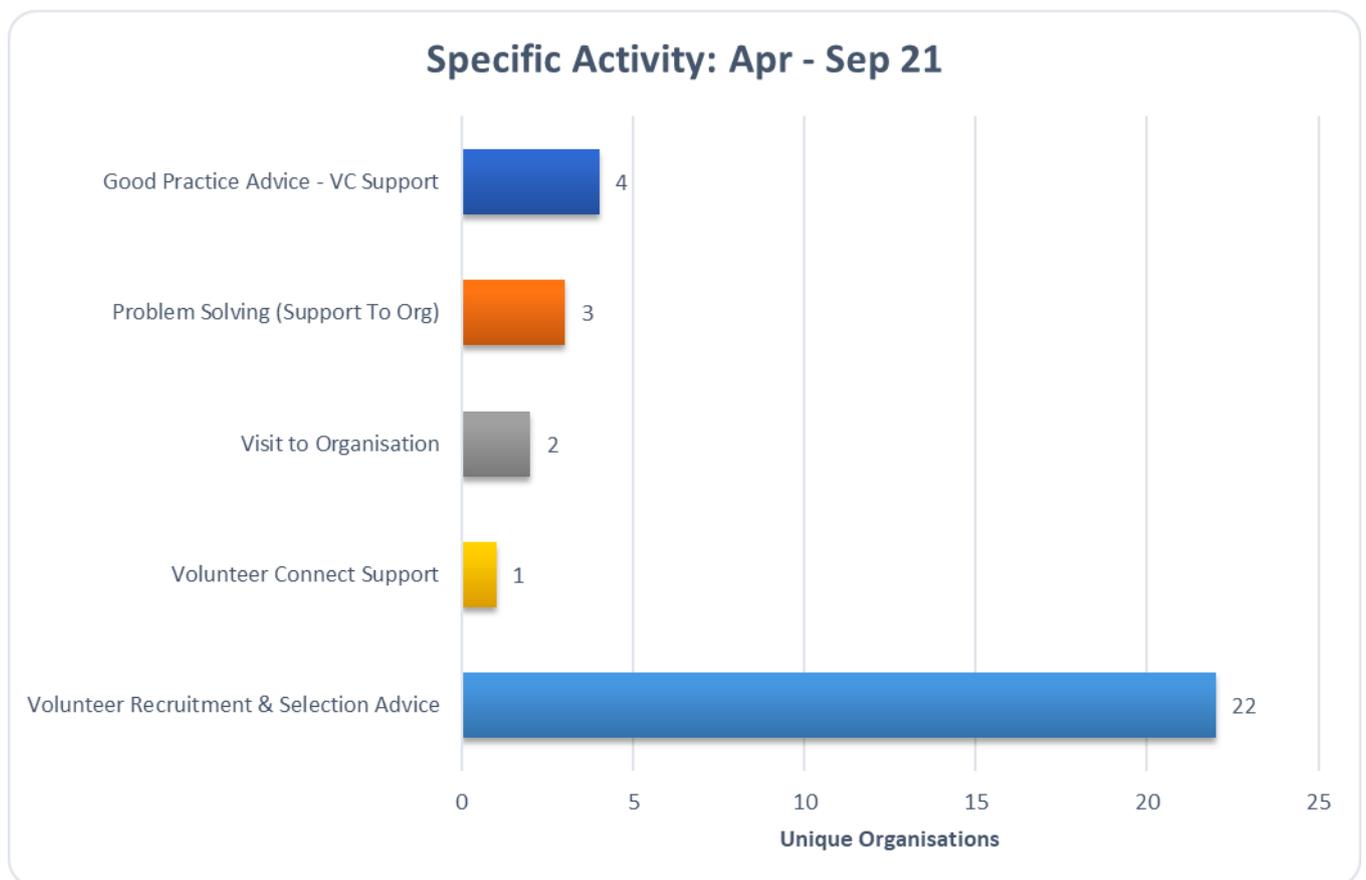
We have received positive feedback from groups and volunteers themselves about the event. As a result we are planning to hold further virtual recruitment events throughout the year in addition to (hopefully) our face to face meetings and events. This additional service and way of reaching people will allow us to tailor events to specific groups for example Sixth Formers or people who may be looking to volunteer from home – an option which has grown during the pandemic as some organisations have changed the way they offer services.

*Calculated by (number of volunteers placed x average number of hours a year (11.6 hrs a month x 12 (139.2hrs) [NCVO UK Civil Society Almanac 2016] (Rates of formal volunteering have not changed since 2016/17)) x average hourly wage (£17.93 - the mean figure of Gross Hourly Pay for Warwickshire, Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE), 2020 (provisional))

KPI 5. Support to Organisations Recruiting Volunteers

We want to see an increase in the volume of organisations supported to recruit volunteers and a high-quality level of support provided to those organisations. This applies to organisations in the public, third and private sectors.

Organisations supported within:	Public Sector	Private Sector	Third Sector
Quarter 1: Apr – Jun 2021	1	0	10
Quarter 2: Jul – Sep 2021	1	0	15



Report Summary

Delivery expectations across the remainder of 2021-22 and future plans 2022+

In 2021-22 North Warwickshire Borough Council invested £11,000 into WCAVA to support the delivery of infrastructure services for the voluntary and community sector in the Borough. NWBC accounts for approximately 20% of our broader funding package for North Warwickshire, from Warwickshire County Council and the Coventry and Warwickshire Clinical Commissioning Group; WCAVA is also fortunate to supplement this significantly from recharges from other projects we are part of.

For every £1 invested by the public sector for delivery in the North, over the full year **2021-22, we estimate that this is over £4.46 additional value brought into the community** (£22.32 if we are successful with the Arts Council).

Warwickshire County Council have put their VCSE Infrastructure Contract out for re-tender for 2022-25, which WCAVA has made a submission which we of course hope will be successful, however this would mean a **shift in their delivery priorities** and a **reduction in countywide investment** compared to current.

WCAVA has already been through a period of restructuring and streamlining its operations, which we have kept all commissioners aware of; if successful we may again have to readjust what is practically deliverable within the finances available to us. Previously we have been able to maintain an equitable service countywide across each district, with each area having a dedicated team of:

- 22.5hrs per week Funding and Groups Development (FGDO)
- 22.5hrs per week Volunteering Coordination (VC)
- 11.25hrs per week Senior Development (half of a shared Northern role)
- Half of a shared Northern Area Manager role

If we are successful with the WCC tender we are **facing a deficit of 40% against current income on the 3 direct VCSE delivery roles alone**, not accounting for even greater losses against managerial roles, whose post holders are responsible for all strategic and partnership activities. It will therefore become more **untenable to maintain an equivalent service in North Warwickshire without securing additional investment**.

We continue to be very grateful for the financial contribution of NWBC, and our very positive working relationships with officers; the investment received from other local authorities averages £40,000 per year and if comparable investment were to be received in North Warwickshire this would make achieving the above from 2022 more realistic. **If NWBC remains at the same level, or decreases, then residents of North Warwickshire would see a significantly reduced offer from WCAVA.** We would be more than happy to talk this through in more detail if appropriate.



North
Warwickshire

North Warwickshire Citizens Advice

Report to North Warwickshire
Borough Council

1st April 2021 – 30th September 2021



Figures from NWCA:

April 1st 2021 – September 30th 2021.

a) Opening hours

- Monday: 9.00am – 4.30pm
- Tuesday: 9.00am – 4.30pm
- Wednesday: 9.00 – 4.30pm
- Thursday: 9.00am – 4.30pm
- Friday: 9.00am – 4.00pm

Face to face advice:

Face to face is currently available after an initial assessment by phone or email.

Telephone advice:

Monday to Friday: 10:00 – 2:00

Email advice:

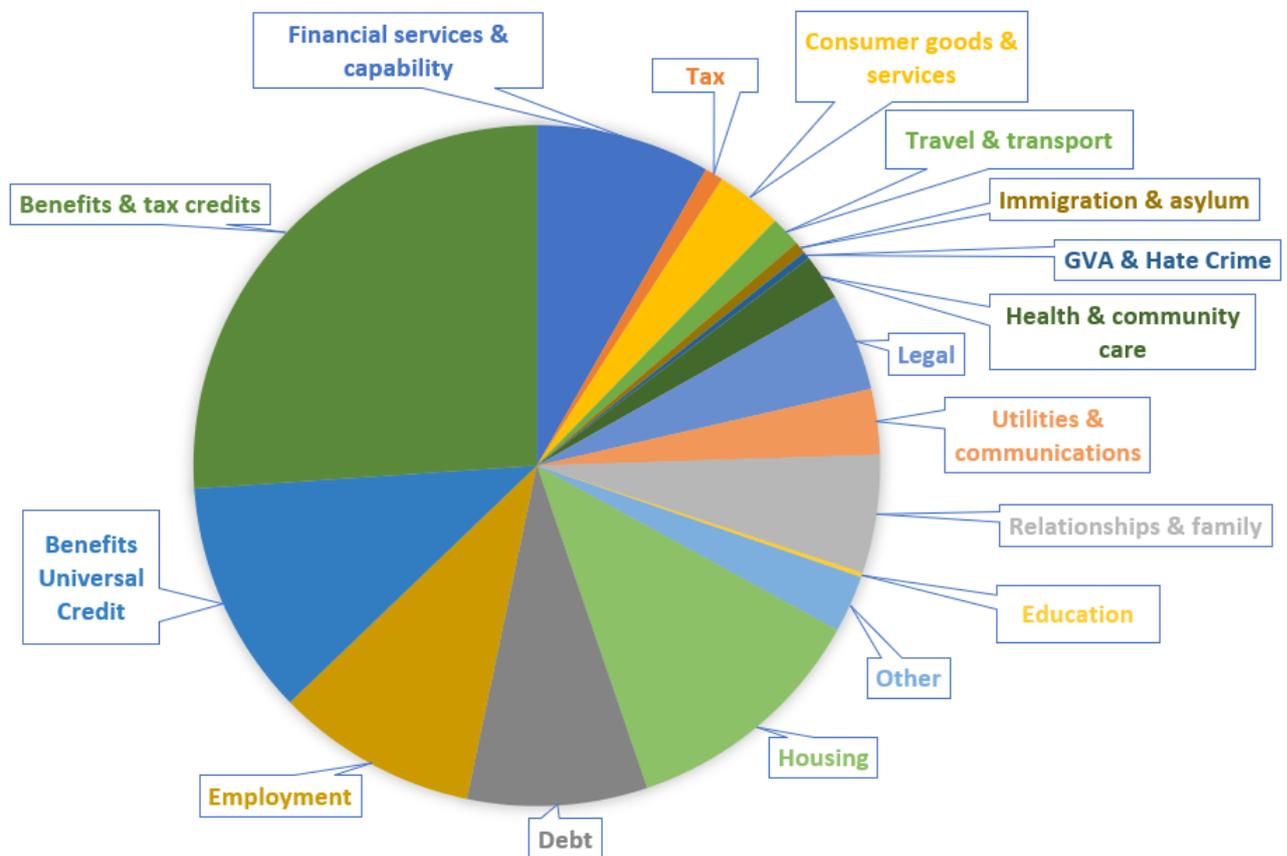
We aim to respond to email enquiries within 3 days.

b) Number of enquiries

NWCA dealt with **1401** enquiries in this period.

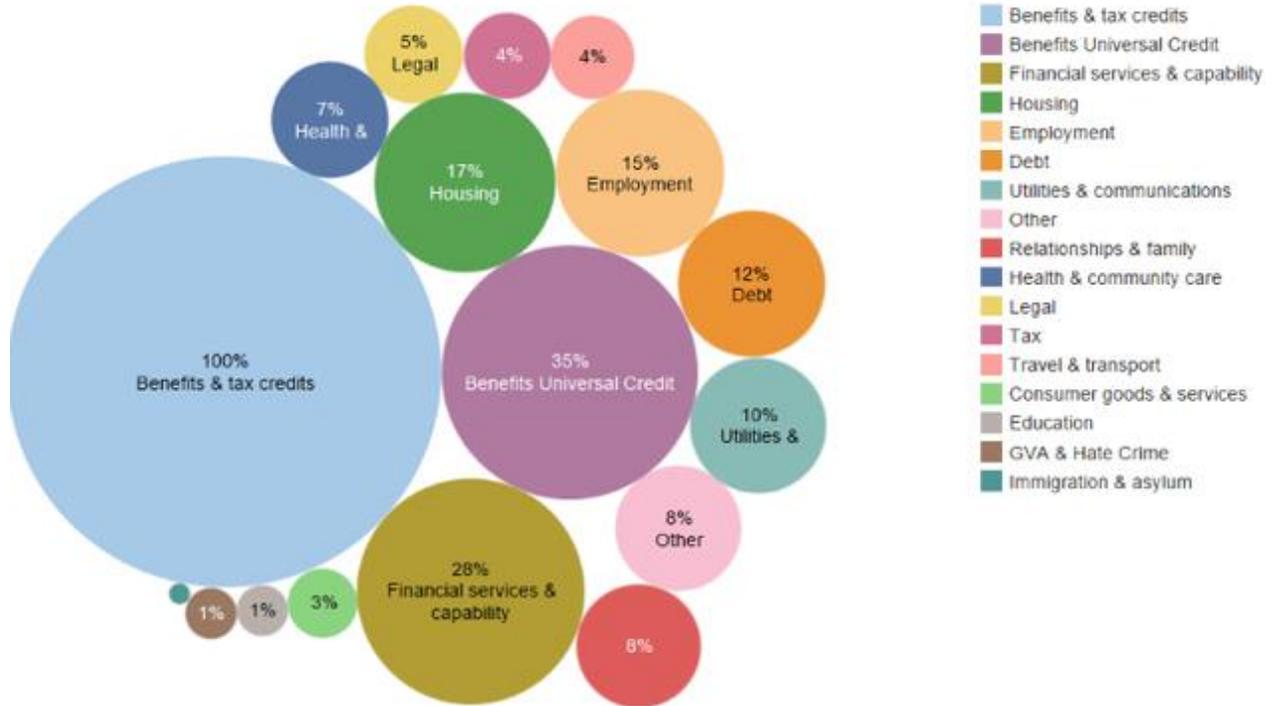
c) Enquiries categorised by complexity:

5,970 issues – representing an average of **4.2** issues per case. The three most common issues were: **Benefits 26.1%**, **Housing 11.8%**, and **Universal Credit 11.2%**.



Most cases include multiple issues as shown by the cluster diagrams below.

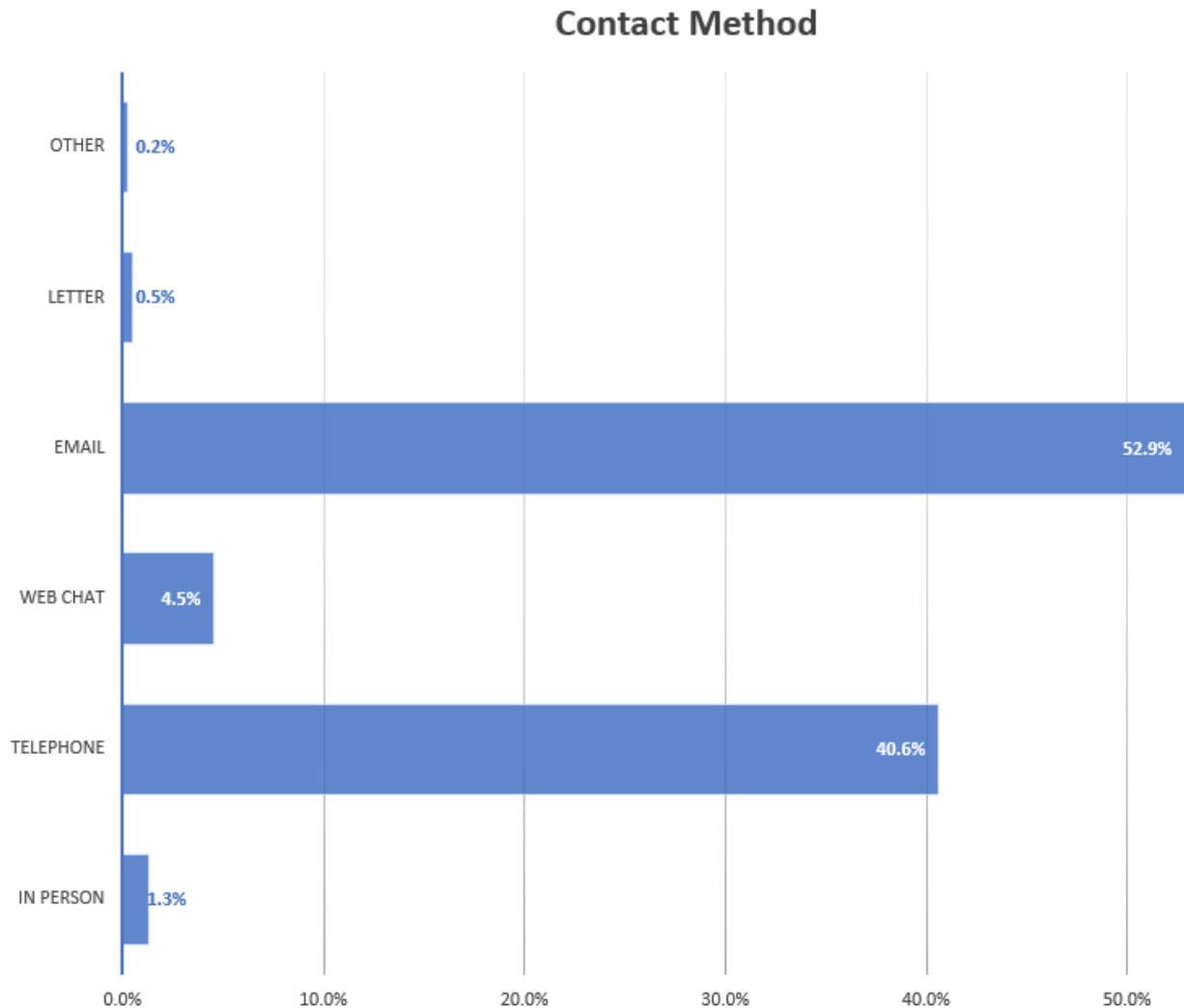
Benefits Linked Issues



Debt Linked Issues



d) How people have contacted us:



e) Paid Staff:

North Warwickshire Citizens Advice currently employs 12 staff, FTE 5.6.

f) Volunteers:

There are currently 38 volunteers working with North Warwickshire Citizens Advice. These include administration and trustee roles, but consist predominantly of Advisers who typically give either one or two days of their time, each lasting 5-6 hours, for advice sessions.

g) Training sessions undertaken by staff:

The bureau delivers a monthly training session, usually on the last Thursday of each month. Attendance is mandatory for all volunteers and paid staff. During this period, the following training was delivered:

Apr 2021 – Women and Gambling Programme. (GamCare)

To build awareness of problem gambling and support options within the wider support sectors for women and girls.

27 May 2021 – National housing awareness of homelessness and housing. (Shelter)

Can recognise common emergencies and situations needing full advice. Use approved information, support and supervision resources to source relevant information. Understand the support on offer when signposting to specialist agencies to improve client journey for housing advice.

18 June 2021 – Volunteer week – mental health.

Awareness of how to support own mental health and where to access support. Respect and acknowledge feelings of others in the office and of our clients.

22 July 2021 – Local Healthwatch. (Healthwatch Warks)

Webinar - Understand the support on offer when signposting to specialist agencies to improve client journey for improving health.

30th September – Safeguarding.

Providing staff and volunteers with knowledge of Safeguarding = acting promptly on issues if necessary, referring to the local authority and the police, where appropriate, to make sure action is taken to keep children and adults safe.

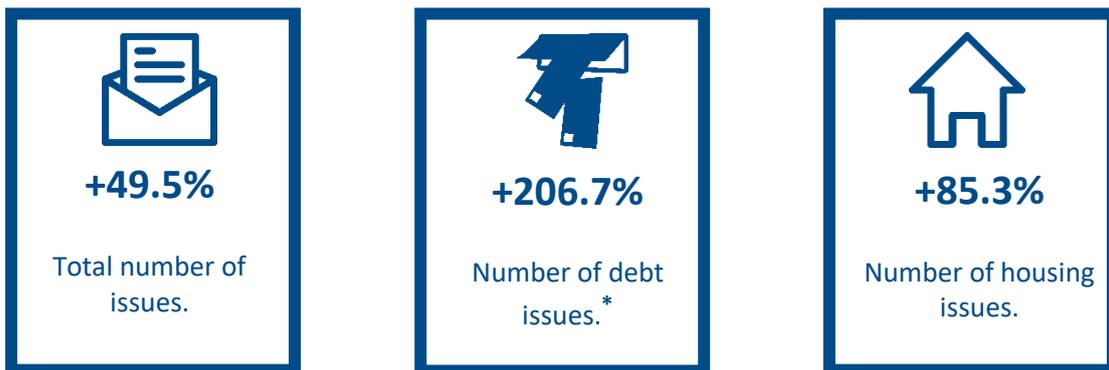
h) Number of formal complaints about the bureau:

No formal complaints were received during this period.

i) Key Indicators:

Comparison Apr 2020 – Sep 2020 with Apr 2021 – Sep 2021

These represent changes in proportion of enquiries. Covid-19 has suppressed overall enquiries in the first half of the financial year.



* Debt - the previous reporting period includes the time for which government furlough and debt alleviation schemes operated.

j) Key Outcomes:

- **60** benefit increases, reinstatements or new awards for a total **annualised value of £173,388**.
- **£6,395** in charitable grant requests, or food referrals.
- **338 clients** reporting improved health and improved capacity to manage their circumstances.

k) Commentary:

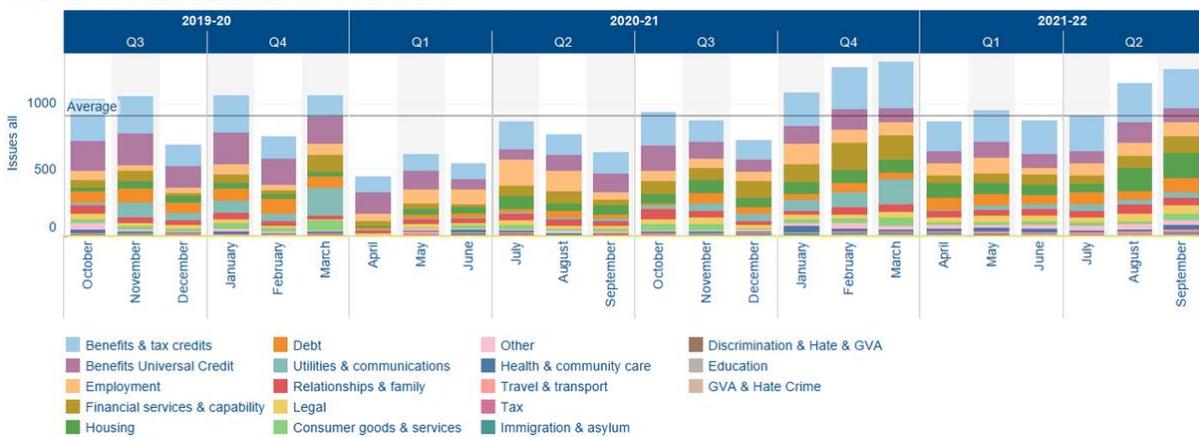
NWCA have continued to operate our remote advice service, which includes targeted support for all our outreach locations, incorporating telephone, email, and web chat. Our multi-channel remote service is well established and we continue to ensure we are meeting the needs of those who require face-to-face, including our most vulnerable clients, through our appointment-based system. This is based both at our main offices in Atherstone and also at various community locations.

The evidence of ‘suppressed demand’ (seen in a decrease in clients) during the earlier stages of the pandemic while clients made use of the government’s mitigation measures have now seen clients flowing through to our service and an increase in clients as these measures, such as furlough have come to an end.

This can be explained largely by the financial alleviation measures that the government put into place at the beginning of the crisis period, such as, mortgage and credit payment holidays, furlough and eviction moratoriums.

There has been a significant increase in client numbers for NWCA (+49%) on the same period last year and our clients continue to present with complex needs – with an average of over 4 issues per client.

Graph of issues for last period and previous period



Free, confidential advice.

Whoever you are.

We help people overcome their problems and campaign on big issues when their voices need to be heard.

We value diversity, champion equality, and challenge discrimination and harassment.

We're here for everyone.



@NorthWarksCAB

nwcab.org.uk

Registered charity number 1105712.

North Warwickshire Borough Council



Please note that local authority funds invested in a particular financial year support the programme that happens from June 1st in that year through to the end of May in the next financial year. We call this the 'Programme Year'. Comparing target/outputs by financial year will throw up inappropriate outcomes as our programming and quantitative monitoring process is based on the June to May period.

Summary to May 2022

This is the summary of the current Arts Council England (ACE) National Portfolio Programme (NPO) period. ACE funds underpin the whole Live & Local programme and cover most of our core costs meaning that local authority funds all get spend on the ground in their area. The quantitative outputs for this period started in June 2018 and will finish at the end of May 2022.

Local Authority	NPO Period 2018-2022				District/Borough Investment						
	Original 4 Year Target	Avg. /Year	Outputs to May 2020/21	Balance Due	Funds Per Year	Original £/ Output	Used £	£ Bal to C/f	Funding from 2021/22	Total for 2021/22	Request for 2022/23
North Warwickshire Borough Council	40	10	28	12	£2,000	£ 200	£5,600	£ 400	£2,000	£2,400	£2,000

Therefore, we came into the final programme year of the current four-year NPO period with a balance of 12 events due.

Programme Year Booked to Date (2021/22)

Fri 30 Jul 21	LivingRoom (Garlic Theatre)	Warwickshire Young Carers - North (x 3)
Wed 29 Sep 21	Roo'd - Joy Magnet	Coleshill Town Council (x 3)
Wed 06 Oct 21	The Pigeons - Circii	Coleshill Town Council (x 3)
Mon 01 Nov 21	LivingRoom (Garlic Theatre)	Warwickshire Young Carers - North (x3)
Sat 05 Mar 22	Remi Harris Jazz & Blues Duo	Owen Street Community Arts Centre
Fri 29 Apr 22	Blair Dunlop - Trails	Owen Street Community Arts Centre
Fri 20 May 22	Tears of Laughter	Owen Street Community Arts Centre
Total No of Events: 15		

Therefore, currently have a balance of -3 (over target)

Financial Year Booked to Date (2021/22)

Fri 30 Jul 21	LivingRoom (Garlic Theatre)	Warwickshire Young Carers - North (x 3)
Wed 29 Sep 21	Roo'd - Joy Magnet	Coleshill Town Council (x 3)
Wed 06 Oct 21	The Pigeons - Circii	Coleshill Town Council (x 3)
Mon 01 Nov 21	LivingRoom (Garlic Theatre)	Warwickshire Young Carers - North (x3)
Sat 05 Mar 22	Remi Harris Jazz & Blues Duo	Owen Street Community Arts Centre

On a financial year basis, we would apparently have a balance of -1 (over target)



Live & Local - Impacts 2021.doc

Request for Next Year

Please see embedded document that covers general benefits of Live & Local.

Our 2021/22 programme period (June 2021 to May 2022) is the last year of the original ACE NPO period. ACE have declared 2022/23 a transition year into their next NPO four-year period (2023-2027); partly as a reaction to the pandemic and partly to enable organisations to develop their response to their new 'Investment Principles' in time for the NPO application (due spring 2022). We have lodged an outline business plan and fully expect ACE funding to be confirmed for this transition year.

We would like to officially request continued funding from North Warwickshire Borough Council for at least this 2022/23 transition year of £2,250 for 10 events in the Borough. (The current funding for 10 events has been the same for many years)

Recognising that we are likely to get a higher than normal 'churn' within our voluntary promoter network we have embarked on proactive recruitment drive across virtually all our areas. Whilst NWBC funds do not directly underpin the film screening programme, they are vital to us maintaining an active presence in the Borough to support the Big Picture Show screening programme and the Creative People & Places bid to ACE for North Warwickshire.

This paper is in response to the request from North Warwickshire Borough Council for more information with regard to the impact of the Live & Local Community Touring Scheme in the Borough.

Meeting Local Authority Priorities

This network of local voluntary groups supported by Live & Local, helps the Borough Council achieve objectives in its current local plan, in particular “To ensure the satisfactory provision of social and cultural facilities” as well as in the Sustainable Community Strategy 2009-26 vision of North Warwickshire being “*a place where people want to live, work, invest and visit*”.

What has been achieved?

In the three years to March 2020 Live & Local and the North Warwickshire local promoters achieved:

- 52 performances or screenings across 11 communities
- 11 voluntary groups participating using 196 volunteering instances who invested 960+ hours (Approx. value £13,300)
- 2,958 local people entertained. The shows and screenings are particularly accessible to older, younger, disabled, carers and people on lower incomes as they are so local and affordable
- Substantial inward investment from the County Council and Arts Council, England into this arts and community/voluntary support initiative¹
- Approx. £3,000 retained from sales by local communities to reinvest locally
- Live & Local maintained contact during the pandemic through its ‘LivingRoom’ projects with community groups in Baddesley Ensor and the North Warwickshire Young Carers group

The audiences from all ages and backgrounds enjoy top class professional performances which could not otherwise happen without the support available through the scheme. However this is not just about ‘arts’; the benefits of these performances extend far beyond the immediate audiences:

- They are an important part of the social life of these rural and other communities
- They are a focus of social interaction for weeks before and after the show; helping to reduce isolation and loneliness, and getting people out to see, or make, friends
- They involve people of all ages and social backgrounds, including many who do not see themselves as being interested in the arts, and crosses boundaries between them
- They motivate people to volunteer and get involved, and supports the work of village hall committees and other associations
- They are a catalyst for community development, because it always requires people to become active partners in the work
- Provides opportunities for the volunteers to network locally, regionally and nationally

Community and Personal Benefits

Live & Local has previously conducted Promoter surveys across our whole network. The headlines evidence the measurable personal and community development benefits:

- **84% of Promoters felt more connected to their community since volunteering as part of Live & Local** - “This has introduced me to members of the community I have never before met and has involved them in other village activities.”
- **66% of Promoters are more active which helps their mental and physical wellbeing** - “As I am retired, having Live & Local to coordinate gives me positive things to do and think about.”

¹ In 2018-19 attracted inward investment of £7,062 from Arts Council England; • Raising £4,870 in earned income; • Enabling 140 hours of voluntary time (equivalent £2,286 in-kind contribution¹); Therefore, for each pound invested by NWBC, an additional £7.11 was attracted from other sources.

Appendix D

- **63% of Promoters have learnt new skills that they can apply to other areas of their life** - "I have used some of the experience gained on my CV and application forms and after a break of over 20 years I am now back in regular employment."
- **94% of Promoters feel more confident about organising and marketing events for their community** - "Before working with Live & Local we had never had professional performers or any sort of show. It helped us get out of the rut of quiz nights by giving us something a bit classier (we still do the quiz nights though!)" (Priority 1/4)
- **84% of Promoters feel more confident about trying new things and different ways of working** - "I have found the support of Live & Local is first rate, I can't praise it highly enough. This gave me the confidence to promote our first show and keep this a regular annual event."
- 44% of Promoters have been able to attract new volunteers to their group - "*Nothing succeeds like success!*" (Priority 1/4)
- 88% of Promoters have been able to generate greater awareness of their community venue(s) - "*The Village Hall is now used a great deal more.*"
- **75% of Promoters felt that taking part in Live & Local has helped to strengthen local identity and community spirit** - "*The older members of the community really appreciate getting to see live show so close to home and easy to get to.*"
- **100% of Promoters have provided opportunities for local people to enjoy new experiences** - "Every show we have put on has attracted high praise and being able to walk 5 minutes to get live music and a bar can't be bad in a village with no pub or other community centre." (P1)

Note: Some Promoters commented that Live & Local had also enabled them to invest skills that they had developed in other areas of their lives back to their community.

Some Local Quotes

"The shows, altogether, have brought in new tranches of locals and have raised the profile of the village hall and its influence in the community. The shows have also attracted people from surrounding towns and villages who go away impressed by our active and friendly community. The shows have also created dialogue and networking between us and other villages who have staged shows." Live & Local N Warks Voluntary Promoter

"I never tire of telling people what wonderful shows we get "on our doorstep!" I sold a ticket to an elderly lady today who was brimming with anticipation at getting out for an affordable evening without having to struggle into the city or find a group of friends to go with – she can just potter down the road, have a glass of wine and make new friends, young and old, in the village!" N Warks Voluntary Promoter

"It [Live & Local] has sharpened our operation, licensing and ticket sales" N Warks Voluntary Promoter

"It is a milestone in the ongoing revival of the village hall." Live & Local N Warks Voluntary Promoter

Community Participation

The North Warwickshire Promoter network is one of the most supportive and active across our 35 local authority areas and are aware and appreciative of the Borough's support. Since April 2003 thirty voluntary groups have taken part and these are the community groups who have taken part in the three years to March 2020:

Austrey Village Hall Committee
Baddesley Ensor Parish Council
Coleshill Town Council
Fillongley Big Picture Show
Fillongley Village Hall Committee
Hurley Community Association
Maxstoke PCC
Nether Whitacre Village Hall Cttee
Owen Street Community Arts Centre
Warwickshire CAVA & Big Local
(North Warwickshire Borough Council)

North Warwickshire Allotment Federation Annual Report 2021

Another lockdown or at least cautious year. However, that did not prevent us from undertaking our annual competition and judging went ahead in a responsible manner with the assistance of Barry Tuck. Prizes were distributed with most being presented at the produce show in September.

Held at the Church End Brewery in Ridge Lane, the show was hugely successful and enjoyed by all who attended. The sun shone on us and there were a variety of stalls and the produce competition tent for people to look around. In all, the day raised £350.32 for local charities and was divided equally between the Salvation Army Christmas toy appeal in Nuneaton, and the Atherstone food bank.

We are planning to hold an AGM in January although this may need to be carried out via Skype or in some other socially distanced format. The committee are still exploring options for a low cost but informative and easy to use web site. This will serve as an invaluable aid in maintaining contact with allotment sites across North Warwickshire and allow us to obtain more feedback regarding the needs and wants of our members. A trip is being discussed for the coming year and ideas for a destination will be sought at the AGM. Last year's grant, of £500 enabled us to cover the cost of the awards trophies as well as setting some aside for the new website and subsidising the proposed trip.

During this year support and guidance was provided to one site regarding the implementation of Covid-19 restrictions. Additionally, advice was provided to the committee of another site regarding a matter of members not adhering to site rules. We believe a successful resolution is in sight.

For the coming year we hope to welcome a return to a full-scale allotment competition and separate awards evening. These will probably need to be scheduled during the warmer months in case we need to hold them outdoors. We continue to explore various methods of promoting the benefits of allotment and leisure gardening with a particular emphasis on the health and wellbeing benefits. It is hoped that we shall also be able to provide links to general and mental health support services via our website.

North Warwickshire First Responders Year End Report

Below is a breakdown of our SLA reporting information.

Number of First Responders. We now have 8 responders with another 2 awaiting training to commence in the new year.

All responders have now attended yearly update training as required by the ambulance service.

Number of First Aiders. We have 2 first aiders who help at events where required.

Number of call outs 369 call out up to the 31st October 2021 call out up from 298 the year before. This will be down to many factors increased need for ambulances, more higher priority calls, and having 3 cars covers a bigger area and more patients.

Number of vehicles. We now have 3 up 1 from last year.

Number of events supported. 4 events supported this year so far with 3 more to come, they are

- Atherstone Car Show
- Bike Time Trials
- Michael Drayton Junior School Firework Display
- Roundtable Nuneaton Firework Display
- **Dickens Night**
- **Atherstone Christmas Market**
- **Youth Group Firework Display Arley**

Maintenance undertaken to defibrillator units such as battery replacement or pad replacement due to the defibrillator being used.

- Replaced 5 sets of out of date pads
- Replaced 1 set of opened pads after an activation
- Replaced 1 battery
- Services for all cars and MOT
- Servicing of the Zoll blood pressure, spO2 and ECG machines
- Replaced the in car terrifix as it needs a new screen as the old one is out of date
- Replaced and updated in car storage in new 3rd car which was donated to the group at no cost.
- New uniforms

Final accounts are currently been completed and will be available online through the charity commission shortly.

A rough break down of cost are as follows

£1200 yearly fuel costs

Insurances £2700

Service, MOT and AA cover £1000

Equipment Servicing and replacement £800

Uniform cost £300

Admin costs £250

New equipment £500

As you can see from the documentation the money applied for last year is vital and we would like to apply again this year for the grant. Plans for this year is to complete the agreement for NWBC to take over the ownership and management of 6 defibrillators which are currently owned by the council to help reduce the council yearly spend on this matter, it will ensure they are maintained, monitored and replaced where needed. The funding we get through the grant will ensure we can do this therefore freeing up vital funds for the council to spend elsewhere. This is so important to us as a charity as this will not only help the council it will help out community as this money will be used elsewhere to help out communities.

Agenda Item No 8

Community and Environment Board

14 March 2022

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies - Progress Report

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report informs Members of the progress made in respect of delivery against the priorities set out in the North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033) and the adopted Playing Pitch Strategy (2018 to 2031).

Recommendation to the Board

- a That Members note and comment upon the progress made in respect of the implementation of the priorities of the North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033) and the Playing Pitch Strategy (2018 to 2031); and,
- b That the Board considers and comments upon the principle of the Authority entering into an agreement with Piccadilly Community Association, through which it could assume responsibility for the management and maintenance of a Memorial Garden within part of Piccadilly Sports Field, prior to the possible consideration of this matter at a future meeting of the Resources Board.

2 Consultation

- 2.1 Consultation has taken place with relevant Members and any comments received will be reported at the meeting.

3 Introduction

- 3.1 As Members are aware, the Board formally adopted the North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033) at its meeting held in January 2020. The Playing Pitch Strategy was adopted by the Board at its meeting held in January 2019. This report provides an update on progress in respect of delivery against the priorities identified in both documents.

4 **Service Priorities**

4.1 **Improvement, Maintenance and Cleanliness**

Atherstone Sports Club

- 4.1.1 Members are aware that, in 2018, the Authority determined to enter into a Tenancy at Will with Atherstone Sports Club in respect of its use of part of Royal Meadow Drive Recreation Ground. Further to a request received from the Club and after consideration by this Board, the Resources Board, at its meeting held in November 2021, granted permission for Atherstone Sports Club to enter into a long-term (30 years) lease in respect of its management, development, maintenance and use of part of the Recreation Ground. An initial draft of the lease has been shared with Atherstone Sports Club and will be used as the basis for the negotiation of the final agreement between the two parties.
- 4.1.2 The Board is also aware of the difficulty the Sports Club had with its initial contractor appointed to undertake levelling work at the site to enable the creation of additional sports pitches. The Club has now appointed a different contractor to rectify the problems caused at the Recreation Ground. This work has addressed the issues at the southern end of the site and has provided the Club with much needed additional playing pitch space. Further work is required on the northern section of the Recreation Ground to enable regular play where the soil has a higher clay content and is currently prone to flooding in wet conditions. The Club has been working with Birmingham County Football Association, through its Power Pitches programme, to address these issues with a view to bringing the whole area into use for the 2022/23 season.
- 4.1.3 Additionally, the Sports Club has been finalising a planning application in respect of the provision of proposed ancillary facilities and has held initial discussions with consultants with a view to appointing a project manager for the facility development aspects of the project.

Boot Hill Recreation Ground, Grendon

- 4.1.4 Members are aware that the sports pitch improvement works at the site were completed in November 2020, after which the Recreation Ground has been further secured against damage from vehicular incursion through the provision of bow top fencing around the perimeter of the car park and new site signage deterring unwanted behaviour. In furtherance of needs identified in the Playing Pitch Strategy, the site currently provides one adult and two junior pitches, which enables regular play by two adult and two junior girls' football teams.

- 4.1.5 The Board has previously been informed of the various options available to support the provision of on-site ancillary accommodation. The only affordable option is to address the subsidence and repair the existing brick-built pavilion. Following receipt of a structural engineer's report, quotes are being sought for the provision of the required work. Due to the nature of this specialist undertaking, however, it is proving to be difficult to find available contractors that can deliver the specified improvements. Nevertheless, progress is being made and it is currently anticipated that work can begin on the pavilion during the summer months, which will avoid any disruption to the football teams during their playing season.
- 4.1.6 Following the approval received from the Resources Board last September, a Tenancy at Will has been agreed with Grendon Football Club and colleagues within the Legal Section are preparing the document for signatures. This agreement will demonstrate the commitment and security of tenure needed to access smaller grants for the provision of items such as maintenance equipment that will enable Grendon Football Club to become self-sustaining at the site.

Art Challenge

- 4.1.7 The Warwickshire "Our Spaces" Project is being funded by the Getting Building Fund and Warwickshire County Council. The Warwickshire Art Challenge (Our Spaces) is designed to help encourage shoppers and visitors back on to the high streets after the pandemic, by using public realm art-based interventions. It is being led by Warwickshire County Council, working in partnership with the boroughs and districts. The project is fully funded (including the maintenance and decommissioning of the installations) through a combination of CWLEP grant (£194,000 Getting Building Fund) and the WCC Place Shaping Fund (£150,000).
- 4.1.8 A total of eight temporary (three to four years) installations will be created and installed across the county. Initial consultation was completed to form the artist's brief for each design, and the final designs have been considered by the community and local councils. As part of the project, Warwickshire County Council has commissioned an art sculpture to be created in Abbey Green Park, Polesworth. The commission will be delivered by a specialist place curator, Creative Giants. The project is intended to deliver functional place interventions that provide the local community with an exciting, visually interesting and dynamic new space in which to "dwell".

4.2 Safety and Security

4.2.1 As previously reported to the Board, all of the Borough Council's recreation grounds have been risk assessed in respect of their potential vulnerability to attract unwanted vehicular incursions. Further to advice subsequently received from Warwickshire Police's Crime Prevention Design Advisor, the following measures have been taken to try and protect these important public spaces:

- Higher security padlocks have been ordered and will be installed at all of the Authority's recreation grounds by the end of March 2022
- Additional pull-up anti-ram bollards have been installed at Brett's Hall Recreation Ground in Ansley Common, as well as Hurley and Wood End Recreations
- Palisade fencing has been installed to the boundary of a wooded area between Sycamore Crescent, New Arley, and Hill Top Recreation Ground
- Heavy duty chain and round locks are now in place at Piccadilly Sports Field to provide added security to the height restriction barrier

4.3 Tree Management

4.3.1 The Green Space Officer (Trees) is responsible for the provision of a professional arboricultural service in respect of the Authority's tree stock. This post has been vacant since September 2021. Inspections are currently being completed by arboriculturists at Warwickshire County Council, with the required works being completed by the current contractor, Stump n Grind. Albeit a responsive service, this arrangement has enabled priority tree works to be efficiently undertaken during the autumn and winter months.

4.3.2 From 1 April 2021 through to the end of February 2022, the Borough Council has removed 15 trees from nine sites. Despite the absence of a Green Space Officer (Trees), it is pleasing to be able to report that two tree planting schemes are also being progressed:

- **Local Authority Treescape Fund:** In conjunction with the lead agency, Warwickshire County Council, financial support was secured from the Local Authority Treescape Fund to enable the planting of more than 350 trees in Abbey Green Park, Polesworth, Piccadilly and Wood End. The planting of the trees is currently being undertaken through the service provided by the County authority.

- **Queen's Green Canopy:** This initiative does not provide funding towards Borough/District Council tree planting. Further to a commitment made by this Board, however, the Authority is working with the Parish and Town Councils in Atherstone, Coleshill and Polesworth, in respect of the planting of trees to mark the Queen's Platinum Jubilee. Arboriculturists from Warwickshire County Council are working with Officers to identify the most appropriate locations in which to plant the trees.

4.4 Biodiversity and Climate Change

4.4.1 The Green Space Strategy sets out a number of priorities in respect of the conservation and enhancement of biodiversity through habitat creation and management, to which the Local Nature Reserves Project is making a significant contribution. A report on progress has recently been received from Warwickshire Wildlife Trust and is attached for the Board's information at Appendix A.

...

4.5 Children and Young People

4.5.1 The Green Space Strategy recognises the vital role of open space in helping children and young people to develop skills through play and social interaction and it commits the Authority to supporting the development of a strategic network of play facilities across the Borough. The Play Area Development Programme has enabled the Authority to meet this commitment through the delivery of an associated action plan.

4.5.2 Members will be aware that the Borough Council play areas approved for development in 2021 are those located in:

- Austrey

Work at Holly Bank, Austrey, began on 14 February 2022 and will be finished by mid-March 2022.

- Cole End Park, Coleshill

Work at Cole End Park began on 17 January 2022 and has now been completed. An inspection has been carried out by an external consultant and the site is now fully open for use.

- Piccadilly

Work at Piccadilly is due to start at the end of February and is scheduled to be completed by the end of March.

4.5.3 The Board will also be aware that the Borough Council play areas approved for development in 2022 are those located in:

- Corley
- Hurley
- Abbey Green Park, Polesworth
- Wood End

4.5.4 The associated tender process for these four sites has been completed and contractors have been appointed to undertake the work. Local residents and Ward Members will be consulted on the final designs of the play areas.

4.5.4 The installation of a “pump track” at Ansley Common Recreation Ground is also due to be progressed as part of the approved Play Area Development Programme. Unfortunately, the tender process failed to realise any submissions from potential installation companies and it is understood that this may have been a consequence of the relatively small budget available for this particular undertaking. Officers have undertaken a review of budgetary capacity and are also reviewing the potential to secure external funding to support this project, which would be the first of its kind in the Borough.

4.5.5 Following consultation with local residents, the proactive engagement and support of Ward Members and Hartshill Parish Council, Officers are currently seeking quotations to install a large circular footpath, additional bins and two new benches at Grange Road Recreation Ground. This work is being undertaken outside of the formal Play Area Development Programme but will lead to an important and well received enhancement to the Recreation Ground for people of all ages.

5 Area Priorities

5.1 Curdworth, Hurley and Wood End

5.1.1 Officers have met with representatives from the Piccadilly Community Association, which has drafted plans (Appendix B) for the provision of a Memorial Garden at Piccadilly Sports Field. The proposed garden is intended to mark the village’s mining and armed forces heritage. The Association has secured external funding of £1,200 from Warwickshire County Council towards the provision of the proposed raised beds and hedgehog boxes. The Association is also looking to make two further bids for financial support to provide the required budget to realise the delivery of the appended plans and has reached the second stage of an application for £50,000 to the Heart of England Social Impact Fund to part fund the project. The outcome of this application is expected later this month. The Association has also held discussions with HS2 in respect of seeking support from its Community and Environment Fund to meet the remaining costs of the project.

5.1.2 The larger potential funders may require the granting of a long-term lease to the Community Association in order to provide security of tenure in respect of its management and maintenance of the proposed Memorial Garden. This matter is currently being assessed in conjunction with the Community Association and the potential funding organisations. Whilst permission to grant a lease agreement would be determined by the Resources Board, in the meantime, this Board is asked to consider and comment upon the principle of this course of action, in view of its implications for the conclusions and recommendations of the Green Space Strategy. For clarity, the proposed Memorial Garden would not impact on the operation or the Borough Council's management of the football pitches at the Sports Field.

5.2 Cole End Park, Coleshill

5.2.1 Members will be aware that the Borough Council, in a partnership led by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust, has been successful in securing £37,000 from the Government's Green Recovery Challenge Fund to help improve Cole End Park in Coleshill. The scheme is part of a £705,000 project to transform the Cole Valley in the West Midlands. The related works include the provision of a new gravel footpath, woodland management and the installation of new information boards.

6 Report Implications

6.1 Finance and Value for Money Implications

6.1.1 The financial implications arising directly out of this report are identified within the Green Space Strategy Action and Funding Plan and within the Playing Pitch Strategy. The corresponding actions will be financed through approved budgets, through external funding support or through developer contributions. Indeed, developer contributions are being used to support play-related projects in Austrey, Coleshill and Polesworth.

6.2 Safer Communities Implications

6.2.1 Projects advanced through the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies contribute to community safety by providing well-managed open space and recreation areas that afford opportunities for positive activity.

6.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

6.3.1 There are no legal, data protection or human rights implications arising directly out of this report.

6.3.2 Legal Services will provide further advice as to the terms of any lease that may be granted to Piccadilly Community Association in respect of its proposed development of a Memorial Garden in Piccadilly Sports Field, if this Board supports the principle of such a course of action and if the Resources Board determines to enter into such an agreement.

6.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

6.4.1 Delivery of priorities identified in the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies contributes directly to environmental improvements, enhancement of biodiversity and mitigation of the effects of climate change. It also helps to build sustainable and vibrant communities.

6.5 Human Resources Implications

6.5.1 There are no human resource implications arising directly out of this report.

6.6 Risk Management Implications

6.6.1 There are no direct risks consequent upon the services identified within this report. The activity that is included with the Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies, however, will be risk assessed and appropriate controls put in place, where appropriate.

6.7 Equalities Implications

6.7.1 There are no equalities implications arising from this report. The authority's green spaces and playing pitches are provided for the benefit of the whole community and no group or individual defined by the protected characteristics under the Equality Act will be excluded therefrom.

6.8 Links to Council's Priorities

6.8.1 The North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies have direct and positive links to the following corporate priorities:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

6.8.2 Additionally, implementation of the provisions of the Strategies contributes directly to the attainment of the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy to:

- Raise aspirations, education attainment and skill levels
- Develop healthier communities
- Improve access to services|

The Contact Officer for this report is Becky Evans (719346).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No.	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	North Warwickshire Borough Council	North Warwickshire Green Space Strategy (2020 to 2033)	January 2020
2	Director of Leisure and Community Development	Play Area Development Programme	January 2021
3	Director of Leisure and Community Development	North Warwickshire Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies Progress Report	October 2021

NORTH WARWICKSHIRE LOCAL NATURE RESERVE REPORT - SEPTEMBER 2021 to JANUARY 2022

The following comprises a brief summary of works delivered over the last six months by Warwickshire Wildlife Trust (“WWT”) in connection with Abbey Green Park, Cole End Park, Daffern’s Wood and Kingsbury Meadow Local Nature Reserves (“LNR”s). This complements the report sent in September 2021.

Works across the sites are progressing well and nearing completion. Winter works have started in November and continued until January.

At Daffern’s Wood, winter woodland management works are largely complete. We have continued with the gradual removal of trees in the ‘pit’ and the cutting of a proportion of the bramble. The coppice regime in the centre of the wood and in compartment A has seen over mature hazel shrubs regenerated and allows light down on to the woodland floor. This will benefit the dormant woodland flora this spring. Smaller sycamore have been removed to across further areas of the wood and a small number of hollies along the boundary to reduce the likelihood of spreading as they can become invasive and shade out other plants and trees. Our volunteers enjoy working in the wood and we invite along two local long term volunteers. Local residents are very supportive of our work and we have a high level of engagement whilst on site.

Kingsbury meadow management was completed (with the exception of the woody debris installation) in the autumn with a focus on cutting and removing the arisings from the sedge beds and grassland areas to maintain floristic diversity. The 2 willow arches are now regenerated and tamed! It is proposed that the woody debris installation project be unclaimed for this year and receives further planning and consideration next year.

At Abbey Green; the top meadow there was a mix up which meant it got cut by NWBC and Nature Force raked and removed the cuttings on their visit. Further grassland cutting and raking took place on the island. Two days of reed and vegetation pulling in the channels took place but this task was made difficult by the silty/muddy bed. School engagement with the Trust's Education team in the autumn term took place.

Building on the summer work of Himalayan Balsam pulling, Cole End park grasslands alongside the river Tame have been cut to knee height and two trees have been coppiced in the woodland compartment, bringing light and structure to the plantations. Tree planting after the LYriC funded tree management is planned alongside wildflower plug planting. Local people continue to support our work and we receive many positive comments when on site. We continue a policy of inviting local contacts to work parties and tasks on their local sites.

Finally, the Trust secured funding to run a health and wellbeing project at Daffern’s Wood. Funded by the NHS Coventry & Warwickshire CCG – Winter pressures fund the Trust is delivering 2 x 8-week bush craft courses, between September 2021 and 31st March 2022. The outcomes for the project are to meet increased demand from local people, to promote the uptake of physical health checks and vaccines with all participants and to maintain their wellbeing.

Woodland wellbeing courses, run by colleagues, are also taking place at Cole End Park with a focus on mental health and a return to Daffern’s Wood will occur later in 2022 due to its success.

Below is a breakdown of the volunteer sessions and hours committed for the year 2021/2022 to date along with a few photos of activities across the autumn and winter.

Site	Date	Number of volunteers	Hours	Comments
NF Abbey Green	04/10/2021	3	15	Reed / plant pulling / brush cutting, litter picking
NF Abbey Green	13/10/2021	2	7	Backwater channel; clearance
NF Abbey Green	25/10/2021	4	20	Grassland raking
		Total	42	
NF Cole End Park	03/06/2021	5	35	Balsam pulling
NF Cole End Park	29/07/2021	7	38.5	Balsam pulling
NF Cole End Park	15/11/2021	2	10	Grassland - paths and woodland management
NF Cole End Park	10.1.2022	3	15	Grassland man and tree planting prep
		Total	98.5	
NF Dafferns Wood	02/08/2021	2	5	Variegated yellow archangel pull
NF Dafferns Wood	26/08/2021	7	35	Grassland management
NF Dafferns Wood	27/08/2021	3	11	Scrub management, revisiting regrowth
NF Dafferns Wood	17.1.2022	8	40	Woodland management
NF Dafferns Wood	24.1.2022	3	15	Woodland management
		Total	106	
NF Kingsbury Meadow	16/08/2021	4	22	Grassland management
NF Kingsbury Meadow	27/09/2021	3	15	Sedge bed / grassland / wetland cut
NF Kingsbury Meadow	11/10/2021	4	20	Grassland / wetland management
Tameforce - Cole End Park	20/07/2021	8	40	Balsam pulling
SF Kingsbury Meadow	23/07/2021	4	20	Wet grassland condition survey
		Total	117	
		Total Hours	363.5	
		Days	51.92	
		Volunteer match in £	£5088.16	(based on £98.00 per day based on WCAVA figures)



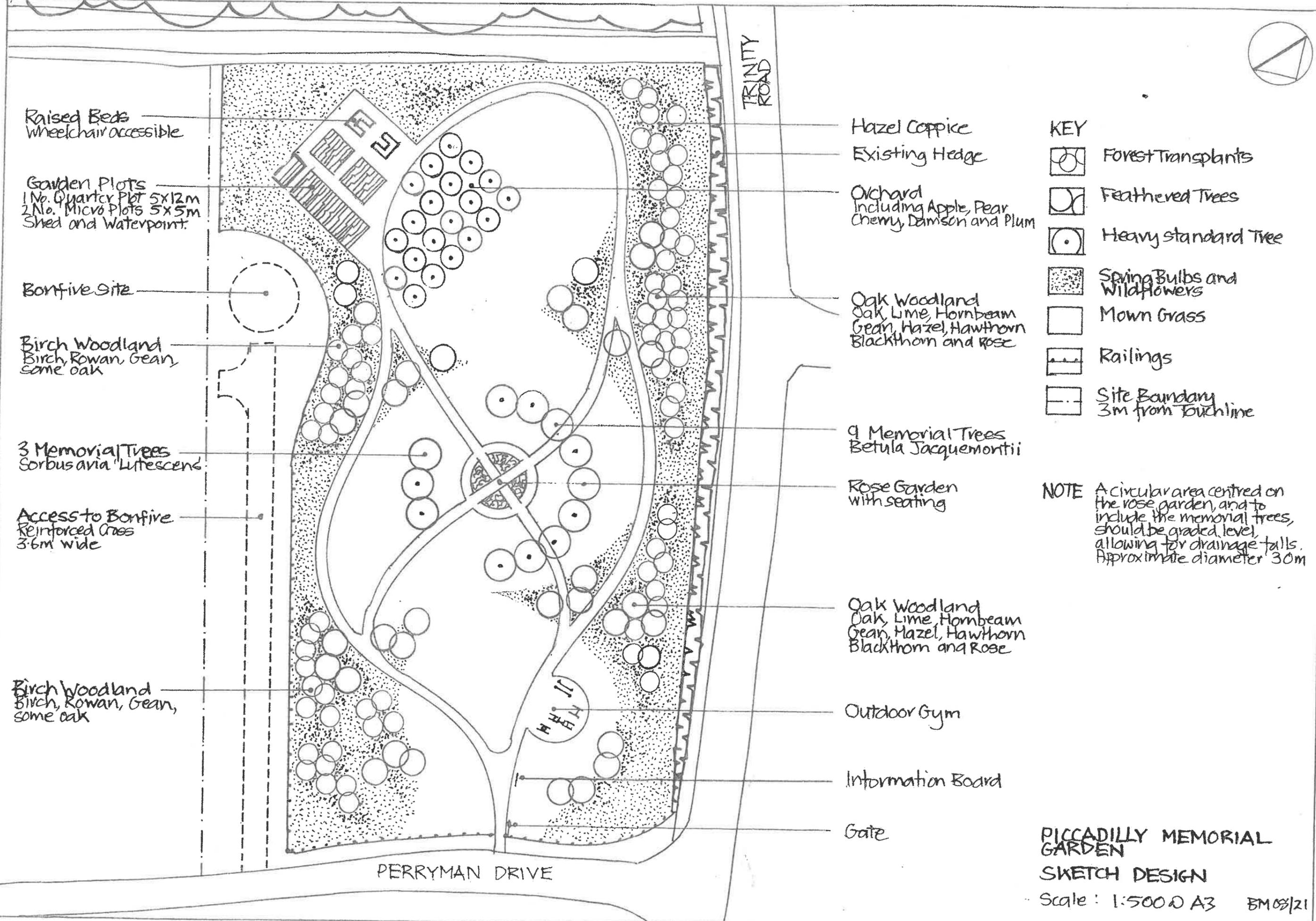
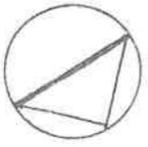
Reed pulling in the channels at Abbey Green Park. Eddie Asbery.



Willow arch maintenance at Kingsbury Meadow. Eddie Asbery



Raking the 'top meadow' at Abbey Green. Eddie Asbery



Raised Beds
Wheelchair accessible

Garden Plots
1 No. Quarter Plot 5x12m
2 No. Micro Plots 5x5m
Shed and Waterpoint.

Bonfire Site

Birch Woodland
Birch, Rowan, Gean,
some oak

3 Memorial Trees
Sorbus aria 'Lutescens'

Access to Bonfire
Reinforced Grass
3.6m wide

Birch Woodland
Birch, Rowan, Gean,
some oak

Hazel Coppice
Existing Hedge

Ochard
Including Apple, Pear,
Cherry, Damson and Plum

Oak Woodland
Oak, Lime, Hornbeam,
Gean, Hazel, Hawthorn,
Blackthorn and Rose

9 Memorial Trees
Betula Jacquemontii

Rose Garden
with seating

Oak Woodland
Oak, Lime, Hornbeam,
Gean, Hazel, Hawthorn,
Blackthorn and Rose

Outdoor Gym

Information Board

Gate

KEY

 Forest Transplants

 Feathered Trees

 Heavy standard Tree

 Spring Bulbs and
Wildflowers

 Mown Grass

 Railings

 Site Boundary
3m from Touchline

NOTE A circular area centred on
the rose garden, and to
include the memorial trees,
should be graded level,
allowing for drainage falls.
Approximate diameter 30m

PICCADILLY MEMORIAL
GARDEN

SKETCH DESIGN

Scale: 1:500 A3

BM08/21

Agenda Item No 9

Community and Environment Board

14 March 2022

Report of the Director of Leisure and Community Development

Leisure Facilities: Local Authority Trading Company

1 Summary

- 1.1 This report provides information in relation to the establishment of a Leisure Facilities Local Authority Trading Company and seeks the Board's approval for the undertaking of such a course of action.

Recommendation to the Board

- a That the Board approves the establishment and registration of a wholly owned Leisure Facilities Local Authority Trading Company; and**
- b That delegated authority be given to the Chief Executive, in consultation with the Chairman, Vice-chairman and Opposition Spokesperson for the Board, to set up a Leisure Facilities Local Authority Trading Company.**

2 Consultation

- 2.1 As the Authority's leisure facilities are of Borough-wide significance this report has been circulated to all Councillors for their consideration. Any comments received will be reported at the meeting.
- 2.2 If the Board determines to approve the establishment of a Leisure Facilities Local Authority Trading Company, it will be necessary to undertake formal consultation with potentially affected staff, including through the Joint Negotiating Forum.

3 Introduction and Background

- 3.1 Members will be aware of the Authority's adoption of its Leisure Facilities Strategy, the production of which had been commissioned as part of an overarching review of leisure, green space and playing pitch provision in North Warwickshire by an external consultant. Within the commission, the consultant was required to prepare a Leisure Facilities Strategy that assessed current and future growth-related needs in respect of indoor leisure provision. Allied to the Leisure Facilities Strategy and a review of operational

performance, the consultant was also required to appraise the options for the future delivery and management of the Leisure Facilities service.

- 3.2 The consultant reviewed a number of operational delivery models and, based on the prevailing circumstances in North Warwickshire at the time, concluded that there were three realistic future options for the Borough Council: Option 1: Continue with the In-House Operation, Option 2: Externalisation and Option 3: Establish a Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo). The scale and scope of future facility provision was identified as being key to informing which of these options would most appropriately serve the Borough Council in the longer-term. Indeed, the consultant stated that the future of the Authority's leisure facilities should ideally be agreed before any change to operational management was introduced.

4 Strategic Outcomes Planning Model

- 4.1 The adopted Leisure Facilities Strategy did not go so far as to identify a clear pathway through which to determine the most appropriate and cost-effective means by which to meet future demand for indoor leisure provision. In 2020, the Board, therefore, approved the undertaking of a Strategic Outcomes Planning Model (SOPM), through which an options appraisal / framework would be undertaken that would inform the decisions required to deliver a long-term and sustainable investment in leisure facility provision. The Model was intended to identify an approach to the provision and future management of effective and viable leisure facilities that would meet both corporate objectives and community demand.
- 4.2 An external consultant was engaged to work with the Authority, and the original intention had been to complete the SOPM process by the autumn of 2020. Almost immediately after the appointment of the consultant, however, the country was hit with the implications of the Coronavirus pandemic, which impacted on the ability of the consultant to complete elements of the commission, most particularly in respect of consultation with partners and stakeholders and the need to engage with marketplace service providers. Indeed, in respect of the desirability of engaging with the marketplace, the Authority has been advised that this element of the process should best be left until the market has stabilised after the pandemic and confidence has returned in respect of the reliability of operational / trading data. Further, whilst the consultant produced an initial draft report on the work undertaken, the financial implications of the pandemic on the Authority were such that it was not possible to accurately assess the viability and sustainability of the outlined facility mix options for future provision in Atherstone and / or Polesworth.

4.3 In the meantime, and as all Councillors are aware, the Borough Council is facing a difficult financial position, such that there is a need to find revenue savings within each of its services, including within the Leisure Facilities function. This challenge is being addressed in a number of ways, including, for example, through the introduction of new services at Coleshill Leisure Centre and, although not the driver for the change, through the new approach to service provision in Polesworth. The establishment of a Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo) is another means by which significant financial savings could be made within the Leisure Facilities service.

5 Local Authority Trading Company (LATCo)

5.1 The last twenty years have witnessed considerable change within the local authority leisure facilities marketplace. A significant number of authorities have outsourced their services to private sector operators, although, as identified above, the pandemic has de-stabilised this market, in the short-term at least. Interestingly, “in-sourcing” has seen the number of services being run in-house slightly increase in recent years. Whilst not a “trend”, this number may continue to increase, in part due to the impact of the Coronavirus pandemic.

5.2 In reviewing the direction set by the adopted Leisure Facilities Strategy, and in view of the impact of the pandemic on the external marketplace, the option and potential advantages of establishing a LATCo through which to manage the Authority’s leisure facilities have been assessed.

5.3 The Borough Council needs its Leisure Facilities service to become more commercial and financially sustainable. Local Authority Trading Companies are bodies that are free to operate as commercial entities, but remain wholly owned by the parent local authority.

5.4 In seeking to consider and understand the tasks and impact that setting up a LATCo would have on the Borough Council’s resources, external advice was sought and a review undertaken of the considerations, actions and timescales involved in this process.

5.5 There are a number of reasons for considering the establishment of a LATCo. In the context of leisure facilities, these issues could include the perceived effectiveness and efficiency of the in-house operation, the condition of any fixed assets and the capital and revenue position of the Authority.

5.6 In the Borough Council's case, the initial drive to review the option to establish a LATCo was informed by the need to realise a saving within the revenue budget. Transferring the management of the Leisure Facilities services to a LATCo affords the potential for a significant financial saving to be made by the Authority. Mandatory 80% relief from National Non-Domestic Rates (NNDR) is available, with the option to grant a further 20% discretionary relief, of which 50% would be met by Central Government. In North Warwickshire's case, this could amount to a saving of as much as £152,090 in respect of its leisure facilities, including Atherstone Memorial Hall, ownership of which would remain with the Authority:

- Atherstone Leisure Complex £56,300
- Atherstone Memorial Hall £8,270
- Coleshill Leisure Centre £83,500
- Polesworth Workspace Units £4,020 (estimate*)

* formal valuation still to be confirmed

5.7 Income on most sporting activities is exempt from VAT, although the VAT on corresponding expenditure is non-recoverable. Where income is significant, therefore, or where it has the potential to grow significantly, the potential for VAT-related savings is also likely to exist if services are delivered through a LATCo. Changing leisure services that are currently standard-rated to VAT exempt status could potentially realise an additional £112,000 in income. Whilst non-recoverable VAT on corresponding expenditure would amount to around £57,000, it would still provide a net benefit in the region of £55,000

5.8 In advancing consideration of the option to establish a LATCo, there are a number of "pillars" that are considered to be critical to the future success of a decision to change existing management and operational arrangements.

- Vision
 - Shared vision between the Borough Council and the LATCo
 - Meeting community need and corporate objectives
 - Mutual trust
 - Strategic planning, including Finance, Human Resources, Legal, Facilities Management, etc.
- Governance
 - Public law duties
 - LATCo company documents
 - Board responsibilities
 - Performance management
- Formal Agreements
 - Contract / lease(s)
 - Specification
 - Funding agreement
 - Board / Member agreement

- Operations
 - Cultural change
 - Business / financial plan
 - Operational systems

6 Vision

6.1 Successful Local Authority Trading Companies have a clear vision. The Borough Council, therefore, would need to be able to express the strategic outcomes that it wants to deliver through the Leisure Facilities service, be they, for example, financial savings and / or improved health indicators, etc. The work undertaken through the SOPM process could help to inform the short and medium-term objectives for the LATCo, including whether or not it should support the Borough Council in finding a solution to its longer-term facility needs.

7 Governance

7.1 The Authority can rely upon Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, which contains the “general power of competence”, and other powers in order to establish a LATCo. There is, however, a need for a (HM Treasury Green Book compliant) business case to be prepared and formally approved by the Borough Council before the LATCo could start to trade.

7.2 If Members determine to establish a LATCo, the Borough Council will be specifying the services to be provided at the leisure facilities. Under these circumstances, the award of a contract to the company would be a procurable contract. In order to award the contract to the company without a procurement competition, the LATCo would need to be structured as a “Teckal” company. To be Teckal compliant the following conditions need to be met:

- The Authority exercises a control over the company that is similar to that it exercises over its own departments
- More than 80% of the activities of the company are undertaken on behalf of the Borough Council (if the company’s sole activity is carrying out the Leisure Facilities function for the Authority, this requirement will be met. It will, however, also have scope to provide limited additional services whilst remaining within this exemption)
- There is no direct private capital participation in the company

7.3 Contracts between a LATCo and the Borough Council can also benefit from exemptions in procurement rules, which could be used to allow a LATCo to obtain certain services from the Council, if appropriate.

7.4 There are a number of different types of LATCo:

- Company Limited by Guarantee with or without share capital (CLG)
- Company Limited by Shares (CLS)

- Community Interest Company (CIC)
- Community Benefit Society (CBS)

7.5 Officers have sought external advice on the most appropriate form of company to meet the needs of the Borough Council. Given that the company would be a wholly owned, “not for profit” organisation, the flexibility and simplicity of a Company Limited by Guarantee, which also has the benefit of limited member liability, is considered to be the most appropriate vehicle through which to establish the LATCo. Under a CLG, the Borough Council would be the sole “member”. At the very least, the following documentation would need to be produced:

- Articles of Association / Constitution
- Member Agreement
- Service Level Agreement – with regard to services provided by the Borough Council to the LATCo
- Leisure Operation Agreement

7.6 Who sits on the Board of the company is a matter for the Borough Council to determine. Members and Officers are permitted to sit as Directors of companies. In determining this matter, the Authority would need to take the following into account:

- It is appointing people to operate and make decisions about a business
- Directors are likely to require the following skills
 - Leisure management
 - Financial skills
 - Business experience
- There will be conflicts of interest between being a Director of a LATCo and making formal decisions within the Council that relate to the company

7.7 Members and / or Officers who might be expected to make decisions about the company within the Council, therefore, would find it to be extremely difficult to undertake the role of a Director.

7.8 The Borough Council would need to monitor and hold the LATCo to account. This is necessary to ensure that the company delivers the outcomes required by the Authority. Conversely, the LATCo must be able to demonstrate an appropriate degree of independence from the Borough Council in order to benefit from “Eligible Body” status to receive certain tax benefits. This requires an ability to transact at a distance, with Directors making decisions in an “independent” capacity. It may be appropriate, therefore, for Members to undertake the “Shareholder” role within the Council and not sit on the LATCO’s Board of Directors, which would enable the Directors to make decisions (within their remit) in the best interests of the company and also reduce the risk of Members having conflicting interests. Indeed, Councillors are in the best position to hold the performance of the LATCo to account. In this regard, consideration should be given to the following:

- Establishing a Member Board to review performance
- Identifying a resource within the Authority to review performance
- Agreeing a set of key performance indicators (KPIs), with baseline data provided

8 Formal Agreements

- 8.1 There would be a need for a formal contract, which obliges the company to provide a Leisure Facilities service, a service specification and a right for the LATCo to occupy the specified leisure facilities. The Borough Council would also need to ensure that any staff transferring from the Authority to the LATCo retain certain pension protections. In this regard, the transfer of the Leisure Facilities service into the company would result in the applicability of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). Where TUPE applies there are obligations to inform and consult with affected employees and employees have the right to transfer with their existing employment contracts and continuity of service.
- 8.2 There are further key considerations that would need to be determined between the Borough Council and the LATCo, including:
- The contract term, which needs to be co-terminous with any lease agreements
 - Asset risks:
 - The LATCo will not be able to accept significant maintenance risks associated with the sites, most particularly at Atherstone Leisure Complex and Memorial Hall
 - Asbestos works, responsibility for which will probably need to remain with the Borough Council
 - Utilities. The tariff risks will need to be agreed in view of current cost volatility
 - Trading risk, given that the LATCo has no other business activities / contracts through which to share risk
 - Joint use agreements, which would need to be novated to the LATCo
- 8.3 The Borough Council would need to develop a service specification against which the LATCo would deliver the Leisure Facilities service. The specification would set out the scope of the service and is important for three principal reasons:
- To set out the strategic outcomes that the Authority expects the company to deliver
 - To set out the minimum operating standards expected in delivery
 - To clarify the parameters within which the LATCo would manage the facilities, such as minimum opening hours, concessionary pricing policy, staffing arrangements

- 8.4 The Borough Council may not want to commit to a longer-term funding agreement with the LATCo, preferring instead to have more flexibility and control over its budget. Nevertheless, the LATCo should be required to produce a five-year business plan, which would provide a level of surety to both the company and the Authority.
- 8.5 Both the Borough Council and the LATCo would need to consider their requirements for and of each support service (Finance, Human Resources, Property, IT and Communications). There may be a need to establish Service Level Agreements, which set out the nature of any service to be delivered to the LATCo, over what period and at what cost.
- 8.6 In assuming that the LATCO is established as a company limited by guarantee, it is advisable to have a Member's Agreement held between the Borough Council and the company. This Agreement will provide visibility about the Council's role and clarity over decision making, for example in order to approve changes to the company business plan or the approval of contracts above a certain value. The Agreement should also set out the reporting arrangements / frequency to which the Borough Council would expect the LATCo to adhere.

9 Operations

- 9.1 The Borough Council would need to determine a suitable management structure for the new company and to this end it would be necessary to produce a skills matrix and undertake a skills audit for the senior team. This team would need to further develop its commercial mindset and additional core skills that may be required to strengthen the business could include:
- Company finance
 - Commercial skills
 - Sales and marketing
 - Performance management
- 9.2 As previously identified, the LATCo should be required to produce a business plan, which will include business, financial and marketing proposals. This will not be a straight-forward undertaking, in view of the age and condition of Atherstone Leisure Complex and Memorial Hall, the recently changed approach to provision in Polesworth, the impact of the pandemic and the volatility of certain costs, including utilities. There are risks associated with these factors and the Borough Council and the LATCo would need to agree on the approach to be taken to the planning process, so as not to undermine the opportunity for company success.
- 9.3 Financial planning would need to be carried out by both the Borough Council and the LATCo. The Borough Council would need to assess the impact of the LATCo on its financial position:
- Tax / VAT / NNDR advice

- Impact on support services

9.4 The new company, too, would require advice and support in respect of the following:

- Tax / VAT / NNDR
- Cashflow and cash management
- Initial financial position / investment
- The extent and cost of services to be provided by the Council
- Reserves and contingency arrangements

9.5 The LATCo would need to set up its operating procedures, but this should be straight forward, given that it is currently managing the service. The most significant changes are likely to occur in respect of the marketing, branding and communication of the service.

10 **Proposed Action**

10.1 Careful project management would be required to effectively form a new company and to transition services accordingly. Several key tasks can be undertaken concurrently, although some are dependent upon the identification and allocation of risk and responsibility, which will be set out in the contractual terms and conditions.

10.2 The purpose of this report, however, is to seek authorisation to establish and register a wholly owned LATCo to manage the Leisure Facilities service on the basis outlined herein, a process which could take around 12 months to complete.

11 **Report Implications**

11.1 **Finance and Value for Money Implications**

11.1.1 As highlighted in paragraph 5.6, providing leisure services through a Trading Company would allow business rates savings of around £152,090 to be made within the service. The Borough Council currently picks up 40% of the cost of any discretionary relief given out. If a full 20% of discretionary relief was awarded, the cost to the Council would be £12,167. If the Authority remains above its baseline funding level, then this would reduce the additional rates that the Council could retain. If the Council was to fall below its baseline funding level, then it would be a direct cost.

11.1.2 The Council could currently choose to treat its leisure services as exempt from VAT and retain the additional income. This option has not been taken, as it would take the Authority over its partial exemption limit for VAT and would mean that the VAT on all expenditure by every Council service could not be reclaimed. This would lead to additional costs of around £90,000 per annum on revenue activity. Additional costs on capital expenditure would vary according to the capital programme. Whilst a Trading Company would also have VAT regulations with which to comply and would be unable to

recover all VAT on expenditure, the net impact would still be beneficial at around £55,000.

11.1.3 Other divisions currently provide services to the Leisure Facilities, with many support staff charging only a proportion of their time to the Facilities. These staff would remain with the Council. If the Trading Company buys services from the Council, there will be limited impact on support services. If, however, the Trading Company was to obtain services elsewhere, the Council would either have to absorb the additional support costs or would need to streamline the relevant support services.

11.2 Safer Communities Implications

11.2.1 Leisure facilities contribute to community safety through the provision of well-managed indoor and outdoor leisure and recreation services that are safe by design and afford opportunities for positive activity.

11.3 Legal, Data Protection and Human Rights Implications

11.3.1 The Borough Council can rely upon Section 1 of the Localism Act 2011, which contains the “general power of competence”, in order to establish a LATCo, together with section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972. The Local Government and Housing Act 1989 regulates how local authority companies operate and sets out a number of criteria that must continue to be met whilst such companies operate. The main body of this report details a number of specific legal requirements that would need to be met in order for the Authority to set up the company and for the LATCo to operate successfully and within the law. Additional, ongoing advice will be provided to ensure that any LATCo is set up in a way that is beneficial to the Borough Council and enables it to achieve its objectives.

11.3.2 There are no immediate data protection or human rights implications arising directly out of this report.

11.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

11.4.1 The provision of a sustainable, fit-for-purpose portfolio of well managed leisure facilities has a positive impact on the health and wellbeing of individuals and communities by providing opportunities for leisure and recreation activities and by contributing to an improved quality of life.

11.5 Human Resources Implications

11.5.1 As identified in the report, the Authority would need to ensure that any staff transferring from the Borough Council to the LATCo retain certain pension protections. In this regard, the transfer of the Leisure Facilities service into the company would result in the applicability of the Transfer of Undertakings (Protection of Employment) Regulations 2006 (TUPE). Where this is the case, there are obligations to inform and consult with affected employees and

employees have the right to transfer with their existing employment contracts and continuity of service

11.6 Risk Management Implications

11.6.1 The corporate risk management process identifies and scores risks associated with the provision, management and maintenance of leisure facilities. As detailed in the main body of the report, the process through which a LATCo would be established and the services transferred thereto would require the detailed assessment of risk at a number of key stages in order to ensure the maintenance of the best interests of both the Borough Council and the new company. This process will help to ensure that informed decisions can be made in respect of the most appropriate means by which to sustainably meet and manage the leisure-related needs of the local community.

11.7 Equality Implications

11.7.1 It is intended that Local Authority Trading Company management and operation of the Authority's Leisure Facilities service would ensure continued equality of access to sustainable, good quality leisure opportunities.

11.8 Links to Council's Priorities

11.8.1 The proposal to establish a wholly owned LATCo will have direct and positive links to the corporate priorities in respect of:

- Safe, liveable, locally focused communities
- Prosperous and healthy
- Sustainable growth and protected rurality
- Efficient organisation

11.8.2 It is also intended that management of the Borough Council's Leisure Facilities service through a LATCo would contribute directly to the priorities of the Sustainable Community Strategy, namely:

- Raising aspirations, educational attainment and skill levels
- Developing healthier communities
- Improving access to services

The Contact Officer for this report is Simon Powell (719352).

Background Papers

Local Government Act 1972 Section 100D, as substituted by the Local Government Act, 2000 Section 97

Background Paper No	Author	Nature of Background Paper	Date
1	Assistant Director (Leisure and Community Development)	Draft Leisure Facilities, Green Space and Playing Pitch Strategies	February 2018
2	Chief Executive and Corporate Director - Resources	Trading Company	February 2021

Agenda Item No 10

Community and Environment Board

14 March 2022

Report of the Corporate Director – Streetscape

Climate Change Update

1 Summary

- 1.1 Following the Council's declaration of a Climate Emergency, this report updates Members on progress and next steps.

Recommendations to the Board

- a That Members note the contents of the report, and;
- b That Members endorse the collective aim to reach Net Zero by 2050

2 Background

- 2.1 The Council declared a Climate Emergency at the Extraordinary Full Council meeting on 22 October 2019. As part of that declaration, the Council committed to taking steps to tackle the issue and confirmed that action is required to assess the impact the Council's activities have on the environment and the climate and to take steps to ensure that the level of the impact is reduced, as far as is practicable, with the ultimate aim of carbon neutrality.

3 Progress update

- 3.1 A baseline audit has been undertaken to identify the Council's current emissions. The results of this audit provide a hierarchy of areas to focus on first. The results are as follows:
- Fleet vehicles 39%
 - Heating 33%
 - Electricity 23%
 - Water 2%
 - Transmission and distribution losses 2%
 - Staff travel 1%
- 3.2 Officers are making good progress on the Council's Climate Change Action Plan (detailed in section 4).
- 3.3 Climate change implications are considered within Board reports.

- 3.4 A Climate Champion has been appointed in each Division to oversee how the activities, policy development and decisions of that Division contributes to the Council's overall climate objectives.
- 3.5 Officers are working closely and meeting regularly with neighbouring authorities to share best practice and ensure, wherever practicable, a consistent and integrated approach to tackling climate change.
- 3.6 The Council is actively promoting and supporting access to climate change grant funding for community groups.
- 3.7 A webpage has been set up on the Council's website to provide information and guidance to residents about climate change. This information will be expanded and, once published, will include the Climate Change Action Plan and related updates.
- 3.8 The Coventry and Warwickshire COP26 conference took place on Friday 11 March 2022, to which North Warwickshire Borough Council is a signatory. The purpose of the conference was:
- 3.8.1 To achieve a mutual understanding of the current landscape and a commitment of collaboration from critical public service bodies across the Coventry and Warwickshire sub-region, to ensure that, collectively, our plans are backed by a realistic and deliverable trajectory to reach net zero by 2050, and set out a shared public service commitment for the city and county with the following items:
- Agreements endorsed by the seven Councils;
 - Agreements backed by major partnership organisations; and
 - Pledges of commitment from significant business and voluntary/community sector bodies in the sub-region to play their part in achieving net zero.
- 3.8.2 To share good practice, identify the priorities and actions as well as the barriers and solutions to accelerate the sub-region's progress towards net zero and to develop collective confidence and ambition to help the city and county mitigate the risks of climate change and harness the opportunities.

4 Climate Change Action Plan

- 4.1 The Council's Climate Change Action Plan is an evolving document and will be updated continuously during the draft stages and over the coming years. The plan is currently split into the following key focus areas:
- Travel and transport
 - Waste
 - Our buildings (excluding housing)
 - Our housing
 - Forward Planning and Development Management
 - Supporting communities
 - Biodiversity and open space management
- 4.2 Each focus area details:
- What we want to achieve
 - Achievements so far
 - How targets will be achieved
 - Adaptation
 - Further reading
- 4.3 Adaptation (preparing for climate change and the impact it will have on people, the economy and the environment) is a key part of the action plan.
- 4.4 Examples from the action plan include:
- Evaluating the option of switching from diesel to hydrotreated vegetable oil (HVO) in the majority of fleet vehicles which has the potential to achieve significant CO₂ reductions as well as removing other air pollutants and particulates.
 - A case study of the Sherbourne MRF which will provide numerous benefits for North Warwickshire and the wider region.
 - Plans to reduce carbon emissions from fossil fuels within our buildings and climate change adaptation of our buildings to ensure they remain suitable.
 - Achievements in housing retrofitting and new builds and how we plan to continue this to achieve low or net zero new homes in line with national legislation.
 - The achievements by Forward Planning and Development Management teams and areas of focus for the short and long term.
 - Our ongoing work to achieve biodiversity net gain, for example through Local Authority Treescape Funding involving tree planting in Polesworth, Piccadilly and Wood End.
- 4.5 Reducing the Council's carbon impact will reduce air pollution and in turn improve air quality. The Climate Change Action Plan will consider air quality and how additional benefits can be achieved though linking these areas.

5 Next Steps

- 5.1 There will be ongoing discussion with the Climate Change Member Group and Council divisions including Housing, Leisure and Community Development and Finance to further develop the Climate Change Action Plan.
- 5.2 A draft Climate Change Action Plan will be brought to the next meeting of the Community and Environment Board in May for the Board to comment on and send back to the Member Group for finalisation.
- 5.3 A final version of the Climate Change Action Plan will then be brought to the July meeting of the Community and Environment Board for adoption.

6 Report Implications

6.1 Financial Implications

- 6.1.1 There is no specific budget allocated for climate change related activity. It is expected that individual Divisions will account for climate change measures within existing budgets and as part of “business as usual”. Ultimately, the aim is that climate change mitigation and carbon reduction should become an integral part of the Council’s activities, policies and procedures.

6.2 Risk Management Implications

- 6.2.1 The risks of climate change are well documented. The Council needs to take action to ensure that those risks are reduced as much as possible for North Warwickshire’s residents.

6.3 Equality Implications

- 6.3.1 In terms of equalities implications, the actions set out and further proposed in this report do not affect any individual, group or community more than any other. Individual equality impact assessments will be considered as part of any key policy and service change decisions.

6.4 Environment, Climate Change and Health Implications

- 6.4.1 Tackling climate change is vital to ensure a sustainable Environment.

The Contact Officer for this report is Olivia Childs (719267).

Health and Wellbeing Working Party Minutes

15 February 2022

Present: Cllr. M Humphreys (Chairperson), Cllr. Chambers, Cllr. S. Smith, Cllr. Hancocks, Becky Evans, Matthew Green, Dorothy Barratt (all NWBC), Yasser Din (Public Health England), Mike Slemensek (WCC), Alison Thompson (WCAVA), Michael Towers (CCG), Claire Taylor (WCC)

Apologies for Absence: Cllr. Davey, Simon Powell, Russell Simkiss (NWBC)

Item	Notes	Action
2	<p>Minutes of the Last Meeting (16 September 2021)</p> <p>The minutes of the meeting held on 16 September 2021 were agreed as an accurate record of the proceedings.</p>	
3	<p>Public Health / JSNA Update</p> <p>A draft action plan has been produced and a meeting has been arranged to progress the JSNA work.</p>	
4	<p>Social Prescribing</p> <p>Michael Towers gave a presentation to the Working Party.</p> <p>Cllr. Humphreys requested the details of the Link Workers to share information on local groups. Michael to follow up with Health Exchange.</p>	Michael Towers
5	<p>WCAVA</p> <p>Alison Thompson gave an update to the Working Party, detailing the work of WCAVA from 1 April to 31 December 2021:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • 76% of work in North Warwickshire related to the health and wellbeing of residents • 55 new volunteers had been registered, with 81 new volunteering opportunities promoted • WCAVA worked with 140 local groups, mostly related to group development and the acquisition of funding <p>Recovery of groups after COVID was raised as an issue due to staff / volunteer capacity.</p>	
6	<p>Air Quality</p> <p>Matthew Green gave a presentation to the Working Party.</p> <p>Councillors raised concerns that Fine Particulates (PM) are not currently monitored. Cllr. Humphreys requested that Environmental Health email the details of the resource / staffing issues that are preventing the work from taking place.</p>	MG
7	<p>Leisure Facilities Update</p> <p>Deferred until the next meeting.</p>	

Item	Notes	Action
8	<p>Warwickshire County Council Localities Update</p> <p>Information on the Health Equity Group was shared with the Working Party.</p> <p>A co-ordinator for the Health Champions is being funded through Public Health. Mike S to send through more information for circulation to the Working Party.</p> <p>16 requests have been received relating to potential North Warwickshire projects through the County Councillor Grants Scheme.</p> <p>£6k of funding has been identified to support groups working to tackle social isolation and loneliness. Conversations are taking place with BE and AT (WCAVA) to identify appropriate groups.</p>	<p>MS</p> <p>BE / AT</p>
9	<p>Health and Wellbeing Action Plan</p> <p>There are currently no plans to re-open the Health Store in Nuneaton or Atherstone, but feedback from young people suggests that they are happy to attend appointments in a clinical setting.</p> <p>The Commissioner from WCC is to be invited to a future meeting of the Working Party</p>	<p>BE</p>
10	<p>Budget</p> <p>A briefing note on Story Of Place was presented to the Working Party, which requested a £3k contribution for a £45k project being co-ordinated by WCC to produce four films that reflect assets within communities. This was rejected, with a request for more information.</p>	<p>BE</p>
11	<p>Dementia Strategy</p> <p>Due to time constraints, a brief update was given by Claire Taylor, but a full presentation will be given at a future meeting of the Working Party.</p>	<p>CT</p>
12	<p>Feedback from Relevant Partnership Meetings</p> <p>Deferred due to time constraints</p>	
13	<p>Any Other Business</p> <p>Deferred due to time constraints</p>	
	<p>Future Meeting Dates</p> <p>TBC</p>	