

Woodley Town Council

Annual Report 2009/10



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A message from the Town Mayor

Welcome to Woodley Town Council's Annual Report for 2009/10. Within this report we aim to let you know about our achievements and targets for this year and how we performed against previous targets.

The Town Council has always been community focussed and is here to serve and represent the residents of Woodley. We are proud of the services we provide locally and this report provides information about these. We are always pleased to hear from residents about your comments, queries and concerns to enable us to deliver the best service possible to you.

If you would like to comment on this report or any aspect of our services or your town please contact your local councillor or the Town Council offices.

CLlr Kay Gilder
Town Mayor

Introduction

Welcome to the Council's Annual Report 2009/10. Since 1999 the Council has published a Best Value Performance Plan each year, as required under the Local Government Act 1999. Since 2008 this has no longer been a requirement and an Annual Report, along similar lines, will now be produced each year.

In this report we have provided information about our services and set out our objectives and targets for the coming year. We have also reported on our performance measures and whether targets were met. Although no annual report was published last year we have included the relevant performance information and target outcomes from that period.

Woodley Town Council – An Overview

Woodley Town Council came into being in 1974, gaining town status as part of the wholesale local government changes that year. Before then, Woodley and Sandford Parish Council had been in existence for over 70 years covering a larger area than it does now. The town of Woodley has grown enormously over the past 30 years. Latest figures put the population at 26,500 with an estimated 10,000 households and comparable in size to the towns of Windsor, Newbury and Wokingham. Over the past thirty years the Town Council has extended its services and facilities to provide for the growing community.

The Council, elected every four years, is made up of 25 councillors, representing 9 electoral wards. The last Council elections were held in May 2007.

The Council appoints a Town Mayor and Leader of the Council for the year at its Annual Meeting in May. The Leader's role is to manage the political process, policy and direction of the Council. The Town Mayor provides a figurehead for the Council within the community, officiating at events and acting in an apolitical way on behalf of the Council. Currently the Mayor is Councillor Mrs Kay Gilder, and the Leader, Councillor Mrs Beth Rowland. A list of Town Councillors is attached at **Appendix A**.

All the work the councillors carry out for the Council is voluntary, with expenses only paid for duties outside the town. Although it now has the power, this Council has decided not to pay allowances to its councillors. Councillors' work not only involves attending council meetings and council work outside meetings but also dealing with issues raised by residents, representing the Council on other bodies and generally being involved in community activities.

Much of the business of the Council is delegated to four standing committees, which in turn may delegate to sub-committees or establish working parties/groups to provide advice on particular issues. The minutes of the committees are received by Full Council at the end of each of the five cycles of meetings. A summary of the responsibilities of the committees is attached at **Appendix B**.

All formal meetings of Council are open to members of the public with agendas available at the meeting or from the Town Council offices three working days before the date of the meeting. In addition, and in order to encourage public participation and feedback, the Council holds a Town Forum before each Full Council Meeting which residents may attend to ask questions or make statements to the Council. The Town Electors Meeting, held every March, also provides residents with an opportunity to ask questions of the Council, make statements or raise issues with the Council. A schedule of meeting dates for the coming year is attached at **Appendix C** and further information can be obtained by contacting the Town Council offices.

The Council employs around 100 staff, many of whom are part time. In all, the Council's services and facilities are delivered by the equivalent of 37 full time staff.

Information on the Council staff establishment is attached at **Appendix D**.

Over the past two years improvements in services and facilities have included the following:

We have installed low level fencing around the nature garden in response to residents' safety concerns about the pond.

The safety surfacing at the Memorial Ground play area has been dug out and renewed.

The paddling pool lining has been replaced after the previous lining finally came to the end of its life.

We have succeeded in obtaining ownership of the Rivermead Road play area and have refurbished the grassed area to make it a more usable space for children.

As part of our drive to reduce graffiti on Town Council buildings and in the town generally, designated street art boards have been installed near the youth shelter in Woodford Park as a legitimate canvas for graffiti. Funding for this was obtained with the help of Thames Valley Police and Just Around the Corner installed the boards, adding an additional one following the success of the project. There have been some fantastic works displayed on these boards.

We have renegotiated a further ten year lease with Reading Borough Council for the Reading Road allotment site.

In response to popular demand we have added a further 43 allotment plots at the Reading Road site.

We were successful in receiving a project planning grant from the Parks for People Heritage Lottery Fund and with this developed plans for the refurbishment of Woodford Park and made an application for £1M of funding. Unfortunately this was not successful but the work carried out to develop plans means that the Council now has a programme of refurbishment to follow, as funds become available.

We have increased and improved the disabled and women's toilet provision at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

At Woodford Park Leisure Centre the sports hall floor was replaced and one internal and external wall was rebuilt following damage to the hall following heavy downpours and a subsequent burst pipe during the winter. The Council's insurance arrangements covered the cost of repairing the damage.

At Bulmershe Leisure Centre we have developed a new swimming lesson programme in conjunction with the Amateur Swimming Association. We have also increased the take up of lessons and are approaching saturation.

We have attracted funding to be able to deliver new or more services at our leisure centres including:

Free swimming for 5 – 19 year olds

Street Dancing

Westcoast Sports Disability Club

Healthy eating pilot course

We have provided summer activities for 13 – 18 year olds at reduced rates at both leisure centres.

We have continued our programme of redecoration of the Council's premises including the pool, reception area, corridors and both halls at Bulmershe Leisure Centre, the sports hall at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and the Oakwood Centre.

We have welcomed the Just in the Park café to the Oakwood Centre. The café and catering for clients at the centre is now provided by the JAC Community Interest Company – a not for profit organisation with the aim of offering work experience and volunteering opportunities

to local people as well as supporting local young people with any surpluses generated by the company.

Wokingham Job Support Centre has a regular Tuesday morning session at the Oakwood Centre, providing support and information to local people looking for work.

The agreement for the use of an office at the Oakwood Centre as a base for the Neighbourhood Police Team was finally agreed and the team is able to devote more time to police work in the town as a result.

The Town Council has complied fully with the no smoking legislation and all premises became no smoking premises on 1 July 2007.

We have taken on the maintenance of several new bus shelters around the town. A condition of the shelters being installed was that they be maintained by the town council, rather than become a Wokingham Borough responsibility.

We have improved administration systems at all our sites and updated computers. In particular we have installed a bookings package at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and the planning application consultations and allotments records and procedures are now managed using computer packages.

We have set up and or improved back up systems at all our administrative offices as part of our business recovery plan.

We have changed our fuel contracts to take advantage of lower prices available.

We have worked with Woodley Community Partnership on the Design Statement and the Woodley 2020 Vision, the plans for the town's future.

We continue our ongoing review and improvement of internal procedures and systems:

- Internal audit programme – all issues raised were addressed.
- Personnel policies reviewed and developed in the light of new and changing legislation.
- Insurance cover reviewed and renegotiated.
- Health and Safety training programme in operation.

Over 2009/10 we plan the following improvements:

We plan to further increase the number of plots available for cultivation and to install a toilet at the site.

Following the decision by Wokingham Borough Council to remove the play equipment at Mollison Close play area the Council decided to take over this site and maintain the play equipment to ensure that this provision continued to be available in this part of the town. We hope that this will be finalised in 2009/10.

We will refurbish the paddling pool at Woodford park and progress plans to create a new play area with developers contributions and Playbuilder funding.

We will also be starting a programme of improvement works at the lake and its surrounds with developer contributions funds. We will be seeking further sources of funding to continue the improvements in this area.

We will look for opportunities for funding to develop and extend the youth area at Woodford Park.

We will be investing in new grounds maintenance equipment to maintain outdoor sports areas to a high standard.

As part of our aim to encourage healthy lifestyles we will be increasing sporting opportunities for children with disabilities and encouraging families to take up swimming by offering reduced rates.

We will also be taking part in the government's initiative to provide free swimming to under 16 and over 60 year olds from January 2010 to March 2011.

We will arrange for waste generated at Woodford Park Leisure Centre to be recycled.

We will run a pilot Eat for Health course with Berkshire West PCT

We will also continue discussions with the Health Service with the aim of being part of a GP Referral programme in Woodley.

We will continue to seek ways to attract funding to provide leisure and sports activities at our leisure centres.

We will continue our programme of redecoration at the leisure centres.

We will establish a new agreement for the management of the Inn on the Park, at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

We will replace the roof at Coronation Hall.

We will make arrangements with Reading Credit Union to make their community banking services available at the Oakwood Centre.

We will set up improved systems to manage the Council's assets and centralise the Council's contract arrangements.

We will continue to work on increased efficiency savings across all Town Council sites to ensure that the precept paid by Woodley residents provides value for money.

Woodley Town Council's Overall Objectives

Woodley Town Council is elected by the residents of Woodley and aims to:

- **secure the best possible services and environment for the community of Woodley by:**
 - **representing the interests of Woodley**
 - **providing services directly, subsidised if necessary, where there is a democratic will of Council to do so**
 - **working in partnership**
- **provide accessible, responsive services and to be flexible in meeting community needs**
- **enhance facilities for the local community, in particular by being responsive to expressed needs.**

Our services, objectives and key targets for the coming year

Community Halls

Our objectives in providing this service...

- ◆ To provide meeting rooms and halls to enable and encourage community activities and events to take place locally.
- ◆ To provide halls and rooms at a lower cost to residents, non commercial organisations and individuals and to offset this by different charges to commercial hirers.

The service we provide...

Three halls for use by organisations, community groups and individuals:

Coronation Hall, Headley Road, built in 1955 by public subscription, has always been administered by the Council. The accommodation consists of the main hall (capacity 150) with a kitchen adjacent and a committee room which can be used separately from the main hall.

Chapel Hall, Loddon Bridge Road, built in 1959, originally belonged to the United Reformed Church and was taken over and refurbished by the Council in 1985 when it was feared that the facility would be lost to the community and the land sold for building. There is one large hall (capacity 100) with a kitchen adjacent and a meeting room at the back that can be used separately. The use of the hall is limited by its proximity to residential properties.

The Oakwood Centre, Headley Road opened in March 2004. Two community halls and three meeting rooms are available for hire, as well as the theatre space and the Miles Suite. The two halls combined will hold 300 standing or 190 seated. The building is licensed for civil weddings and partnership ceremonies and houses the Just in the Park café run by Just Around the Corner Community Interest Company. The Town Council offices are also based at the Centre.

Hire charges at our halls depend on the status of the hirer. Woodley residents receive a discount to reflect their contribution through the precept on the council tax. There are also some reductions for registered charities, senior citizens and community and youth groups.

(A function room and meeting rooms are also available for hire at Woodford Park Leisure Centre, but for the purposes of this document are included within Leisure Services.)

Our key targets for 2008...	Did we meet them...?
To provide new chairs at Coronation Hall	Yes.
To reduce the budgeted net cost of running the Oakwood Centre by 22%	From 2006/7 to 2007/8 the net reduction was 10% From 2007/8 to 2008/9 the net reduction was 35%

Targets for 2009/10

To resolve the flooring problems at the Oakwood Centre.

To increase business bookings at the Oakwood Centre in 2009/10 to 61% of total business capacity (1495 blocks).

To increase social bookings at the Oakwood Centre in 2009/10 by 10%.

To reroof Coronation Hall.

To decorate Coronation Hall.

To provide new curtains at Chapel Hall.

Leisure Services

Our objectives in providing this service...

To provide and promote customer focused sporting and recreational facilities and activities within Woodley to enable local access to sport and to encourage the health of the community by:

- providing a variety of leisure and sporting facilities at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and Bulmershe Leisure Centre and encouraging their use by different groups in the community
- providing outdoor sports facilities at Woodford Park
- operating a Recreation Card which gives residents a reduced charge on many facilities and activities
- working in partnership with local sports bodies and clubs.

The service we provide...

Two leisure centres, Bulmershe Leisure Centre on Woodlands Avenue and Woodford Park Leisure Centre, off Haddon Drive.

Bulmershe Leisure Centre was leased to the Council in 1995 for 21 years by the then Berkshire County Council, now taken over by Wokingham Borough Council. The centre is a 'dual use' facility providing indoor sports and the use of the swimming pool to Bulmershe School during weekdays in term time.

Facilities at the centre include:

- 25 metre swimming pool
- large sports hall marked out for badminton, netball, basketball and football, with cricket nets also available
- small sports hall
- some use of the swimming pool viewing gallery upstairs.

Since taking over the centre, the Council has increased its use by the public and the variety of activities offered at the centre.

Woodford Park Leisure Centre provides indoor and outdoor facilities including:

- sports hall marked for badminton/netball
- function room, two meeting rooms
- hard surface area marked out for tennis, football and netball
- crazy golf course
- chemically treated and filtered paddling pool in an enclosed area
- cricket pitch with artificial and grass wickets; two practice nets and
- three full size football pitches and junior tournament pitches.

The charges for sports facilities are reviewed each year and set at a competitive rate. The Council operates a Recreation Card system for Woodley residents. This entitles the holder to reduced charges for sports and other activities in the leisure centres and reflects the contribution residents have already made through the precept on the council tax paid.

A customer suggestion/comments scheme is in operation at both Leisure Centres.

Our key targets for 2008...	Did we meet them...?
<p>To promote healthy lifestyles and well being by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • working in partnership with the private sector • joining the Wokingham Borough Council's Sports Federation 	<p>Yes. We have rolled out the Fitter Kids programme at Bulmershe School in partnership with the school Fit for Sport, targeting 14 – 15 year olds who were not active. Through partnership with Westcoast, Berkshire Sport and Sport England we have increased sporting opportunities for disabled children.</p>
<p>To work in partnership with local football clubs to promote and increase children's participation in football</p>	<p>Yes. Football Forum now operating with local Woodley teams looking at ways in which these teams can train and play in Woodley. Working in partnership with Woodley Town FC and the Primary development Manager from Wokingham to offer football coaching in primary schools in Woodley & Earley for years 3 & 4.</p>
<p>To create a post at Woodford Park Leisure Centre of Sports Officer/Tennis coach jointly funded by Woodley Town Council and Berkshire Lawn Tennis Association</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>To work with local schools to encourage students to undertake the NPLQ lifeguarding qualification and provide employment opportunities at Bulmershe Leisure Centre for those so qualified.</p>	<p>Yes. Link established with both Bulmershe and Waingels Schools to run NPLQ courses and also signed up with NARS to offer one day lifeguard courses as part of national learning week in October. Once qualified students are offered lifeguard roles at the centre.</p>
<p>To improve toilet provision at Woodford Park Leisure Centre</p>	<p>Yes. New disabled toilet installed and ladies toilet provision increased.</p>
<p>To update the shower facilities at Woodford Park Leisure Centre in particular the ladies showers</p>	<p>Yes. All showers have been refitted and redecorated.</p>
<p>To replace the window units in the Function Room at Woodford Park Leisure Centre</p>	<p>No. This work will be reprogrammed.</p>
<p>To replace the sports hall floor at Woodford Park Leisure Centre and rebuild the east facing exterior and interior walls</p>	<p>Yes.</p>
<p>To provide new chairs for the Function Room at Woodford Park Leisure Centre</p>	<p>Yes.</p>

Targets for 2009/10

Lay new flooring in the Function Room at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

Install a pool cover at Bulmershe swimming pool.

Secure funding for existing and new sports/activities.

Investigate ways of improving the sporting facilities at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

To increase the number of swimming courses at Bulmershe Leisure Centre by running four instead of three sets of courses a year.

To provide summer holiday activities for young people at the leisure centres at reduced charges.

Parks, Amenities and Allotments

Our objectives in providing these services...

Parks and Amenities

- ◆ To create enjoyable recreational space for the community of Woodley by managing, maintaining and enhancing the open spaces within the Council's control.
- ◆ To give priority to preserving the character of the Garden of Remembrance as a special place in the park.
- ◆ To continue to investigate appropriate ways of adding facilities to open spaces for the enjoyment of the public, conservation and/or environmental improvement.
- ◆ To continue to provide amenities such as footpaths, seats, footpath and street lighting, noticeboards and bus shelters, considering the need for new provision within budget parameters and, where appropriate, following consultation.

Performance Standards:

- grass cutting on playing fields and open spaces when required
- regular litter collection and emptying of litter and dog bins
- being responsive to particular litter and vandalism problems in the Council's parks
- keeping flower and shrub beds maintained
- servicing and maintaining machinery and equipment in good and safe working order, replacing items when needed and using the correct equipment for the task
- maintaining the lake at Woodford Park in a clean and tidy condition
- maintaining the Council's children's play areas in a good and safe condition and carrying out twice weekly checks in line with best practice guidance
 - providing adequate lighting and signposting

Allotments

- ◆ To contribute to the preservation of a healthy and sustainable environment in Woodley by:
 - providing allotments at the Reading Road allotment site and encouraging local people to rent plots
 - working in partnership with the Allotment Tenants Committee through the Allotments Working Party to identify maintenance requirements, items for a five year rolling programme of improvements on the site and possible future conservation projects.

The service we provide...

Approximately 35 acres of parkland/open spaces, maintained by the Council’s Grounds Maintenance staff, including:

- Woodford Park - an area of 25 acres. The park is largely grass with landscaped areas, two children’s play areas, sports pitches, a lake and a county standard bowling green, used by Woodley Bowling Club and available to the public.
- The Garden of Remembrance in Woodford Park, opened in April 1999, was provided as a special place for people to visit to remember loved ones.
- Memorial Ground - an area of flat grassland beside Headley Road and adjoining Woodford Park. The Council is the trustee of the charity, maintaining the ground that was bought by public subscription in 1919 in memory of those who had died in the First World War.
- Wheble Park - a small park with play equipment for younger and older children off Wheble Drive and Manners Road leased from Reading Borough Council.
- Malone Park - a small park off Malone Road/Jerome Road with a children’s play area. The park is leased from Wokingham Borough Council.
- Loddon Mead Open Space - a small area of open space off Loddon Bridge Road with access to the River Loddon.
- Rivermead Open Space - a small fenced off grassed area on Rivermead Road.
- Bulmershe Park - an open space off Pitts Lane, behind Reading Road allotment site. Woodley and Earley Town Councils jointly maintain this area which is leased to the councils by Wokingham Borough Council.
- Mollison Close play area – the Council has agreed to take ownership of the play area from Wokingham Borough Council once legal matters are finalised.

Allotments

The allotment site at Reading Road is leased from Reading Borough Council. The new lease runs to December 2018.

Approximately 300 plots are suitable for cultivation. The Tenants Committee meets regularly with the Council through its representatives on the Allotments Working Party. Its members also help to organise an annual site clearance and the Best Kept Allotment Competition.

Amenities

The Council owns and/or maintains 50 streetlights sited on footpaths around the town and numerous bus shelters, noticeboards and seats. These are provided in addition to those belonging to other agencies, for example, Wokingham Borough Council.

Our key targets for 2008	Did we meet them...?
To seek to renew the lease for the allotment site at Reading Road which comes to an end in December 2007.	Yes. A new 10 year lease was agreed – to December 2018.
To develop a comprehensive plan for the refurbishment of Woodford Park and apply for funding.	Yes. Unfortunately we were not successful, however the original plans have provided the priority plans for the park. Alternative sources of funding and ways of achieving this are being pursued.
To investigate ownership of Rivermead Play Area and improvements to the play area	Yes. The land was transferred to the Council and the area levelled and grassed.

To erect low level fencing along the path at the side of the Nature Garden	Yes.
To install a street art/graffiti board in Woodford Park	Yes. Another board has been installed and one extended.
To make improvements to the fencing around the overflow car park at Woodford Park	Yes.

Targets for 2009/10

To pursue the priority plans for Woodford Park:

- Refurbishment of children’s play area next to the leisure centre,
- develop the youth area at the rear of the Oakwood Centre,
- improve the lake and its surrounds ,
- and improve the paths, lights and signage around the park.

To seek to have any available Section 106 developers’ contributions allocated for improvements in parks and open spaces.

To increase the number of plots at the allotment site.

To install a toilet at the allotment site.

To take ownership of Mollison Close play area.

Democratic Services

Our objectives in providing this service...

- ◆ To act as an advocate on behalf of the community of Woodley as a whole, by:
 - seeking to be consulted on a range of services and issues that affect the lives of people in Woodley, ensuring responses represent and balance the needs of different groups and individuals within our community
 - representing and assisting members of the community on matters involving services outside the remit of the Council
 - responding to all matters on which the Council is consulted, making relevant comments following consideration at committee or by the relevant Member of Council or in line with Council
- ◆ To provide support to the democratic process in order that the Council is able to carry out its aims and objectives and meet its statutory duties by:
 - complying with local government and other legislation in the arrangements for meetings of Council and the annual Electors Meeting in March
 - advertising meetings of Council, encouraging attendance by the public and making agendas available at meetings
 - presenting comprehensive reports written in plain language to meetings of Council
 - allocating funds as necessary for election costs every four years and budgets for Mayor’s and Members’ expenses
 - holding a Town Forum at the beginning of each meeting of full Council, at which any Woodley resident may speak.
- ◆ To support and promote the role of the Town Mayor within the local community.

The service we provide...

Representation of residents and the town of Woodley on various matters relating to services provided by other agencies and organisations. In the past traffic management, road safety, highways, the police authority, public transport services (bus and rail), and environmental issues have been commented upon.

Consultation on the planning process forms a significant part of the Council's representative role. The Council receives copies of all planning applications in the parish from Wokingham Borough Council. It informs neighbours by letter of any planning application that might affect them and invites them to view the plans at the council offices. Last year 980 neighbour letters were sent out with many residents attending Plans Committee meetings to give their views. The committee will consider comments from residents and, taking into account planning guidelines and local circumstances, will respond to the Planning Authority.

Support to the Woodley Community Partnership which has now produced 'Vision 2020', a plan setting out the future needs and aims for the town. The Council, along with local groups, individuals and organisations will be working on the Vision's action plans.

Servicing the decision making processes of the Council. This includes the support to the Town Mayor, administrative support to Members and the meeting process and the training and any expenses paid to Members. The cost of elections every four years also falls within this area of service.

Full Council is scheduled to meet five times a year. Before each Council meeting, residents of Woodley may take part in the Town Forum where they are invited to make any comments and ask questions about the Council's services or any other matters that affect the community. The Annual Town Electors' Meeting in March gives residents the opportunity to hear about the work of the Council and its policies and to make any representations to the Council on local matters. Administrative support is provided to all Members and specifically to support the increasingly active role of Town Mayor.

Our key target for 2008	Did we meet it...?
To promote the role of the Town Mayor of Woodley.	Yes. The Town Mayor was invited to events to which previous Town Mayors and Chairmen had not received an invitation.

Target for 2009/10

To continue to promote the role of the Town Mayor of Woodley.

Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative

Our objectives through this partnership...

- To bring together the resources and goodwill of the public, private and voluntary sectors in order to raise the quality of Woodley town centre from the point of view of its users.
- To establish the centre as second to none in terms of the range and quality of services provided for a town the size of Woodley.
- To create an attractive and safe environment for all residents, employees and visitors, paying special attention to accessibility for the less able.
- To develop and expand the town centre's role in its shopping, business, leisure and cultural activities.

The service we provide...

The Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative (WTCMI), established in 1995, is a partnership between the Council, Wokingham Borough Council and the Woodley traders. Its aims are to promote and develop the town centre. Since its creation the Council has allocated funds to the initiative. This year £12,342 is allocated for this purpose. The Council employs the part time Town Centre Manager on behalf of the WTCMI with the post jointly funded by the partners. Feedback from residents indicates that the activities the partnership promotes in the town centre are very popular.

Our key targets for 2008	Did we meet them...?
To continue to be a partner in the Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative, giving support through funding and other resources in order that it achieve its aims.	Yes. Representatives from the Council take part in the work of the Initiative. The Council agreed a contribution of £12,342 in 2009/10.
Through the TCMI to work with Wokingham Borough Council and any prospective developers on any plans for the redevelopment of the town centre	No. There appear to be no wholesale plans for the development of the town centre.

Target for 2009/10

To continue to be a partner in the Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative, giving support through funding and other resources in order that it achieve its aims.

Youth Services

Our objectives in providing this service...

- ◆ To work in partnership with Wokingham Borough Council Youth Service, the Police and other local organisations through the Woodley Area Youth Committee to enable the community's young people to become participating, active, caring and creative members of society, realising their full potential by:
 - allocating a budget towards local projects/services for young people
 - developing information to inform the planning and prioritisation of youth work provision
 - monitoring youth provision in the area against agreed policies and priorities.

- ◆ To maintain the Council's interest in the operation of the Woodley Airfield Youth and Community Centre.

The service we provide...

The Council has been involved with the provision of services to young people for over 17 years. It allocates significant funds for this purpose, £18,134 this year. The Council is a partner on the Woodley Area Youth Committee made up of representatives from organisations involved with young people. The committee advises and informs youth services providers of the needs of young people in the area and how these may be met. The organisations represented consider what resources they have available for meeting these needs and the committee may also apply for funding for particular projects. The core group

for this service is young people between the ages of 13 to 19, although work with young people either side of this range also takes place.

The Council funds the Just Around the Corner project (JAC) to provide services to young people in Woodley. This includes outreach work, work with young people and their families where appropriate and regular provision of the JAC trailer/bus in the town.

The Council has also supported the work of the Woodley Activity Group, contributed to youth summer schemes and provision for young people at The Venue, Woodley Baptist Church Centre.

A grant to ARC, the youth counselling service, has meant counselling for young people is provided in the town.

Our key targets for 2008	Did we meet them...?
To work with the police, Wokingham BC and local groups and organisations towards the introduction of a town wide Alcohol Designation Order	No. The police did not support this – they believe they already have sufficient powers to deal with situations involving anti social behaviour and alcohol.
To work with local groups and organisations on strategies to reduce litter and graffiti in the town	Yes. On council property work with JAC and PCSOs has helped the problem at the weekend. The Council also joined in an annual spring clean and managed to encourage several teams to tackle problem areas in the town.

Target for 2009/10

To further develop the youth area in Woodford Park, in consultation with different youth groups in the town.

Inn on the Park

Our objectives in providing this service...

- ◆ To provide a public house facility within pleasant surroundings at Woodford Park with a good range of 'real ale' at competitive prices.
- ◆ To make a profit from this service.
- ◆ To provide bar facilities for functions at Woodford Park Leisure Centre.

The service we provide...

The Inn on the Park public house at Woodford Park Leisure Centre. The pub has a screen for showing sports and other events. The Council has an agreement with GRS Inns Ltd for the management and operation of the bar and monitors this through regular meetings with representatives from the company.

Target for 2009/10

To negotiate a new agreement for the management of the Inn on the Park.

Capital Projects

Our objectives in providing this service...

- ◆ To allocate funds each year to undertake capital projects to maintain existing Council property and to develop and increase, where appropriate, the Council's facilities.
- ◆ To allocate funds each year to repair and renew Council property in order of priority, ensuring facilities and fittings are maintained to a reasonable and safe standard for their purpose.

The service we provide...

Annual allocation of funds to the capital programme, a rolling fund to meet the costs of large maintenance or new capital projects and access works.

Our key target for 2008...	Did we meet it...?
To establish the Capital Programme	Yes.

Targets for 2009/10

To establish the Capital Programme for 2009/10.

Grants/Community Events

Our objectives in providing this service...

- ◆ Through the allocation of grants and funding for special events, to enhance and increase services and activities and special provision to the local community.

The service we provide...

The Council allocates funds each year in order to award grants to various organisations. In 2009/10 the Council has budgeted to make the following grants:

Grant	Amount	Further Information
ReadiBus	£14,186	To fund ReadiBus service to provide community transport to residents who need this service
Citizen's Advice Bureau	£3,659	Towards general CAB service and clerical work in connection with debt advice work in Woodley
Mobile Information Centre (MICE)	£3,469	To fund the MICE service in Woodley
Museum of Berkshire Aviation	£1,225	Towards the general running cost of the museum
ARC – Youth Counselling Service	£3,500	Towards providing a counselling service for people in Woodley

Keep Mobile	£1,500	Towards providing community transport to residents who need this service
Wokingham Job Support Centre	£1,300	Towards the costs of providing the service in Woodley, at the Oakwood Centre

In addition the Council has allocated £3,500 for grants for which local organisations and individuals who bring special credit to the town may apply in April and November each year. Applicants must meet the set criteria and the maximum grant awarded to any one group is £250, for individuals the maximum is £100.

The Council also funds activities at community events, for example, in particular the evening entertainment at the Carnival and has allocated £7,601 in 2009/10 for this purpose.

Our key target for 2008	Did we meet it...?
To allocate funding to meet the service objective.	Yes.

Target for 2009/10

To allocate funding to meet the service objective.

Central Support Services

Our objectives in providing this service...

- ◆ To ensure effective financial and administrative management of the Council's activities and resources by:
 - managing efficient and flexible office and booking systems
 - operating efficient financial systems which comply with the Council's financial standing orders and government legislation
 - providing regular budget monitoring information to managers and Members
 - ensuring office equipment is relevant for its purpose, updating where appropriate
 - ensuring sufficient personnel to carry out the Council's objectives
 - seeking to develop staff to their full potential through training and other appropriate arrangements
 - operating personnel policies that are consistent with good employment practice
 - managing and controlling all issues relating to land and legal agreements held by the Council.
- ◆ To be aware of and ensure that all statutory duties of the Council are met.
- ◆ To ensure effective implementation of Council policies.
- ◆ To ensure that Council activities are promoted and publicised.
- ◆ To operate a customer focused service and to respond to all contact made with the Town Council offices in a courteous, helpful, timely and effective way.
- ◆ To keep the Town Council's facilities in good and safe working order and ensure that they comply with the appropriate regulations.
- ◆ To improve the appearance of Town Council property within resources available.
- ◆ To respond to acts of vandalism as soon as possible to ensure safety and discourage further damage.

- ◆ To provide a good and safe working environment, fulfilling all Health and Safety responsibilities.

The service we provide...

Overall management of the Council's administrative and financial procedures and operations based at the Town Council offices at the Oakwood Centre. Responsibilities include personnel matters for all staff, administrative and computer systems, incoming mail, financial systems, all payments and income, audit, operation of legal agreements, bookings, insurance, dealing with complaints and public relations. The office is also responsible for the public reception area and incoming telephone calls to the Council.

The administration and management of the maintenance of the Town Council's property (asset value of £5 million) is carried out centrally, with each facility allocated a repairs fund within its budget. Responsibilities include verification of orders and invoices, drawing up tenders for work, programming of works, capital programme reports and implementation, maintenance of all alarm systems, establishment of appropriate maintenance contracts outside the Council and the monitoring of all Health and Safety matters.

Our key targets for 2008	Did we meet them...?
To publish a further four editions of the Town Council's newsletter, <i>Woodley Herald</i> , and deliver to all households	Yes.
To ensure that all town council premises meet the legal requirements for public non-smoking buildings as of 1 July 2007	Yes.

Targets for 2009/10

To ensure that all Council owned land is registered with the Land Registry.

To improve the Council's asset management systems and centralise contracts management.

Performance Indicators

Performance indicators are a way of measuring performance against a service's objectives. The Council has set its own performance indicators in the light of local priorities and objectives.

Performance Indicator	2001/2	2002/3	2003/4	2004/5	2005/6	2006/7	2007/8	2008/9	Target 2009/10 (where appropriate)
Corporate Performance Indicators									
Percentage of residents satisfied with overall service provided by the Council (<i>structured sample Residents Survey</i>)	74.1	79.1	82.5	82.3	87.4	86.9	n/a	93.7	
Number of working days lost due to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee	3.4	3.66	2.9	3.2	3.3	5.1	8.7	5.7	
Number of self - certified working days lost to sickness absence per full time equivalent employee	-	1.2	1.4	1.8	1.3	1.9	2	2.4	
Number of partnership arrangements/agreements with other organisations to provide services/facilities in the town	13	13	14	14	15	17	16	19	
Community Halls									
No of local organisations hiring halls for their own activities or to provide activities/services for local people ♦♦	95	80	86	96	105	118	106	128	
Percentage take up of venues (daily use)	76	75	84	88	89	93	86***	83	

Percentage of Council and Committee agendas sent out within 3 clear working days of the meeting	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100	100
Number of functions/visits made by Chairman/Mayor	39	42	48	45	95	73	44	52					
Woodley Town Centre Management Initiative													
Council contribution to TCMI partnership (£)	11,700	11,500	11,500	11,845	11,845	11,845	11,845	11,845	11,845	11,845	11,845	12,342	12,342
Youth Services													
Number of contacts with young people through service level agreement with JAC:	5,020	4,199	4,203	3,174	7,864	9,329	8,775	5,108					
- youth outreach work	-	7,995	8,772	8,646	12,024	7,780	6,466	11,263					
- other youth activities (school lunch times/small group work/ events)													
Youth projects funding (£s)	20,000	19,690	19,198	16,677	18,874	18,412	18,134	18,796					19,360
Inn on the Park													
Annual profit (£s)	35,253	34,042	36,047	44,895	50,203	55,457	61,024	64,295					53,402
Grants/Community Events													
No. of organisations/individuals receiving a grant	30	29	28	30	20	20	15	16					
Grants awarded as a percentage of all applications for grants	100	100	90	97	95	91	68	84					

+ Bulmershe Leisure Centre closed for a total of 8 weeks for essential works on water systems. * Reduction over the years largely because town and parish councils no longer appoint to school governing bodies. § Bulmershe Leisure Centre closed for a total of 11 weeks for essential works on water systems. *** Calculation of days available reviewed and now include all Sundays, loss of regular hirer at Chapel Hall. ++ Allotment plots increased in response to high increase in demand. ♦♦ Includes local companies and separate parts of large organisations/companies.

Consultation Strategy

The Council believes that consultation is a key activity, both to seek views on the delivery of its services and to represent views on services provided by other organisations. Members and officers each have a part to play in this work through their contact with residents in carrying out their respective roles. In seeking to continue and develop this role we will:

- ◆ make all individuals or groups in the local community feel welcome and able to express their views when coming into contact with any representatives of the Council.
- ◆ be responsive to suggestions and comments from the community and other agencies.
- ◆ continue to operate the Town Forum before each meeting of Full Council where members of the public can make statements, give their views or seek information.
- ◆ continue to make meetings of Council open to the public and encourage attendance.
- ◆ ensure councillors' names and contact details are made widely available.
- ◆ invite customer/resident comments/feedback on our services through the customer comments boxes at our leisure centres and aim to respond to these within 10 working days of receipt, displaying responses on leisure centre noticeboards.
- ◆ ensure that the Council, through its representatives, gives an opportunity for members of the public to make known their views on any major issues affecting the community and to consider and take appropriate action.
- ◆ seek feedback on Council services from a sample of residents on an annual basis.
- ◆ consult with neighbours or other groups on changes to service delivery or Council operations that may have a direct impact on these groups.
- ◆ continue to send agenda papers to the local newspapers, members of parliament for the area, local district councillors and other public agencies.
- ◆ aim to increase the Council's profile in the press and other media.
- ◆ identify a range of methods of consultation and work with other organisations/bodies as appropriate to ensure effective consultation is carried out, including hard to reach groups and black and ethnic minority residents.
- ◆ continue to consult on planning applications and encourage public participation.
- ◆ ensure the consultation process conforms to legislation regarding confidentiality.

The Council's Budget

The Council sets its budget estimates and the precept level for the following financial year in February. In 2009/10 the Council's revenue expenditure is estimated to be £1,652,568 with income from its services estimated to raise £746,485 – a net revenue expenditure for the year of £906,083. The Council has general reserves of £137,826, and £110,000 of capital, project and earmarked reserves and will pay £219,318 capital costs. This year's precept on a Band D household is £113.01.

The Council raises all its expenditure from the precept paid by every household within the Council Tax demand and from the charges for its services. It does not receive any on-going government funding towards its services. Where it is able, the Council will apply for additional funding for projects, services and activities.

The standing committees monitor overall income and expenditure at each of their meetings. Managers with budgetary responsibility report any actual or potential variations to the relevant committee and will consider any action to be taken. The budget estimates are reviewed and revised as necessary as part of the budget setting process for the following year.

The table overleaf provides further information on the Council's budget figures in 2008/9 and those projected for 2009/10.

2008/9 Expenditure – variations between estimated and actual expenditure

Leisure Services – High increases in fuel costs and a high level of certified sick leave of duty cover staff were significant contributing factors to the increase in net costs at both centres.

Community Halls – Both Coronation and Chapel Halls exceeded the targeted income and costs were slightly lower than anticipated.

Oakwood Centre – Costs were reduced and income fell just short of the target, giving an overall reduction in the anticipated net cost for the centre.

Parks, Amenities, Allotments – Costs reduced and higher income level than budgeted achieved.

Democratic Services – Staff, civic costs and members training costs lower than original estimate.

Youth Services – Costs slightly under budget estimate.

Grants/Community Events – Fewer grant applications received, some reduction in the events budget.

Corporate Management – Lower than budgeted insurance and superannuation costs.

Central Support Services – Overall reduction in net costs because of unspent staff contingency funds and underspending on several budgets although income from bank interest did not meet its target.

Variations in expenditure between 2008/9 actual figures and those estimated for 2009/10

Leisure Services – Increase in courses and other income while maintaining cost levels at both Woodford Park and Bulmershe Leisure Centres are targets for this year.

Community Halls – Expenditure increase includes anticipated staff costs and fuel costs. Prudent income estimate to allow for changes in regular hirers and variations in one off hirings.

Oakwood Centre – Staff costs slightly higher, fuel costs estimated to be higher than actual cost of previous year.

Parks, Amenities, Allotments – Increase in staff and some other running costs anticipated.

Democratic Services – Civic costs and members training budgets set higher than previous year's actual costs.

Youth Services – Budget allocation to cover service level agreement with Just Around the Corner only.

Inn on the Park – Lower income and some higher costs anticipated. New agreement from 31/10/09.

Grants – Cost of living inflation increases (as at September 2008) to annual grant recipients.

Corporate Management – Superannuation, insurance and costs related to annual report anticipated to be higher.

Central Support Services – Staff contingency costs allowed for. 2009/10 budget anticipates increases in some costs. Income estimate reduced in respect of bank interest.

Woodley Town Councillors

Bulmershe

Shelagh Flower, 5 Ambleside Close, Woodley
Sam Rahmouni, 38 Kingfisher Drive, Woodley
Celia Storry, 50 Church Road, Earley
Malcolm Storry, 50 Church Road, Earley

Coronation East

Dawn Bayly, 16 Harris Close, Woodley
Jenny Cheng, 19 Whitegates Lane, Earley
Tom Barker, The Warren Cottage, Warren Road, Woodley

Coronation Central

Nick Cox, 8 Ryecroft Close, Woodley
Janet Sartorel, 63 Welford Road, Woodley

Loddon Airfield

Phil Challis, 5 Farman Close, Woodley
Brian Franklin, 9 Mohawk Way, Woodley
Matt Hayward, 30 Hartland Road, Reading

Loddon South

Alan Clifford, 45 Colemans Moor Road, Woodley
Darren Smith, 10 Duffield Road, Woodley
Bill Soane, 30 Spruce Road, Woodley

Loddon West

Tony Mattingley, 25 Woodlands Avenue, Woodley
Denis Thair, 13 Tennyson Road, Woodley

South Lake North

Ray Duncan, 1 Fairwater Drive, Woodley
Mary Holmes, 29 Highgate Road, Woodley
Coling Lawley, 26 Farriers Close, Woodley

South Lake South

Kay Gilder, 360 Kingfisher Drive, Woodley
Linda Higgs, 129 Nightingale Road, Woodley
Beth Rowland, 155 Fairwater Drive, Woodley

Warren

Dave Mills, 68 Reading Road, Woodley
Kate Haines, 29A Warren Road, Woodley

Council Committees and Working Parties**Appendix B**

A brief outline of the work of the present standing committees and working parties/groups is provided below.

Strategy and Resources Committee

This committee allocates the Council's resources. It approves the budgets of the other standing committees and recommends the final budget to full Council for approval. The Strategy and Resources Committee deals with all matters of general council policy. It also oversees the Council's financial and staffing matters. The Personnel Sub-committee reports to this committee. The committee has a Bar Working Party.

Leisure Services Committee

This committee oversees all matters relating to the Council's leisure facilities. It has the biggest budget of all the standing committees and is the Council's largest income generator. The Tournaments and the Woodford Park Development Working Parties report to this committee.

Community Services Committee

This committee deals with all external service matters affecting the life of people in Woodley including highways, water, police and other agencies. It funds various community activities, e.g. youth projects, and oversees the grants paid to various organisations. The Allotments Working Party and the School Governors Panel report to this committee. Town Centre Management Initiative and Area Youth Committee matters are reported to this committee.

Plans Committee

This committee meets once a month, more regularly than the other standing committees. The committee considers planning issues within Woodley and makes formal representations regarding these to the planning authority, Wokingham Borough Council. It informs neighbouring residents of planning applications and invites them to give their views at meetings of the committee as well as in writing.

Appendix C

PLANS COMMITTEE	LEISURE SERVICES COMMITTEE	COMMUNITY SERVICES COMMITTEE	STRATEGY & RESOURCES COMMITTEE	FULL COUNCIL
2009 19 May 16 June 21 July	2009 9 June	2009 23 June	2009 7 July	2009 14 July
18 August 15 September 20 October	8 September	22 September	6 October	13 October
17 November 15 December	3 November	10 November	3 November 24 November	8 December
2010 12 January	2010 19 January	2010 26 January	2010 2 February	2010 9 February
16 February 26 March 13 April 18 May	30 March	20 April	27 April	<i>Town Electors</i> 9 March <i>Annual Meeting</i> 11 May

The Annual Town Electors Meeting (Annual Parish Meeting) will be held on 9 March 2010