

**Slough Borough Council Annual Report
2020/21**

Draft – Spring 2021

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Welcome

2020-21 has been a year like no other for local government, and Slough Borough Council and our partners can look back in pride at how we rose to the challenges of the COVID-19 pandemic. Our staff responded with flexibility and agility – helping our residents to access services in new and different ways to ensure everyone in Slough was supported through these unprecedented times. This report highlights some of our achievements from the last twelve months, as well as highlighting some of the challenges we have still to tackle.

Alongside our voluntary sector partners in the #OneSlough group, we stepped up at the beginning of the pandemic to support our most vulnerable residents. The COVID-19 section of this report highlights some of the achievements we made together in a number of areas, including: the delivery of food parcels; enabling contact tracing and community testing; helping businesses to adapt to new regulations; ensuring care homes had access to assistance and coordinating the distribution of PPE; and supporting our schools and young people.

Despite the pressure on our staff and our resources, we have also been able to continue to work towards the implementation of our Council Five Year Plan. The Priorities section of this report outlines some of the key work we have done to achieve the five priority outcomes listed in our Five Year Plan:

- Ensuring that Slough's children grow up to be happy, healthy and successful
- Supporting our people to become healthier and manage their care needs
- Making Slough an attractive place where people choose to live, work and stay
- Ensuring our residents live in good quality homes
- Enabling Slough to attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

Alongside our partners in the Slough Leaders Group, we have now launched our new Slough 2040 Vision. This Vision sets out our shared ambitions for the future of Slough, and was created by listening to our residents, elected councillors, and the organisations which serve the town. You can read more about the Slough 2040 Vision in the Partnerships section of this document.

The council has also made significant progress with our Transformation Programme, known as Our Futures. This includes the launch of our new website designed to allow residents to quickly access the services they require online, the shift towards delivering our services in communities, and a redesign of our organisation structure to ensure our teams are well placed to deliver the best services to residents. You will read about several of the successes of the OurFutures programme in this report, woven throughout the different sections of the document.

This report summarises some of our key achievements from the last year. It outlines some of our areas of success, and the work we are proud to have achieved during the challenges of the last 12 months. However, as a council, we continue to face significant pressures from both the COVID-19 pandemic, and from the financial position we now find ourselves in. Over the next year, we will work to support the town through its recovery and continue to implement our Council Five Year Plan. We are confident that Slough will come out of this crisis stronger than ever, and continue to grow as a place of opportunity and ambition for all.

Josie Wragg – Slough Borough Council Chief Executive
Councillor James Swindlehurst – Leader of the Council

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Highlights

Notes: Highlights of the last 12 months, showing the key events which have taken place during this time. This will be displayed as a highly visual timeline.

April	New financial year begins with the country in the first lockdown of the COVID-19 pandemic. Clinically Extremely vulnerable people advised to shield. #OneSlough response provides support to the community. Everyone In campaign temporarily houses rough sleepers in Slough. Slough Business Improvement District launched.
May	The first lockdown begins to ease, with people allowed to leave the house more than once a day.
June	Schools reopen their doors to all students. Bus lane trial begins.
July	Lockdown eases further, with hospitality businesses reopening and international travel permitted. Funding secured for Langley Road Improvements.
August	COVID-19 shielding for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable people ends.
September	New school year begins, with students attending face-to-face learning. Council arranges socially distanced home-to-school transport.
October	3-tiered lockdown system launched. Slough is placed in the medium tier. Country placed in the second national lockdown. E-scooter rental trial begins.
November	Council purchases former Colnbrook GP site. Planning team invites residents to comment on Spatial Strategy element of the new Local Plan.
December	Second national lockdown ends. Slough is placed in Tier 3 restrictions, before being moved to Tier 4. Shielding for Clinically Extremely vulnerable residents begins again. COVID-19 vaccination programme begins. Chalvey Community Hub completed. Slough Youth Awards take place.
January	Country placed in the third national lockdown. Community testing trial begins, and is expanded across Slough. Kitemark accreditation scheme for early years settings is launched.
February	Two new hotels built on the old library site open.
March	Schools reopen after third lockdown. Shielding for Clinically Extremely Vulnerable residents ends. Council announces that Britwell Centre will be refurbished.

COVID-19

The last twelve months have been an immensely challenging time for everyone. At the start of last year, we were in the grip of the first wave of what would become the worst pandemic the world has seen in 100 years. The country was in a national lockdown, businesses were closing their doors and putting employees on furlough, and our clinically vulnerable residents were staying at home to shield themselves. And in our hospitals, our NHS colleagues were fighting to save the lives of those who were seriously ill with the virus.

Over the last year, staff from across the council have worked alongside our colleagues from the NHS, the voluntary sector, the police, and many more organisations, to support our residents through these unprecedented times. We have directed resources, staff and funding towards the COVID-19 response, to ensure that we were doing everything we could to help the people of Slough through this crisis.

At the start of the pandemic, we paired up with Slough Council for Voluntary Service (CVS) to work together to provide support to everyone in the town who needed it. We called this approach **#OneSlough**. Together, we established regular food parcel deliveries to those who were unable to leave their homes. 3,000 hot food boxes and 1,200 food parcels were delivered in the first weeks of the lockdown to those who needed them. We also set up the Community Champions programme, where 600 volunteers from the community were given weekly updates on key COVID-19 news and information, so that they could help spread accurate information to the communities of Slough.

While the #OneSlough group were providing support and assistance to residents in need, the council's Public Health Team led the work to try and reduce the spread of the virus in the town. The team ran the **contact tracing** system operating in Slough, working to track down people who had tested positive for the virus and who the national contact tracing team had not been able to trace. In January, the team also led Slough's part in a 6 week pilot to trial the effectiveness of **community testing**. A testing centre was established at The Centre on Farnham Road, to offer free tests to any resident without symptoms. After the success of this initial site, this was expanded out to more locations, including Langley College Sports hall and a range of mobile sites. A total of 28 sites have now been used for community testing, with over 21,000 tests carried out in Slough.

While most of our residents and businesses complied with the **lockdown** restrictions, we hired 16 designated COVID-19 officers to work alongside council staff to help enforce the lockdown regulations in the town. Around 3000 visits were made to businesses during the pandemic, to check organisations were complying with regulations, issue advice and guidance, and in some cases, take further enforcement action.

Throughout the pandemic, our social care team has worked to support both the people who receive care, and the organisations and staff who provide care. At the start of the first lockdown, our team quickly set up an on-call service, 8am-8pm, seven days a week, to ensure **care homes and care providers** could access assistance if they needed it. We also co-ordinated the purchase and distribution of PPE, so that our care homes and providers had access to the right PPE to keep their staff and residents safe. Our **social workers** switched to working virtually where possible, but also continued face-to-face visits where necessary to support Slough residents. Some of our services, such as our day centres, were forced to suspend their normal operations during the pandemic, so alternative provision such as home support was introduced to make sure that the needs of service users continued to be met. Throughout the pandemic, the social care team worked hard to ensure that our duty to care for those residents in need of care and support was met at all times.

Our education team also worked to support **schools and young people** during the pandemic. A weekly group meeting to bring together Slough headteachers and council staff was set up, to discuss challenges around keeping schools open and young people supported. A liaison officer was also appointed to support schools with issues around testing and isolation of students. The council also supported schools with the delivery of free school meals vouchers to vulnerable students. This was delivered through government funding in term times, but the council also provided food vouchers and free virtual activity clubs during the school holidays.

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Priority One: Slough children will grow up to be happy, healthy and successful

Our first priority is all about the children and young people of Slough. This priority considers the education, health and wellbeing of all our young people, and the pathways these create for them to live successful and fulfilled lives.

For our school-aged children, the last twelve months have been extremely challenging. **Schools** in Slough have worked hard to provide high-quality learning and education for young people throughout the pandemic – both virtually and face-to-face. We have worked with schools during the last twelve months to support them throughout the challenging, and rapidly changing environment of the pandemic. Despite these challenges, achievement in Slough schools was high once again, with over 60% of our GCSE students achieving Grade 5 or above in English and Maths. We continued to improve our **school facilities** over the last year. In December 2020, we were excited to announce that the new facilities for Grove Academy were complete. The school has been operating from a temporary location in the former Thames University site, but can now move into its brand new, state of the art facilities.

Our **Early Years** services provide early education and childcare to children before they start school - supporting parents to provide their children with the best start in life. Our children's centres, family hubs and childcare settings remained open throughout the last year, to ensure that children who needed care received it during the pandemic. Our early years education and childcare is all currently rated good or outstanding by Ofsted and the educational attainment for children across the early years foundation stage is well above average national standards. Our teams have been working to encourage families to take up the free hours of childcare they are entitled to if they have a child aged two or older, as evidence suggests that educational attainment in later life is improved if a child takes up their early years place.

Our **youth work** team has also continued to be active in their work to support young people across the town. In November we supported schools, colleges and youth groups to take part in the 'Make Your Mark' ballot. The Make Your Mark ballot allows young people to vote on the policies that are most important to them, and shape what campaigns the Youth Parliament will work on over the next year. This year was the biggest ever Make Your Mark ballot, and it all took place digitally for the first time. In December we also held the fifth Slough Youth Awards to celebrate some of the exceptional young people of Slough. Congratulations to all the young people who were nominated or won an award!

Over the last year, we have also worked to improve the **health** of our children and young people. This has included running a 'Ready for Pregnancy' campaign to ensure that women are healthy and prepared for pregnancy. This project encourages women to take regular exercise, eating healthily, reduce or stop their alcohol intake and stop smoking, to ensure the best outcomes for them and their baby. The team has also run a campaign to improve oral health in children, by creating and promoting a video to encourage children to brush their teeth. Finally, we have installed a brand new play area in Upton Court Park, and improved play areas in Pippins Park and Manor Park Recreation ground – encouraging our children and young people to stay active and healthy!

Case Study: Early Years Kitemark Accreditation Scheme

What are we doing? At the start of 2021, we launched our new Healthy Early Years accreditation scheme for early years settings in Slough. Through the scheme, early years providers will be supported to promote the health and wellbeing of the children they care for, in areas such as nutrition, oral health, physical activity and emotional and mental wellbeing. Settings will be assessed in these areas, and will be able to provide evidence of good practice to achieve a bronze, silver, gold or platinum level of accreditation.

Why are we doing this? Slough has high levels of childhood poor health, particularly in the areas of oral health and obesity. 11% of reception aged children are currently classed as obese, and 37% of five-year olds have signs of dental decay on their teeth. Early interventions to improve children's health can lead to better health as they get older, and prepare them for a healthy and fulfilled adult life.

How do we know its working? Since the scheme was launched a few months ago, sign-up has been high among early years providers, with 25 settings registering with the scheme. Many of these settings have now begun making changes to improve health and wellbeing among the children they work with, and will soon be assessed and receive their accreditation.

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How did we do?

Performance Measure	Previous Performance		Direction	Current Performance		Target
Percentage of Child Protection Plans started in year that were repeat plans within 2 years	G	4.3% (5)	↓	A	10.7% (9)	<10%
Attainment gap between all children and bottom 20% at Early Years	G	31.0%	↑	G	30.1%	<32.4%
Attainment gap between disadvantaged children and all others at Key Stage 2	Data not available due to COVID-19.					
Attainment gap between disadvantaged children and all others at Key Stage 4	Data not available due to COVID-19.					
Percentage of young people not in education, training or employment	G	4.0%	↓	G	4.2%	<=5%
Percentage of reception aged children classified as overweight including obese	-	21.9%	↓	A	23.0%	<23.0%
Percentage of year 6 aged children classified as overweight including obese	-	41.0%	↑	A	40.8%	<35.2%

Priority Two: Our people will be healthier and manage their own care needs

Priority Two focuses on the health and wellbeing of our residents. This priority is all about improving the physical and mental health of our residents, and providing support to those who need it.

Over the last year, the Adult Social Care team has worked hard to support both the people who receive care, and the people who provide it, through the pandemic. Throughout this time, we have supported nearly 2,500 people who receive care and support in Slough. Of the people receiving long-term support, around 20% receive their care and support in a residential setting, while the other 80% receive care and support in their own home.

Ensuring care users are empowered to **manage their own care and support needs** is a central part of the work of our adult social care team. Direct payments allow care users to do this, by providing them with the support to purchase and organise their care around their own needs. Over the last year, we have continued to work to encourage people to receive their care through a direct payment, with nearly 600 people now receiving a direct payment.

Supporting people who receive care to continue living **independently** in their own homes is another crucial part of the work we do. The responder service supports vulnerable residents to remain independent in their own home. The service provides fast support and care to people who have fallen and cannot get up without aid, or when a service user is feeling unwell, but does not necessarily require an ambulance. To benefit from the scheme, service users need to have a specialised alarm system, which they can trigger in the event of an emergency. Over the last year, the responder service has been called out to assist people over 1000 times.

We have also continued our work to ensure our care users are provided with **joined-up, integrated care** which meets all their different needs. Our Adult Social Care team has worked closely with colleagues from the mental health team, community nurses, local GP's and the voluntary sector. By joining together staff from different organisations, we are able to work together to design care which works for the service user.

We have also continued our work to support those people who provide **unpaid care** to others, such as a family member or friend. Over the last year, we have worked with local carers to co-produce a Carers Plan. This plan outlined how carers would be supported during the COVID-19 pandemic and the following months. The vision, priorities and design reflects the views and wishes of our local carers, and focuses upon promoting awareness of carers, and identifying the needs of carers in Slough.

The pandemic has highlighted the importance of **mental health**, and shone a spotlight on the need to consider our mental wellbeing alongside our physical wellbeing. The Mental Health teams in Slough have continued to work closely with the people who use their services to co-produce their approach to mental health. This has included working with 'peer mentors' to deliver preventative approaches to mental health, launching the Enabling Town Slough website, which aims to increase the accessibility of mental health services in Slough, and supporting people looking for employment through the Placement Support service.

As well as mental health, we have also worked to improve the **physical health** of our residents. The Integrated Health and Wellbeing Service was launched at the beginning of the year. This brings a wide range of services, including NHS health checks, stop smoking support, weight

management programmes and fall prevention support, all together in one place. Slough residents can refer themselves to these services by going to the Health and Wellbeing Slough website. And while many of our leisure services were closed during the pandemic, we have successfully opened four new green gyms over the last year, and continued running our Active Slough programme of physical activity and sports, providing online classes seven days a week, to keep our residents fit and active throughout the year.

Case Study: #Fit2FightCovid

What are we doing? During the pandemic, the council has been running the #Fit2FightCovid campaign, to encourage people to be more active, loose weight and fight COVID-19. The campaign promotes lots of different ways people can get active, including taking part in one of the free Active Slough online fitness classes, using one of the 30 green gyms in Slough, or doing an interactive park walk.

Why are we doing this? In Slough, only 20% of residents are identified as active, and more than two thirds of adults are overweight or obese. Being overweight or obese is more likely to lead to a positive test for COVID-19, and more likely to lead to hospitalisation for the virus.

How do we know its working? The #Fit2FightCovid campaign directed people to take place in a variety of activities, including the free online Active Slough classes. The Facebook page containing these classes received high levels of engagement from the people of Slough, with over 8,000 people being reached in the last year.

How did we do?

Performance Measure	Previous Performance		Direction	Current Performance		Target
Number of adults receiving a Direct Payment	R	602	↓	R	583	650
Uptake of targeted NHS health checks	Health checks paused during COVID-19.					
Percentage of residents inactive	Data not available due to COVID-19.					

Priority Three: Slough will be an attractive place, where people choose to live, work and stay.

This priority is all about the identity of Slough as a place, and how it feels to live and work here. This priority focuses on the neighbourhoods and green spaces of our town, as well as the safety and sustainability of Slough.

Over the last year, we have continued to progress the rollout of our **Strong, Healthy and Attractive Neighbourhoods** programme. This programme seeks to work with Slough residents to improve their local neighbourhoods and develop a sense of community pride. The council has worked alongside residents and community organisations in Chalvey to create a Chalvey plan, and to set up the Chalvey Community Partnership to deliver this plan. This group is now working on several projects in the area, including 'Chalvey Can' - a Sport England funded project to encourage people to take part in exercise. Work has now begun to introduce this programme in Colnbrook, and we are currently engaging with the people of this neighbourhood to find out what matters most to them.

We have also moved more of our council services into local neighbourhoods. Members of our customer service team can now be found out in the **community in our new hubs**. This means that people can now access support from the council more easily, and our customer service team can get to know the communities they work with better. The new Chalvey Community hub has now been completed, with customer services sitting alongside training rooms, a kitchen, and IT facilities for the community and voluntary sector. The Britwell Centre is also being extended and revamped, and will bring together council services, the library, community group facilities, as well as community health services.

Our **community safety team** has continued their work to improve the safety of Slough residents. During the pandemic, incidents of domestic violence increased across the country. Our team worked alongside the police and our other partners to ensure that support was in place for victims of domestic abuse and families, raise awareness of domestic abuse and the support available, and deliver domestic abuse training to professionals across the town. Our team has also run a campaign to encourage people not to carry knives, by breaking down the perception amongst some young people that carrying a knife makes them safer. This campaign has been promoted through social media, press releases, and the creation of a spray-painted mural in the town centre. We have also continued our award-winning work to reduce modern slavery, becoming one of only two councils in the country to be involved in a pilot project to explore how car washes can be licenced to reduce the risk of modern slavery.

The pandemic has also led to changes in how we use green spaces, with our **parks and open spaces** seeing an enormous increase in use over the last year. Our parks team has worked hard to keep all our parks open, clean and safe throughout the year, while also making some exciting improvements. The rose gardens in Salt Hill Park and Cippenham Recreation Ground were both refurbished, new wild flower meadows were created in Salt Hill Park and Upton Court Park, and a community orchard was planted in Salt Hill Park, ensuring that these spaces continue to be places for all our residents to enjoy.

This year, the council has taken a huge step forwards in our plans to improve our **sustainability**. The Council has now agreed a new carbon management plan, setting out our target to reduce our net emissions by 100% over the next 10 years. This will reduce our carbon footprint, help reduce dangerous climate change, and save us money while doing so. We have also continued our work to improve air quality in the town. We have been awarded over £10 million to fund different projects including installing more electric vehicle charging points, establishing a

Slough Electric Vehicle Car club, and a project to encourage taxi drivers to switch to electric vehicles. Through these projects, we are aiming to reduce air pollution in Slough, and by doing so, improve the health of our residents.

Finally, we have worked over the last year to increase the amount of household waste which is sent for reuse, **recycling** or composting. We have run a campaign promoting the 'Just Four' message to Slough households, which has led to an improvement in the recycling rate for the town over the last year. Over 26% of all Slough's household waste was sent for reuse, recycling or composting this year – the highest amount in the last five years!

Case Study: Urban Forest

What are we doing? The council is currently working to create an Urban Forest in Slough. £1 million of funding has been secured to plant over 9,000 trees across Slough. As part of this project, the Hawker Hill Field and recreation ground in front of Linden House is being transformed into an area of woodland planted with birch, oak, spruce, pine, rowan, beech and hawthorn. A boardwalk path will be created throughout the woodland, and a wildflower labyrinth will be planted.

Why are we doing this? The council is aiming to reduce our net carbon emissions by 100% over the next ten years, in order to help prevent dangerous climate change. Planting woodland reduces the amount of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere, as trees capture carbon as they grow.

How do we know its working? Estimates of how much carbon the trees will capture vary depending on how many trees survive to maturity, how large they grow, and what species of tree they are. However, all our estimations tell us that the 9,000 trees we are planting will capture a considerable amount of carbon dioxide each year, and that the amount they capture will increase every year as the trees grow larger. These trees will offset the council's carbon emissions, and by doing so, help to reduce global climate change.

How did we do?

Performance Measure	Previous Performance		Direction	Current Performance		Target
Average level of street cleanliness	G	B (2.49)	↑	G	B (2.91)	>=B
Total crime rate per 1,000 population	A	26.7	↓	A	27.7	<24.8
Percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling or composting	R	21.9%	↑	A	26.3%	>=30%

Priority Four: Our Residents will live in good quality homes

Priority four is about the housing in our town. This priority considers both privately-owned and council-managed housing, as well as the people who rent homes, own their homes, or are currently homeless or rough sleeping.

At the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, the housing team worked to ensure that **rough sleepers** in Slough were provided with emergency accommodation as part of the 'Everyone In' initiative. 78 rough sleepers from Slough were housed in hotel accommodation to protect them from COVID-19, and to reduce transmission of the virus in the community. While housed in this emergency accommodation, these individuals were able to access help and support from council officers, and take steps towards securing more permanent housing.

The pandemic, lockdown and businesses closures have created extreme financial pressures for many, and put people at risk of losing their homes. Over the last year, 1,745 households contacted our **Homeless Team** because they were worried about the possibility of becoming homeless. Our homeless team has been hard at work to ensure that as many of these households as possible were prevented from losing their homes.

Despite COVID-19 restrictions being in place for much of the last year, we have also continued to work to maintain safety in privately rented properties. We have continued to run the **housing licensing scheme**, which requires all HMO's in the town, as well as all privately rented properties in parts of Chalvey and the town centre, to be registered with the council. This allows us to improve the quality of rented accommodation by taking action against landlords who do not maintain their properties safely. Over 2,500 properties are now registered with the council as part of this scheme.

The last 12 months have also seen more **affordable homes** being completed in Slough. In partnership with Slough Urban Renewal, we have invested over £12 million to develop a number of affordable homes on small sites across the town. Over the last 12 months, four houses on Turton Way, three houses on Dorset Close and 12 family houses on Wentworth Avenue were completed. These properties will provide much needed social housing, and will all be allocated to local people in need of a home in the town. Planning is also underway for the next set of affordable homes to be created in Slough. Work has now begun to demolish 'Tower House' - an empty tower block in Chalvey. Planning permission has been gained for the site, and it will soon be transformed in 193 new homes for families, with a central green space and play area for children.

This last year also saw us take a major step in shaping the future of **house building** in Slough. Our Planning team are currently creating a new Local Plan for Slough, setting out our vision for how we want our area to develop in the future. This winter, we asked residents and local stakeholders to tell us their views on our spatial strategy, which shows which kind of buildings will be encouraged in which part of our town. This strategy sets out our plan to encourage the building of new homes in the town centre of Slough, making our town centre a vibrant and thriving place which provides homes for our local people. Over 300 people responded to this consultation, with 87% of them telling us they

support our plans to provide new homes in the town centre. The positive results from this consultation mean this strategy will now progress to the next stage, bringing new homes for Slough people in our town centre one step closer.

Case Study: Wentworth Avenue

What are we doing? The council has recently completed the construction of twelve brand new homes on Wentworth Avenue, Britwell. The spacious properties all have three bedrooms, and include gardens, bike storage and car parking. The homes are part of the council's strategy to turn small, disused sites across the town into social housing. Old garages, run-down properties and small parcels of land are being developed into attractive homes. The homes will provide much needed social housing for the town, and will be rented out to local families in need of a home.

Why are we doing this? Slough is in need of more affordable homes. There are currently families on the waiting list for social housing, who are living in temporary accommodation while they wait for a home to become available. Developing new social housing saves the council money by avoiding expensive temporary accommodation, and provides local people with the permanent and affordable homes they need.

How do we know its working? 12 families are moving into the new homes on Wentworth Avenue. This reduces the amount of people waiting for a home, saves the council money, and provides these families with good-quality housing to allow them to build successful and fulfilled lives.

How did we do?

Performance Measure	Previous Performance		Direction	Current Performance		Target
Number of homeless households in temporary accommodation	A	359	↓	R	414	<=299
Number of permanent dwellings completed during the year	A	503	↓	A	501	>=650
Number of mandatory licensed HMOs	A	142	↑	G	267	>=250
The number of service requests that took 90 or more days to close	-	101	↓	R	301	>100

Priority Four: Slough will attract, retain and grow businesses and investment to provide opportunities for our residents

Priority Five focuses on the economy of Slough. This priority centres on the regeneration of Slough, the transport infrastructure in our town, and the businesses these support.

At the start of the year, we launched the **Slough Business Improvement District** or 'BID'. The BID brings businesses in the town centre together to unlock the business potential of the area. The Slough BID will last for 5 years, and deliver more than £2 million of investment in the town centre during this time.

As the COVID-19 pandemic struck, the council worked with partners to **support businesses** in the town. We were awarded over £260,000 in funding from national government, which we passed on to the businesses in our town most affected by the national lockdowns. This funding aims to help businesses to welcome shoppers, diners and visitors back safely as restrictions lift.

Over the last year, the **regeneration** of Slough has continued at a fast pace, with design, planning and building work continuing throughout the pandemic. In February, we were delighted to announce that **two new hotels** had opened on the former library site at the junction of the Bath and Windsor Roads. The Moxy and Residence Inn hotels form part of an exciting residential, retail and leisure hub being created on the former Slough library site, to boost Slough's profile and add life to the town centre.

Planning for further regeneration of the town has also continued over the last year. Plans are being developed to transform the **Montem Lane** site, which previously housed the old leisure centre, into 212 new homes. These homes will be a mix of apartments and family houses, and will include improvements to the woodland area and the brook to make an attractive outside space. Plans are also being created to develop **Stoke Wharf** into a vibrant new neighbourhood, including 300 new homes, and opening up the canal waterway for the benefit of the wider community. Finally, British Land, the owners and managers of the Queensmere and Observatory shopping centre, have been working with the council on their proposals to redevelop the **town centre**. They are aiming to consult with residents on these plans in the spring of 2021, before submitting a planning application in the autumn – bringing the regeneration of the town centre one step closer!

Over the last year, we have also worked to improve the **transport** infrastructure of Slough. The COVID-19 pandemic caused unprecedented shifts in how we use transport. In June, the council trailed a bus and cycle lane along the Bath Road, as part of the government's initiative to get more people walking and cycling during the COVID-19 crises. In December, this trial was adapted after consultation with Slough residents. The new bus lane provides more room on the shared pavement for pedestrians and cyclists, by allowing more confident cyclists to travel safely in the bus lane. We also made improvements to the roads in our town, including starting work on the £2million improvements to Langley High Street, and launched our exciting e-scooters trial!

Case Study: E-Scooters

What are we doing? Slough is currently taking part in a trial scheme to allow electric scooters to be used on roads. The council is working with the electric vehicle company Neuron Mobility to pilot the rental of their bright orange e-scooters, complete with world-leading safety features such as voice guidance and lockable helmets. The e-scooters can be picked up and parked at 60 stations across the town, providing people with an easy and fast way to get around Slough.

Why are we doing this? Slough has high levels of air pollution in parts of the town, which can lead to health problems such as asthma or lung cancer. Electric scooters produce very little air pollution and carbon dioxide, allowing people to travel around the town in a way that is fast, affordable, and environmentally friendly.

How do we know its working? In just the first five months of the trial, 10,000 people signed up to use the e-scooters. In this time, riders in Slough have covered 100,000km. When we surveyed riders, we found out that 60% of trips were combined with public transport, and 40% of trips had replaced a car journey. This means that the e-scooters are successfully reducing the amount of car journeys people make in Slough, and by doing so, improving air quality and health outcomes for residents.

How did we do?

Performance Measure	Previous Performance		Direction	Current Performance		Target
Business rate in year collection rate	-	95.8% (£103.8m)	↓	-	90.0% (£68.4m)	n/a
Access to employment: unemployment rate	A	3.0%	↓	R	8.9%	<6.5
Average journey time from Heart of Slough to M4 J6 (M-F 16:30-18:30)	G	6 mins 13s	↓	G	6 mins 22s	<10mins

Partnership Working

Collaborative and partnership working is a key part of how we operate at the council. Over the last year, we have worked in partnership with many of the key organisations operating in Slough, including the organisations from the voluntary sector, our local NHS colleagues, the police, businesses, schools and many more.

This year, the **Slough Leaders Group** was formed to encourage partnership working in Slough at a strategic level. The group brings together leaders from some of the key organisations working in Slough for regular meetings, in order to allow organisations to build connections and identify opportunities for collaboration. The group brings together representatives from:

- Slough Borough Council
- Thames Valley Chamber of Commerce
- Frimley Collaborative CCG (formerly the East Berkshire CCG)
- Frimley Health NHS Foundation Trust
- Thames Valley Berkshire Local Enterprise Partnership
- Slough Council for Voluntary Services
- Thames Valley Police
- Windsor Forest Colleges Group
- Berkshire Public Health

The group has worked together on several projects, including COVID-19 recovery in Slough, work to create a new brand for Slough, and the Slough 2040 Vision.

The **Slough 2040 Vision** outlines the shared ambitions of the group for the future of Slough. The vision was created by engaging with the local people of Slough – our residents, elected councillors, and the organisations that serve the people of Slough. By listening to their voices, we have created a bold and ambitious shared vision of Slough's future. Over the next 20 years, we will work in partnership with the residents, public bodies, charities and businesses of Slough to transform this vision into reality. *(Note: Slough 2040 Vision wheel to be included showing content).*

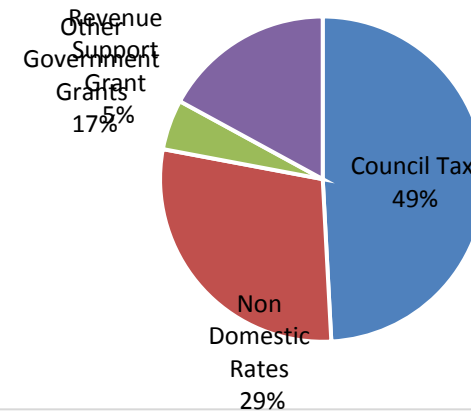
We also work collaboratively through our **Partnership Boards**. These include our three statutory boards – the Slough Wellbeing Board, the Safer Slough Partnership, and the Slough Safeguarding Board – and the other boards which sit alongside these, including the Regeneration, Economy and Skills board, the Health and Social Care Partnership Board, and the Children and Young People's Partnership Board. You can read more about our partnership boards in the separate annual reports which several of these boards produce, and which are published on our website.

Our Budget

These pages contain information about the council's budget, and how we spent our money over the last year. The current forecast position as at 31 March 2021 is an overspend on service budgets of £6.580m. However, work is still ongoing and the figures are likely to change.

Directorate	Revised Budget £'000	PROVISIONAL (Year End) Position 2020/21 £'000	Full Year Variance £'000
Adult and Communities	51,721	53,966	2,245
Children, Learning and Skills	40,632	45,504	4,872
Regeneration	(886)	3,475	4,361
Place & Development	20,947	21,466	519
Finance and Resources	10,529	18,001	7,472
Chief Executive Office	1,123	1,123	0
Service Total	124,066	143,535	19,469
Non-Service Areas			
Treasury Management	915	1,735	820
Other Corporate Items	(3,975)	(3,275)	700
Total Expenditure	121,006	141,995	20,989
<u>Funded by:</u>			
Council Tax	(61,121)	(61,121)	0
Business Rates – Local Share	(33,869)	(33,869)	0
Business Rates Surplus	(1,970)	(1,970)	0
Revenue Support Grant	(6,222)	(6,222)	0
Other Grants	(21,230)	(21,230)	0
Funding Total	(124,412)	(124,412)	0
COVID Grant Estimate	3,406	(11,003)	(14,409)
Total including COVID Grants	0	6,580	6,580

Council Income



Council Net Expenditure

