



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 16th February,  
2016  
7.00 pm

Committee Room Two  
Town Hall  
Redditch



[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)

**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact  
Jess Bayley and Amanda Scarce  
Democratic Services Officers**

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 16th February, 2016  
7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

## Agenda

### Membership:

Cllrs: Jane Potter (Chair) Gareth Prosser  
Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) Paul Swansborough  
Joe Baker Jennifer Wheeler  
David Bush Nina Wood-Ford  
Andrew Fry

<b>1. Apologies and named substitutes</b>	To receive apologies for absence and details of any Councillor (or co-optee substitute) nominated to attend this meeting in place of a member of this Committee.
<b>2. Declarations of interest and of Party Whip</b>	To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests, and any Party Whip.
<b>3. Minutes</b> (Pages 1 - 12)	To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the following dates: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 5th January 2016</li><li>• 1st February 2016</li></ul> (Minutes attached) <b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b>
<b>4. Task Group Reviews - Draft Scoping Documents</b> (Pages 13 - 18) Councillor Tom Baker-Price	To consider any scoping documents provided for possible Overview and Scrutiny review.  The following draft scoping document has been received: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Improving Disabled People's Access to Redditch's Taxi Fleet Short, Sharp Review – Proposed by Councillor Tom Baker-Price.</li></ul> (Scoping document attached) <b>All Wards</b>

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<p><b>5. Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19</b></p> <p>(Pages 19 - 40)</p> <p>Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To consider the Executive Committee's proposals for the Council's budget, as detailed in the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19, and to determine whether to endorse these proposals and / or to make alternative budget proposals for the consideration of Council.</p> <p>(Members may also wish to refer to the minutes from the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 2nd February 2016 – specifically minute 89 - when considering this item).</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>All Wards</b></p>
<p><b>6. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme</b></p> <p>(Pages 41 - 64)</p>	<p>To consider the minutes of the latest meeting(s) of the Executive Committee and also to consider whether any items on the Executive Committee's Work Programme are suitable for scrutiny.</p> <p>(Minutes attached).</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>7. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme</b></p> <p>(Pages 65 - 68)</p>	<p>To consider the Committee's current Work Programme, and potential items for addition to the list arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The Forward Plan / Committee agendas</li><li>• External publications</li><li>• Other sources.</li></ul> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>8. Task Groups - Progress Reports</b></p> <p>Councillor Gareth Prosser</p>	<p>To consider progress to date on the current reviews against the terms agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The current reviews in progress are:</p> <p>a) Joint Worcestershire Increasing Physical Activity Task Group – Redditch Borough Council representative, Councillor Gareth Prosser.</p> <p>(Verbal report)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>

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## 9. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Borough Director, during the course of the meeting to consider excluding the public from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:

“That, under S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (to be specified) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act”.

These paragraphs are as follows:

Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to:

- Para 1 – any individual;
- Para 2 – the identity of any individual;
- Para 3 – financial or business affairs;
- Para 4 – labour relations matters;
- Para 5 – legal professional privilege;
- Para 6 – a notice, order or direction;
- Para 7 – the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime;

and may need to be considered as ‘exempt’.

**(No Specific Ward Relevance)**





# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 5th January, 2016

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Jane Potter (Chair), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Joe Baker, Roger Bennett, Andrew Fry and Gareth Prosser

### Officers:

Jayne Pickering, Liz Tompkin and Sam Morgan and Jess Bayley

### Democratic Services Officers:

Amanda Scarce

### 61. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors David Bush, Paul Swansborough, Jennifer Wheeler and Nina Wood-Ford. Councillor Roger Bennett was present as a substitute for Councillor Bush.

### 62. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

Councillor Andrew Fry declared an other disclosable interest under Minute No 65, as in his capacity as a Worcestershire County Councillor he had contributed, from his divisional funds, to the production costs of the LGBT leaflet.

### 63. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED that

**the Minutes of the meeting held on 8th December 2015 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

### 64. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT, RENT AND CAPITAL 2016/17- PRE-SCRUTINY

The Chair reminded Members that this report was being presented for pre-scrutiny and the recommendations within the report would

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Chair

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be considered by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 12th January 2016.

Officers proceeded to present the report and during this presentation the following areas were highlighted:

- The draft 2016/17 budget for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) taking account of the new Welfare Reform legislation – the main issue being that rents within the social housing sector were to be decreased by one per cent each year for the next four years with effect from 1st April 2016.
- The knock-on effects of this decrease and the negative impact on the HRA Business Plan.
- The actual decrease in rent which would apply for 2016/17 compared to those for 2015/16 and the cumulative impact of the decrease.
- Details of the Right to Buy (RTB) Scheme and the number of sales anticipated and the rent loss arising from those sales.
- The proposals for new housing stock and the options which officers would be putting before the Housing Advisory Panel (HAP) for its consideration.

Following presentation of the report, Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- A breakdown of the Council's income from capital receipts (from Council house sales) and further information about how this money had been used was requested.
- For future years Members requested that this information be included in the HRA report if possible.
- Members asked for further information about the level of rent increases for Council properties over the last three years.
- The borrowings and the potential to repay these within the timescales indicated.
- The number of current Council properties and details of the number and type of properties which needed to be built in the coming years, together with the options open to the Council.
- The restrictions imposed on the Council from the legislation in respect of the HRA.
- The impact on those Councils which had chosen to transfer their stock to other providers and the challenges arising from such transfers.

After further discussion it was



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**RESOLVED that**

**the Housing Revenue Account Initial Budget 2016/17 report be noted.**

**65. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION TRACKER**

Officers highlighted that this quarterly report provided an update on the actions which had been taken in order to implement recommendations which had been made by the Committee. A number of further updates were provided:

- Voluntary and Community Sector – the Grants Officer post was currently being reviewed and once this review had been completed then it was anticipated that the recommendations would be implemented.
- LGBT Task Group – Councillor Baker, as former Chair of the Task Group, confirmed that LGBT Support Services Redditch was making good progress with producing the leaflet proposed by the Task Group. Legal Services had offered to review the leaflet's content prior to sending it to be printed. Councillor Baker shared his gratitude and thanks with Worcestershire County Councillors from across the County who had contributed from their divisional funds towards the cost of producing this leaflet.
- The recommendations made at the last meeting in respect of fees and charges had not been included within the tracker as final decisions remained to be made by Council.

Following presentation of the report, Members commented on a number of items, in particular there was disappointment in the lack of movement in respect of the Access for Disabled People Task Group's recommendation for the installation of a canopy over the ramp access to the Shopmobility area. Officers were requested to contact the Kingfisher Centre one final time to establish whether this action would be completed in the foreseeable future.

(During consideration of this item Councillor Andrew Fry declared an other disclosable interest in respect of the LGBT Support Services Redditch group's leaflet as he had contributed divisional funding, in his capacity as a County Councillor, to support the development of this document).

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**66. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME**

Members' attention was drawn to Minute Nos. 59, 61 and 62 of the Executive Committee's meeting held on 15th December 2015 and which referred to the recommendations put forward by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which highlighted that those recommendations had been endorsed, a number of which would also go forward to Council for its consideration.

An additional, more up to date, copy of the Executive Committee's Work Programme had been tabled and Officers highlighted the changes which had been made to this:

- The inclusion of the Winyates Centre Consultation.
- A number of Health and Safety policies, previously recorded on the plan as separate items, had been incorporated into a combined item within the Work Programme.
- The Leisure Intervention update would now be provided to the Executive Committee at its April 2016 meeting.

During consideration of the Work Programme Members discussed the timing of the report from the Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP) and questioned whether it was possible to consider this at a later date. It was commented that at Worcestershire County Council a similar report was brought before the September/October meeting, which Members felt was timelier and would allow for it to be given appropriate consideration outside of the pre-election period.

Members raised concerns in respect of the Matchborough and Winyates Centre consultations and discussed the lessons learned from the re-development which had taken place at Church Hill District Centre. The Committee concurred that it was important that the relevant Ward Members were involved in the process and agreed that it would be prudent for the Committee to also play a role at all stages, including pre-scrutiny of any suggested re-developments.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) Officers pass on the Committee's comments, as detailed in the preamble above, in respect of the IRP Report for consideration;**

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- 2) the Committee be given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise and monitor any future developments at Matchborough and Winyates Centre;
- 3) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15<sup>th</sup> December 2015 be noted; and
- 4) the content of the 1st February to 31st May 2016 edition of the Executive committee Work Programme be noted.

## 67. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

In presenting the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme Officers reminded Members that, with their agreement, an extra meeting had been arranged for Wednesday 20th January, which would be dedicated to the scrutiny of the Council's budget.

### **RESOLVED that**

**the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

## 68. TASK GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

Joint Worcestershire Increasing Physical Activity Task Group –  
Redditch Borough Council Representative, Councillor Gareth  
Prosser

Councillor Prosser confirmed that there had not been a meeting since early December and it was therefore unlikely that the final report would meet its deadline of January 2016. He believed that it would now be ready in March 2015. Members agreed that the Chair of the Task Group, accompanied by Councillor Prosser, should be asked to present the final report to the Committee.

### **RESOLVED that**

**Officers contact Officers supporting the Joint Worcestershire Increasing Physical Activity Task Group to request that the Chair of the group present the final report to the Committee.**

## 69. HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

In the absence of Councillor Nina Wood-Ford, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), Officers provided Members with a copy of the Minutes of the Committee's latest meeting. Attention was drawn to

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minute No. 770 which referred to an urgent item which had been considered in respect of the Quality of Acute Hospital Services following the Care Quality Commission's decision to place the Trust in special measures as a result of an inspection which had taken place in July 2015.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 8.03 pm



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 1st February, 2016

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Jane Potter (Chair), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors David Bush, Andrew Fry, Paul Swansborough, David Thain (substituting for Councillor Gareth Prosser), Jennifer Wheeler and Nina Wood-Ford

### Also Present:

Councillor John Fisher, (Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management)

### Officers:

J Pickering

### Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley

## 70. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Gareth Prosser and it was confirmed that Councillor David Thain was attending as his substitute.

## 71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any party whip.

## 72. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 TO 2018/19

Officers presented a report on the subject of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 to 2018/19. During the delivery of this presentation the following matters were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- The Revenue Support Grant (RSG) settlement had been decreasing in size in recent years and officers had been anticipating that the grant would be withdrawn altogether by 2020.

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Chair

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- However, the RSG settlement for the Council, announced in December 2015, had been worse than anticipated requiring action to achieve a balanced budget in both 2016/17 and in subsequent years.
- Many Councils were in a similarly difficult position having not anticipated the level of reduction and the speed at which it would come into effect.
- The Government had changed the way it calculated the RSG, and it now took into account anticipated growth in Council Tax revenue as part of the calculation.
- Business rates were another key source of funding for local authorities. The Government would allow local authorities to keep 100 per cent of business rate growth in due course, but this would not come into effect until 2020/21 at the earliest.
- The Government was working on the basis that business rate growth would be increasing nationally. Modest growth was anticipated in Redditch and this had been taken into account in figures for the following three year period in which the Council would only be able to keep 50 per cent of business rate growth.
- Councils would also continue to receive the business rate baseline, which was calculated by the Government. In Redditch this was approximately £2 million per annum.
- In line with the new process for calculating RSG contributions the Government was assessing the core spending power of Councils. Where this was less than the amount a Council received in business rates the local authority would need to pay back funding to the Government. It was anticipated that in Redditch this would come into effect in 2019/20.
- The New Homes Bonus (NHB), another core source of funding for the Council, was also likely to change in due course. The Government was in the process of consulting on potential changes which could impact on the Council's funding in the long-term.
- As part of changes to the NHB it was likely that a specific budget, of potentially £1.4 billion, would be allocated to NHB across the country. Under this arrangement funding would need to be divided between Councils rather than be allocated on the basis of the number of new homes built in a given area.
- For the first time Councils were being offered the option to seek a four year funding deal from the Government. However, this deal related to the RSG only.
- Local authorities had been advised that in future there would be greater flexibility over use of capital receipts from sales of surplus assets. However, further detail remained to be provided on how this would operate and Councils would need to produce robust efficiency plans in order to qualify.

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- When calculating costs over the next three years Officers had taken into account likely progression in increments amongst staff as well as a predicted 1 per cent pay rise.
- The Council had also agreed to pay all staff the Rowntree Foundation Living Wage as a minimum. This was higher than the new National Living Wage that had been introduced by the Government.
- When calculating future income Officers had taken into account the amount that would be paid back from the HRA to the general fund, which had been used to cover the costs of borrowing to pay for the housing stock in previous years.
- There remained a cap of 2 per cent for district and Borough Councils in terms of the level at which Council Tax could be increased before triggering a referendum. In the report an assumption had been made that the Council would increase Council Tax by 1.9 per cent per annum over the following three years.
- There would be a reduction in the administrative subsidy grant as benefits services had been transferred to the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) at the start of February 2016.
- A balanced budget would be achieved in 2016/17, though savings would need to be secured to balance the budget in subsequent years.

Following presentation of the report Members discussed a number of points in further detail including the following:

- The capital bid to monitor and manage asbestos and whether this budget would be sufficient to handle any problems with asbestos during the redevelopment of Matchborough centre. It was reported that the Place Partnership was confident there were sufficient funds to manage asbestos on Council properties.
- The status of the redevelopment of Matchborough centre. It was confirmed that this was subject to public consultation and no decision had been made on any redevelopment of Matchborough or any other District Centre and any recommendations following the feasibility study would be presented to Members.
- The extent to which capital funding was available to support the redevelopment of Matchborough centre. Members were advised that no funds had been allocated to the redevelopment of Matchborough centre and that funding was not necessarily required from the Council.

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- The £330k s106 funding proposed to expand the dance studio at the Abbey Stadium and the options that this might involve including the introduction of a mezzanine level. Members questioned the projected costs and income levels for the service.
- The borrowing costs for the Council and the interest rates applicable to these borrowing costs.
- The reasons why a capital bid had been submitted for maintenance of the Proctors Barn Lane kerbing and passing place. Members suggested that there were other car parks and roads on Council land where the surface was in a worse condition.
- The use of funding from reserves that had previously been allocated to other Council projects and the impact that this might have in the long-term on the Council's ability to achieve a balanced budget.
- The capital bid for car parking enhancements and whether £200k was a realistic figure. Officers explained that previously £277k had been allocated to car parking enhancements but following a review this had been reduced to £200k. There was also the possibility that additional funding would be provided for this purpose from the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).
- The potential for Members to submit capital bids to enhance their locality.
- The four savings listed for Business Transformation and Community Services which had been identified following reviews and what these savings entailed.
- The value of Council assets that had been declared surplus and whether these had been advertised for sale on the Council's website. It was reported that the value of these assets was approximately £500k, though a portion would potentially need to be paid back to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).
- The information that would need to be included in an Efficiency Plan. Members were advised that further guidance remained to be provided by the Government, though it was likely that the plan would need to cover a four year period rather than the standard three years normally detailed in the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan.
- The approach the Council would adopt to balancing the budget in subsequent years. The Committee was informed



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that throughout the year officers would continue to address budget challenges and would be assessing the cost of addressing customer demand with a view to focus on the costs of meeting demand that added little value to the community. The Council would establish a matrix to assess how services could continue to add value whilst reducing costs.

- Achievements that had been made already in terms of service transformation and efficiency savings and the potential need for difficult decisions to be made about the budget moving forward.

The Committee also discussed in detail s106 funding with concerns raised that limited information was available to elected Members about how this funding process worked. There was general consensus that in the challenging economic climate facing local government s106 funding was an increasingly important aspect of local finances and Members therefore needed to have greater access to information about this process to ensure that these funds were used appropriately. Members agreed that further information, in the form of a briefing at a future meeting of the Committee, would be helpful and it was suggested that this briefing should be open to all Members to attend. The following questions were proposed for Officers to address in the presentation:

- How much funding is currently available to the Council in terms of s106 funds?
- What are the sources of s106 funding?
- What criteria are applied to determine how s106 funding is spent?
- Who determines how s106 funding is spent?
- What length of time is s106 funding available to the Council to use?
- How, if at all, can Members influence use of s106 funding?

At the end of these discussions the Committee

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the Head of Planning and Regeneration be invited to attend a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to deliver a presentation on the subject of s106 funding; and**

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- 2) the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.01 pm  
and closed at 8.16 pm

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

16th February 2016

**IMPROVING DISABLED PEOPLE'S ACCESS TO REDDITCH'S TAXI FLEET –  
PROPOSED SHORT, SHARP REVIEW**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Simon Wilkes, Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) and Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services.
Ward(s) Affected	All wards.
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

This report provides Members with an opportunity to consider a proposal that has been received for Members to undertake a Short, Sharp Review of action that could be taken to enhance the accessibility of local taxi fleets for people with disabilities.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** to approve one of the following options:

- 1) **Subject to any changes agreed during the meeting, the proposed Improving Disabled People's Access to Redditch's Taxi Fleet Short, Sharp Review be launched.**
- 2) **Members consider options for enhancing the accessibility of Redditch's taxi fleet for customers with disabilities at a forthcoming meeting (or meetings) of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**
- 3) **No further action be taken by Overview and Scrutiny Members in respect of this matter.**
- 4) **Alternative action, to be identified and clearly specified during the meeting, be taken in relation to this matter.**

**3. KEY ISSUES****Background**

- 3.1 In 2011 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee launched the Access for Disabled People Task Group. This group was tasked with investigating barriers facing people with disabilities who travelled into Redditch town centre on various modes of transport. As the review spanned two municipal years the membership of this Task

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Group changed but included the following: Councillors Andrew Fry (Chair from May 2012), Chalk and Y Smith (from May 2012), A Clayton and Hartnett (until April 2012), and former Councillors Mason (Chair until April 2012) and Quinney.

- 3.2 At the end of the review Members proposed a number of recommendations including two which had implications for taxi services in the Borough:
- 3.3 Recommendation 3: "Taxi companies should be offered licences to operate adapted vehicles for a longer period of time than standard vehicles to incentivise taxi firms to increase the number of adapted vehicles in their fleets. The vehicles should be permitted to operate for these lengthier periods of time subject to passing the three inspection tests and the MOT that the Council's licensing regime requires for each vehicle".
- 3.4 Recommendation 4: "Taxi drivers should be offered disability awareness training, which would include information about manually assisting people with disabilities, by Redditch Borough Council".
- 3.5 Following consultation the Licensing Committee adapted the Council's Private Hire Vehicle Policy to take into account the actions proposed in recommendation 3 and disability awareness training was also introduced for taxi drivers in accordance with recommendation 4.
- 3.6 However, during a meeting of the Redditch Licensing Taxi Forum in January 2016 concerns were raised about the services that were being provided to customers with disabilities. This included concerns about the availability of adapted vehicles for passengers who use wheelchairs.
- 3.7 In this context a review of this subject would be timely as it could help to address current concerns within the local community.

**Financial Implications**

- 3.8 There are no direct financial implications.

**Legal Implications**

- 3.9 A short, sharp review of this subject, if it is launched, will need to take into account applicable legislation including the Equality Act 2010 and any relevant legislation in respect of licensed hackney carriages and private hire vehicles.
- 3.10 Overview and Scrutiny reviews cannot consider specific licensing applications as this is subject to a separate and established quasi-judicial decision making process. The focus of this review, if it is launched, will only be on licensing policy issues.

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**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.11 At present there are no scrutiny Task Group or Short, Sharp Reviews taking place in Redditch. There is therefore capacity amongst both Members and the Democratic Services team to support this review.
- 3.12 A review of this subject would be focusing primarily on licensing matters. Representatives of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), which manages all Licensing functions on behalf of the Council, will need to be consulted throughout the investigation.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.13 The proposed review is intended to enhance the services available locally to customers with disabilities.
- 3.14 There are clear equalities and diversity implications to this proposed review. If the review is launched, Members should consider consulting with the Council's Policy and Equalities team for expert advice and guidance.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

No specific risks have been identified.

**5. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Improving Disabled People's Access to Redditch's Taxi Fleet Short, Sharp Review – Scoping Document.

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Jess Bayley, Democratic Services Officer  
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Tel.: (01527) 64252



**Scrutiny Proposal Form**

(This form should be completed by sponsoring Member(s), Officers and / or members of the public when proposing an item for Scrutiny).

**Note:** The matters detailed below have not yet received any detailed consideration. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reserves the right to reject suggestions for scrutiny that fall outside the Borough Council's remit.

Proposer's name and designation	Councillor Tom Baker-Price, Member for Headless Cross and Oakenshaw	Date of referral	16/02/16
Proposed topic title	Improving Disabled People's Access to Redditch's Taxi Fleet Short, Sharp Review		
Link to national, regional and local priorities and targets	<p><b><u>Local</u></b> Help me live my life independently</p> <p><b><u>National</u></b> Ensuring that disabled people are able to access the same services as everyone else with reasonable adjustments is a priority of parliament/the nation as demonstrated by the Human Rights Act 1999 and the Equality Act 2010.</p>		
Background to the issue	<p>On Monday 18th January Councillor A Clayton informed the Taxi Licensing Forum of the experiences of a disabled woman from Matchborough who went shopping and became stranded at the shops as she hadn't given any taxi firm 48 hours' notice (Redditch Standard, 22/1/16, p3). Disability Action Redditch (DAR) also report that disabled people have been charged 3 times more than a non-disabled person for the same journey and that several taxi firms refuse to take bookings for passengers who are wheelchair users. Although charging more for a disabled person is discriminatory it is common practise according to Scope and DAR.</p> <p>In 2013 an Overview and Scrutiny Task Group on "Access for disabled people" recommended that the age of wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) should be increased to elevate this problem. However according to Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) this has not led to a significant increase in WAV which, with a rising population with physical disabilities, is only compounding the problem. WRS Officers have suggested that "there are various options that are worthy of consideration and lessons that can be learned from experiences in other areas" creating a need to review this policy area.</p>		

<p>Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)</p>	<p>The review will review disabled access to the taxi fleet and propose relevant solutions. Specifically, it will review:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Ways to prevent overcharging.</li> <li>2) How to increase the number of WAV.</li> <li>3) How best to reduce the waiting time for WAV.</li> </ol> <p>The measure of success will be:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) DAR and disabled residents reporting they are being charged the same price as non-disabled people.</li> <li>2) An increased number of WAV.</li> <li>3) Disabled people able to get a WAV in less than 2 hours.</li> </ol> <p>Licensing officers have suggested that policy options and considering other authorities' experiences will enable the group to achieve the purposes of this review.</p> <p>This review is relevant to the Council's strategic purpose of 'Living my life independently and the Council is the taxi licensing authority for Redditch.</p>
<p>How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)</p>	<p>If this review can be launched this evening as a Short, Sharp Review I would suggest that it should be completed before the local elections in May, with a final completion date of 12th April 2016.</p>

**Please return this form to: Jess Bayley or Amanda Scarce, Democratic Services Officers, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH**  
**Email: [jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) / [a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)**



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**MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 – 2018/19**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering (Executive Director for Finance and Corporate resource)
Wards Affected	<b>All</b>
Ward Councillor Consulted	None specific

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

To enable Members to recommend the proposed budget for 2016/17 and to consider the impact of the financial settlement on the medium Term Financial Plan to 2018/19. .

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS****2.1 The Executive Committee was asked to RECOMMEND ;**

- 2.1.1 the savings and additional income for 2016/17 of £619k;
- 2.1.2 the revenue bids for 2016/17 of £10k;
- 2.1.3 the Capital bids for 2016/17 of £1.220m;
- 2.1.4 the unavoidable pressures for 2016/17 of £305k;
- 2.1.5 the increase in Council Tax for 2016/17 of 1.9%;
- 2.1.6 the transfer from balances of £598k; and

**2.2 The Executive Committee was asked to consider and comment on the future years Medium Term Financial Plan and approve the steps proposed to ensure the funding available meets the needs of the Borough over the next 3 years.****3. KEY ISSUES****Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The Council receives a proposed financial settlement on an annual basis from Central Government. Over the last few years the element of the funding allocated that relates to the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) has been reducing and the grant for 2015/16 is £1.567m.
- 3.2 Following announcements made in the Autumn Statement the Council was expecting this RSG to reduce to zero by the end of the Parliament i.e. 2019/20. Officers were considering plans to address this shortfall in revenue to ensure that a sustainable approach to the delivery of services was in place. Over the last few years the Council has taken

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every opportunity to deliver savings to meet the reduction in Government funding to include sharing of services with other Councils and looking to transform our services to our community. Savings of £1.5m per annum have been realised from these initiatives whilst increasing balances to £1.9m and officers are continuing to review services to improve the offer to our residents whilst delivering savings.

- 3.3 The Provisional Settlement was received in late December and contained more detail on funding allocations. The funding allocations have changed from 2016/17 and therefore the Revenue Support Grant will disappear for Redditch earlier than anticipated and by 2018/19 will only be £40k with payments to Government ( negative grant ) being made by 2019/20 of £330k.
- 3.4 In previous years the funding reductions have been calculated on the Business Rates Baseline together with the Revenue Support Grant. The Baseline Funding Level is the amount the Council retains from the £39m collected from Business Rates within the Borough. The following table shows the total funding received from Government in 2015/16.

<b>2015/16</b>	<b>£m</b>
Baseline Funding Level	2.003
Revenue Support Grant	1.578
<b>TOTAL FUNDING RECEIVED (Settlement Funding Assessment)</b>	<b>3.581</b>

- 3.5 From 2016/17, the Government has proposed changes to the way cuts are implemented. A new calculation called 'Core Funding' is to be used as the basis for reducing the funding given to the Council from Central Government. The Core Funding now includes the Council Tax Requirement (Council Tax Revenue) from 2015/16 together with the Settlement Funding Assessment ( as detailed in 3.4) .For Redditch, the Core Funding was worth £8.978m in 2015/16.

<b>2015/16</b>	<b>£m</b>
Settlement Funding Assessment	3.581
Council Tax Requirement	5.397
<b>CORE FUNDING</b>	<b>8.978</b>

- 3.6 It is proposed that between 2015/16 and 2019/20, uniform annual cuts are to be applied to each tier of local authorities' Core Funding. Over this four year period, the cumulative cut to lower tier services (Borough) will be 19.2%. This results in the new Core Funding Assessment to be £7.254m.

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	£m
Settlement Funding Assessment 2015/16	3.581
Council Tax Requirement 2015/16	5.397
Core Funding 2015/16	8.978
Cumulative Reduction	-19.2%
<b>CORE FUNDING 2019/20</b>	<b>7.254</b>

- 3.7 If Core funding for 2019/20 is £7.254m the Settlement Funding Assessment for Redditch ( funding to be received from Government ) is £1.857m. This is due to the income from Council Tax being taken as part of the Core Funding.

	£m
Core Funding 2019/20	7.254
Less - Council Tax Requirement	-5.397
<b>SETTLEMENT FUNDING ASSESSMENT</b>	<b>1.857</b>

- 3.8 Once the Settlement Funding Assessment falls below the amount the Council retains from Business Rates which would equate to £2.187m in 2019/20 the Council is then in the position to return funding to Government. In 2019/20 this is assessed to be £330k.

	£m
Business Rates Baseline 2019/20	2.187
Settlement Funding Assessment 2019/20	1.857
<b>PAYMENT TO GOVERNMENT</b>	<b>0.330</b>

- 3.9 It is clear that this new methodology for determining authorities' Revenue Support Grant (RSG) allocations takes into account individual authorities' council tax raising ability and the type of services provided. This is a significant change in the methodology and would appear to favour social services authorities, with significantly larger funding reductions for district councils. It reduces government funding assuming optimistic increases in housing growth and council tax increases and may prove to be unrealistic. Central government intend for local government to be able to spend the same level by the end of this Parliament in cash terms as it does today – therefore a real terms reduction.
- 3.10 The table below reflects the reductions to RSG funding for Redditch based on the Grant received in 2015/16 .

£000's	2015/16	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20
Redditch <i>Cumulative Reduction</i>	1,567	900 (-43%)	360 (-77%)	40 (-97%)	-330 (-121%)

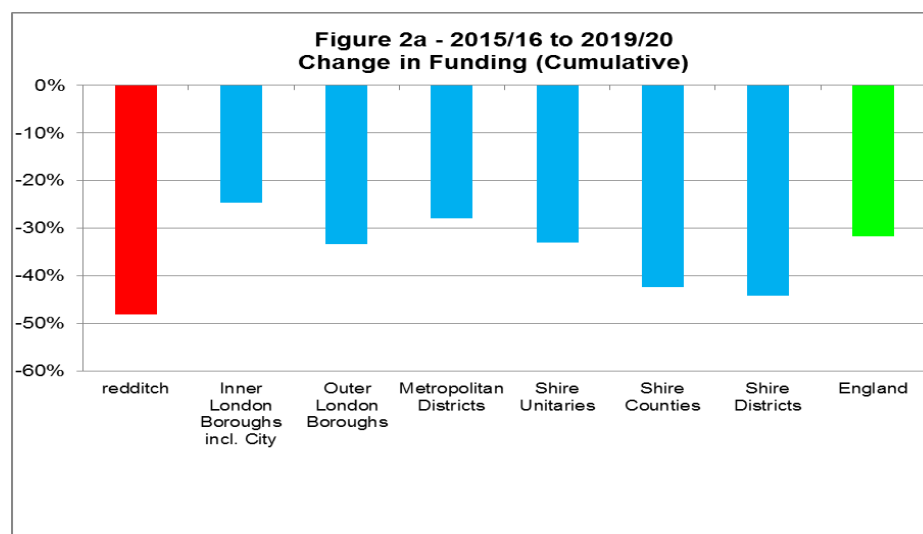
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3.11 As Members are aware there were indications in the Summer that the RSG would be withdrawn in full over the next 4 years. An assessment had been made of this loss within the financial planning however the front loading of the grant had not been anticipated. The following illustrates the impact of the settlement on council, the loss of RSG over the next 4 years up to and including 2019/20 compared to previous forecasts.

Revenue Support Grant	Medium Term Financial Plan Assumption £'000	Settlement December 2015 £'000	Reduction to Financial Plan Assumptions £'000
2016/17	1,499	900	-599
2017/18	1,424	360	-1,064
2018/19	700	40	-660
2019/20	350	-330	-680
<b>Total</b>	<b>3,973</b>	<b>970</b>	<b>-3,003</b>

3.12 The £3m shortfall in funding relates to that compared with the original budget assumptions. It is worth noting that the £3m loss increases to £5m should real terms inflation be added to the base position for 2015/16. The graph below shows the impact of the significant funding reductions over the 4 year period for Redditch compared to other Councils.



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- 3.13 The Council Tax Discount Scheme funding which was included into the Revenue Support Grant in 2013/14 will also disappear and therefore all funding for Council Tax Support will have to be met by the Borough.
- 3.14 The other element of significant income to the Council is New Home Bonus. The Government have stated that this fund will continue on the current basis for 2016-17. The position beyond 2016-17 is not yet confirmed as it is subject to consultation although it will continue albeit on a reformed basis.
- 3.15 The level of New Homes Bonus for 2016/17 is £1.1m. Based on projections included within the consultation paper the following table shows the impact of the reductions in New Homes Bonus that may face the Council depending on the final scheme implemented.

£000's	2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21	Total
Redditch	295	493	622	688	2,098

- 3.16 The consultation also include proposals to reduce New Homes Bonus (NHB) where there is no local plan, where homes have been allowed on appeal or where the growth would have occurred anyway.
- 3.17 The consultation on what proposals for the move to 100% business rates retention may look like is expected to be issued in June 2016. This may be of benefit to Redditch but with anticipated appeals on Business Rates and limited information available on the proposals it is difficult to assess the impact of the financial plan.
- 3.18 As part of the financial statement information there was confirmation that Councils could take up a four year deal to ensure stability across the financial plan. There was indication that an efficiency statement would have to be provided to secure this agreement but the details of format or monitoring arrangements of the efficiency arrangements have not yet been released. Further reports will be brought to members for consideration once the details are available.
- 3.19 Other key elements of the Provisional Settlement and Autumn Statement so far as it relates to local government are:
- **A social care council tax 'precept'** of 2% will allow councils responsible for delivering adult social care such as Worcestershire County Council to raise up to £2 billion a year by 2019-20. Local authorities will be given this additional 2% flexibility on their current council tax referendum threshold to be used entirely for adult social

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care. This is a new power for relevant councils to increase council tax to specifically pay towards social care in their areas;

- **An extra £1.5bn for the Better Care Fund** by the end of the Parliament – more information needed to understand the impact of this;
- The extension of **Small Business Rate Relief** to continue for another year – this is good news for local businesses and for our Business Rates Accounts;
- “Local authorities running education to become a thing of the past, delivering £600m savings to Education Services Grant”;
- Plans to build an additional 400,000 affordable homes by the end of the decade.
- An apprenticeship levy will be introduced in April 2017 at a rate of 0.5% of an employer’s pay bill, to deliver 3 million apprenticeship starts by 2020. This is estimated to cost this Council around £30k ( General Fund) and £17k ( HRA) pa from 2017-18.
- Over £500 million by 2019-20 for the Disabled Facilities Grant to fund up to 85,000 housing adaptations pa. More detail on this proposal is needed to fully understand the impact of this change;
- **Homelessness** - increased funding of £10m available to invest in innovative ways of preventing and reducing homelessness. More detail on this proposal is needed to fully gauge the impact;
- Restrictions on **shared ownership** to be removed and planning system reformed to deliver more homes;
- Real-terms protection for the police budget.

3.20 Some further interesting points were included:

- Proposal to reform services and make them more efficient. A package of new flexibilities will be introduced to encourage local authorities to **release surplus assets**. Local authorities will be able to spend 100% of their fixed asset receipts investing in making services more efficient (local authorities currently hold £225 billion in assets). Under this guidance councils will be able to use new capital receipts from April 2016 to March 2019 to pay for the revenue set up costs of projects that are designed to make revenue savings. It will be for individual local authorities to decide if a project qualifies. In order to qualify, councils will be required to prepare an annual efficiency strategy listing all qualifying projects and this strategy, and any variations to it, will need to be approved by full council.
- It is proposed that the regime of referenda for “excessive” council tax increases will continue at the current rate of 2 percent. Council’s are asked to be mindful of prevailing inflation rates when considering increases and the DCLG have confirmed that there is no council tax freeze grant offer for 2016-17. This does not affect past allocations which are locked into the revenue settlement.

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- 3.21 The impact of the settlement and in particular the speed that the RSG is reducing compared to that originally anticipated, together with the uncertainties around the New Homes Bonus funding will make it difficult to identify all the savings required to balance the financial position over the medium term.
- 3.22 A response to the proposed settlement has been sent by the Council and is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.23 In light of the financial pressures facing the Council a full review of all expenditure and income generated has been undertaken by officers to ensure that only essential spend in delivering services is incurred which will give the Council the ability to increase balances to support the pressures over the next 4 years.
- 3.24 As part of this exercise officers have identified a number of financial unavoidable pressures that they have raised as impacting on their ability to deliver their service against the proposed budgets for 2016/17. In addition they have proposed savings or additional income generated and capital bids for projects and replacement of equipment.
- 3.25 The savings and additional income include:
- General review by managers of all budgets to identify where expenditure budgets can be released to support the financial plan
  - Further savings from the Place review within Environmental Services
  - Funding from earmarked reserves of associated expenditure
  - Significant income generated from the crematorium. As Members are aware the improved facilities will increase income whilst presenting an enhanced environment to the public and funeral officials
- 3.26 The identified unavoidable pressures include:
- The financial cost associated with the increase in properties in the Borough and therefore the additional refuse staffing required
  - The financial cost of the reductions in supporting people funding and the potential loss of the Early Help contract due to commissioning
  - The cost associated with retaining the fraud team within the Council to support identification and prosecution of fraud for the remaining services to be undertaken by the Council following the housing benefit fraud work being transferred to the DWP
  - The shortfall in income following Members decision to defer the alternative model of service delivery in Leisure whilst a full review of customer demand and value is undertaken

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- 3.27 The Capital bids proposed include:
- Purchase of a new refuse vehicle to address the additional demand on the service from the new properties in the Borough
  - Improvements to the gym equipment and the dance studio at the Abbey Stadium
  - Flood mitigation works

In relation to funding of the Capital Programme from borrowing; the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP - statutory element of the funding calculation) will be determined by charging the expenditure over the expected useful life of the relevant assets. This will be the principal annuity with an annual interest rate of 4% starting in the year after the asset becomes operational. This is a change from previous years, where MRP was charged in equal instalments over the useful life. This change has come about in order to recognise the time value of money, resulting in less charge in early years, rising as time goes on

- 3.28 Clearly the impact of the reduction in RSG and the proposed unavoidable pressures have resulted in a financial position that is worse than that originally anticipated and officers have therefore considered all elements of funding to achieve a balanced budget for 2016/17. It is proposed that a number of actions are undertaken to achieve a balanced financial position over the financial plan period and reports will be presented to members during 2016/17 to identify how the shortfalls in future years can be met.
- 3.29 It is proposed that officers undertake a comprehensive exercise of mapping all demand that is met by the Council. This will involve an full analysis of the associated costs and the value to our residents and community in how we achieve the demand. This will enable the Council to address services across a matrix of cost / demand and value and to focus on those areas whereby high cost / low value/ low demand can be explored further. This would provide opportunities to work with other stakeholders or to enable the Council to decide if a service provided really gives value to both the Council and the community. It is anticipated that further savings and reductions in costs can be realised from this exercise.
- 3.30 The 3 year financial summary, including the reductions in grant and the proposed pressures and savings is shown overleaf;



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<b>REDDITCH 2016/17-2018/19</b>			
	<b>2016-17</b>	<b>2017-18</b>	<b>2018-19</b>
	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>	<b>£000</b>
Departmental Expenditure (Starting Position)	10,717	10,593	10,593
Incremental Progression/Inflation on Utilities	10	221	559
Unavoidables	305	364	370
Revenue Bids/Revenue impact of capital bids	10	10	10
Savings and Additional income	-619	-522	-531
<b>Net Service Expenditure</b>	<b>10,424</b>	<b>10,666</b>	<b>11,002</b>
Investment Income	-494	-494	-495
Cost of Borrowing	835	1,014	994
Recharge to Capital Programme	-505	-505	-505
<b>Net Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>10,260</b>	<b>10,681</b>	<b>10,996</b>
Funding from reserves	0	0	0
Revenue Support Grant	-900	-360	-40
Business Rates Retention (Baseline Funding)	-2,020	-2,060	-2,120
Business Rates Growth	0	0	0
Funding from Business Rate Pool	0	0	0
New Homes Bonus	-1,126	-1,154	-695
New Homes Bonus Community Scheme	0	0	0
Collection Fund Surplus (Council Tax)	-104	0	0
Council Tax	-5,574	-5,725	-5,932
Other Grants	-16		
Admin Subsidy Grant Reduction	101	127	167
Business Rates Growth	-50	-50	-50
Parish Precept	8	8	8
Transfer from Balances	-579	0	0
<b>Funding Total</b>	<b>-10,260</b>	<b>-9,215</b>	<b>-8,663</b>
<b>Shortfall</b>	<b>-0</b>	<b>1,466</b>	<b>2,333</b>

- 3.31 Should the budget projections for 2016/17 be approved the balances will reduce to £1.3m which remains at £550k above the minimum level that is set by the S151 Officer .

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**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.32 The pressures as identified will ensure that services are delivered to the community. The additional cuts to RSG will need to be addressed to ensure that quality of service provision is maintained in the Borough.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.33 Undertaking a comprehensive review of the financial cost and the value of the demand on all the Councils services will ensure that all customers needs will be identified to enable members to make informed and considered judgements about the budget over the financial plan.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

To mitigate the risks associated with the financial pressures facing the Authority regular monitoring reports are presented to both officers and Members to enable proactive action being undertaken to address any areas of concern.

**5. APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 – response to Settlement
- Appendix 2 – Proposed Savings
- Appendix 3 – Proposed revenue bids
- Appendix 4 – Proposed Unavoidable pressures
- Appendix 5 – Capital Bids

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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## Appendix 1

**Redditch Borough Council's response to consultation questions*****Question 1: Do you agree with the methodology for allocating central funding in 2016-17, as set out in paragraphs 2.6 to 2.8?***

No. Council tax income should not be used in the formula for calculating the distribution of central resources. Local authorities are pursuing tax base growth and taking decisions on the level of council tax as a means of meeting cost pressures and offsetting reductions in central grant funding.

In addition it is clear that growth in housing (therefore an increase in tax base) results in additional residents to provide services for. Therefore a proportion of the tax base increase also needs to be used to address the resultant pressures associated with this growth, for instance demographic or volume changes in leisure, early help and environmental services eg. waste collection. To build assumed increases in council tax means this growth is required just to maintain a standstill position, and does not contribute to cost pressures over and above this. The Council therefore would have to meet this pressure elsewhere or not provide the services to our residents.

***Question 2: Do you agree with the proposed methodology for calculation of the council tax requirement for 2016-17, as set out in paragraphs 2.10 and 2.11?***

The calculation of council tax requirement for 2016/17 takes into account increases in the tax base that are due to one off growth as a result of changes to the councils Council Tax Support Scheme. These should not be part of the calculation moving forward as it is not a true reflection of the real growth in the District.

***Question 3: Do you agree with the proposed methodology in paragraph 2.12 for splitting the council tax requirement between sets of services?***

No specific comments as this does not effect this Council.

***Question 4: Do you wish to propose any transitional measures to be used?***

Yes. To be faced with such a significant level of funding changes at such a late stage ( weeks away from setting the budget) and will no previous indication results in a severe challenge in achieving a balanced budget. The Council would not be able to make considered and informed decisions on savings and this would be impossible in the current timeline. Therefore savings may carry a greater risk that they would not be fully realised in 2016/17. A transitional system which limits the percentage reduction in total funding and which ideally also takes account of cost pressures should be implemented.

The impact could also be reduced should there be continued funding for the Local Council Tax Support Scheme which is currently funded as part of the RSG.

***Question 5: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to fund the New Homes Bonus in 2016-17 with £1.275 billion of funding held back from the settlement, on the basis of the methodology described in paragraph 2.15?***

For Redditch Borough Council New Homes Bonus represents a significant source of income, however, raising the top slice will increase the impact to local authorities of reductions in overall RSG. Therefore the top slice should remain the same with any unused funds being returned to authorities as in previous years.

**Question 6: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to hold back £50 million to fund the business rates safety net in 2016-17, on the basis of the methodology described in paragraph 2.19?**

No. The intention was that the business rates safety net should be funded by income from the business rates levy. There has not been a change to this policy and the Council does not see the rationale as to why the Government would require this top slice. Releasing this top slice would provide resources for some transitional protection to those Councils most greatly affected.

**Question 7: Do you agree with the Government's proposed approach in paragraph 2.24 to paying £20 million additional funding to the most rural areas in 2016-17, distributed to the upper quartile of local authorities based on the super-sparsity indicator?**

Not applicable to this Council but the value does seem high in light of the significant cuts other Councils are facing

**Question 8: Do you agree with the Government's proposal that local welfare provision funding of £129.6 million and other funding elements should be identified within core spending power in 2016-17, as described in paragraph 2.28?**

As RSG is reduced to minimal or negative amounts by 2019/20: authorities will have to fund this spend from other sources, therefore it is misleading to imply that the funding is available. There needs to be greater transparency in the settlement to enable Councils to understand and explain the changes in funding allocations.

**Question 9: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to include all of the grant funding for the Care Act 2014 (apart from that funded through the Better Care Fund) in the settlement, using the methodology set out in paragraph 3.2?**

By including the funding in this way it attracts the same levels of reduction rather than protecting this grant element.

**Question 10: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to include all 2015-16 Council Tax Freeze Grant in the 2016-17 settlement, using the methodology set out in paragraph 3.3?**

Yes, all council tax freeze grant should be included in core funding. However once the negative RSG is applied this funding will no longer be paid and therefore does not provide certainty to Councils.

**Question 11: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to include all 2015-16 Efficiency Support Grant funding in the settlement and with the methodology set out in paragraph 3.5?**

See answer to question 10. Same applies.

**Question 12: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to include funding for lead local flood authorities in the 2016-17 settlement, as described in paragraphs 3.6 and 3.7?**

Not applicable – however as with the other grants being included will mean that they are also subject to the cuts and may no longer be paid once the Council is in negative RSG.

**Question 13: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to pay a separate section 31 grant to lead local flood authorities to ensure funding for these activities increases in real terms in each year of the Parliament?**

Yes

**Question 14: Do you have any views on whether the grant for lead local flood authorities described in paragraph 3.8 should be ring-fenced for the Spending Review period?**

It is better to give Councils greater flexibility and ring fencing may hinder this.

**Question 15: Do you agree with the Government's proposal to adjust councils' tariffs / top ups where required to ensure that councils delivering the same set of services receive the same percentage change in settlement core funding for those sets of services?**

No. It is not clear how the "negative RSG" mechanism will work and the basis of the Spending Power/ Settlement Funding assessment is fundamentally flawed.

The new methodology for determining authorities' RSG allocations which takes account of individual authority's council tax raising ability and the type of services provided appears to favour upper tier authorities with significantly larger funding reductions for this Borough. The fact that we also provide some form of Adult Social Care through the provision of services to older people has been completely ignored.

With regard to Council Tax, the calculation of core spending power is distorted by some questionable growth assumptions used in respect of the movement in the tax base. The formula has used the average growth between 2013/14 and 2015/16, but this is a flawed. Those years saw changes to the tax base through 'one-off' items such as the uplift in the Council Tax Support scheme, and changes made to council tax discounts and exemptions; effectively these one-off items have distorted the calculations. In earlier years, when there was less distortion, the average increases are significantly lower. These assumptions have inflated the Core Spending Power of the Council and therefore increased the level of cuts.

As a result council tax income levels are ambitious and in turn dampen the potential 'real' reduction in core spending power. It is noted that government has chosen not to use the OBR forecast of tax base growth, but instead calculated individual figures for each council using average growth between 2013/14 and 2015/16. This is a serious concern as it has produced some ambitious projected council tax levels; and as a result it requires modification.

When Business Rates Retention was introduced the policy document stated that "this will provide a strong financial incentive for councils to promote economic growth". It also stated the following regarding tariff and top-up payments "They will not change until the system is reset. The Government has said that this will not occur before 2020 at the earliest. This will provide councils with the certainty they need to plan and budget". Now from 2017/18, a tariff adjustment is being proposed before the system is reset. This is in contradiction of the previous policy document.

**Question 16: Do you have an alternative suggestion for how to secure the required overall level of spending reductions to settlement core funding over the Parliament?**

While the Council accepts the need for spending reductions within the wider economic context, we believe that there needs to be a full and fair review of both needs and resources to inform these and any redistribution; and that funding allocations must take account of the incidence of future spending pressures and inflation. All these appear to be lacking in the Provisional Settlement proposals. The Mechanism for using Council Tax growth assumptions to calculate the Spending Power and resulting cuts to funding is not fair or transparent way of dealing with delivering a balanced budget.

There are a number of freedoms and flexibilities which we believe would help bridge the shortfall. These include:

- Enabling full cost recovery on fees such as those for planning applications which are set at statutory levels.
- Enabling surplus to be made on Building Control and any other restricted services
- Enable increase in Council Tax over 2%
- Capital receipts flexibility in use to offset revenue shortfalls in the short term
- Review of protected groups in relation to Council Tax Support Scheme

***Question 17: Do you have any comments on the impact of the 2016-17 settlement on persons who share a protected characteristic, and on the draft equality statement published alongside this consultation?***

The level of cuts facing this Council will result in a review of service provision and a considered judgement and decisions will be made in light of the impact on all of our residents. By making the cuts in the speed and value that are proposed in the settlement will mean that residents will have to see the impact of these cuts in the services and support we provide.

**SAVINGS & ADDITIONAL INCOME - RBC**

Department	Strategic Purpose	Description of saving	2016-17 £'000	2017-18 £'000	2018-19 £'000	Comments
Leisure and Cultural Services , Hewell Road	Provide Good things to see, do and visit	Rates charge built into 1617 budget but no longer required as building demolished	-5	-5	-5	Rates no longer chargeable as building demolished.
Leisure and Cultural Services , Hewell Road	Provide Good things to see, do and visit	vacant post given up - business Development	-11	-11	-11	Vacant post released
Leisure and Cultural Services , Hewell Road	Provide Good things to see, do and visit	Various	-44	-44	-44	Following full review of all budgets a number of savings can be released
Leisure and Cultural Services , Hewell Road	Provide Good things to see, do and visit	Savings anticipated	300	300	300	There was an expectation to reduce costs associated with Leisure Services by £300k from 2016/17. Members have agreed that further work be undertaken on assessing the demand and value of the services provided therefore it is not appropriate to include savings until this work is completed
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Various savings in Supplies & Services due to the restructure of the Service	-24	-24	-24	Various savings in Supplies & Services due to the restructure of the Service
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Additional savings generated from Service Review	-139	-125	-125	Savings generated from Service Review in addition to £190k savings identified in 15/16 budget round for 16/17 onwards as a result of the service review.
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Additional income - cremation fees	-52	-131	-210	Additional income generated from price 8% annual increase on cremation fees
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Additional income from increase in number of cremations	-125	-130	-135	Anticipated growth in funeral numbers based on actual income achieved over budget in last few years
Corporate - Printing	Enabling	Savings due to print efficiencies	-46	-46	-46	Change to the way print contracts are managed
Community Services	Help me live my life independantly	Various	-53	-53	-53	Following full review of all budgets a number of savings can be released
Business Transformation	Enabling	Central Switchboard	-6	-6	-6	Following full review of all budgets a number of savings can be released
Business Transformation	Enabling	Operational Budgets	-38	-38	-38	Following full review of all budgets a number of savings can be released
Business Transformation	Enabling	Training budget	-5	-5	-5	Following full review of all budgets a number of savings can be released
Legal, Equality and Democratic Services - Elections	Enabling	Local Election savings due to PCC taking place in 16/17 and CC in 17/18	-35	-75		Due to the local election being combined with the PCC in 16/17 there will be lower costs. In 17/18 there are no Local Elections, only County Council

Department	Strategic Purpose	Description of saving	2016-17 £'000	2017-18 £'000	2018-19 £'000	Comments
Legal, Equality and Democratic Services	Enabling	Shared service posts	-16	-16	-16	Vacant posts in Democratic Services
Legal, Equality and Democratic Services	Enabling	Operational Budgets	-13	-13	-13	Following full review of all budgets a number of savings can be released
Customer Access and Financial Support	Help me be financially independent	Reduction in Hours	-17	-17	-17	Reduction in Hours within Customer Services
Finance & Resources	Enabling	Reduction in post costing	-3	-3	-3	Reduction in costs associated with the apprentice post
Reserves	All	Funding from Reserves	-207			Following full review of all expenditure a number of costs can be funded from the reserves previously set aside
Various	All	Review of HRA funding	-80	-80	-80	Following a review of the costs between the General Fund and HRA additional charges can be made to the HRA
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>-619</b>	<b>-522</b>	<b>-531</b>	



**UNAVOIDABLE PRESSURES - RBC**

Department	Strategic Purpose	Description of Pressure	2016-17 £'000	2017-18 £'000	2018-19 £'000	Comments
Community Services - Lifeline	Live my life independently	loss of supporting people funding	40	40	40	In 2014/15 WCC removed the £200k Supporting People Funding to the Council. There is a shortfall of £40k following the introduction of charges to customers.
Community Services - Early Help	Live my life independently	loss of support services contribution by Early Help	37	75	75	Early Help contract ceases at Oct 2016 and therefore there is a potential cost back to the Council for the support services that are currently charged to Early Help
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Domestic Waste collection - increase in properties throughout borough	96	98	100	Additional staff resources required to accommodate for borough wide developments - 1 driver, 2 loaders. Includes running costs of vehicles ( £30k)
Leisure and Cultural Services-Abbey Stadium	Provide good things to see, do and visit	Increase in Music & PRS Licenses	15	15	15	Relates to the increase in licenses to enable music to be played at the Abbey Stadium
Business Transformation - ICT	Enabling	Microsoft License Costs/Increase	28	44	44	Microsoft are changing the framework arrangements and the associated discounts that the Council current benefits from and therefore the costs will increase
CAFS - Fraud and Compliance	Help me be financially independent (incl education & skills)	Reduction in DWP funding	89	92	96	Following the transfer of housing benefit fraud to the DWP an assessment has been made by officers in liaison with other Councils and it is clear that resources are still required to prevent and manage Council Tax and other compliance fraud. It is therefore proposed to retain the specialist team in house to undertake this work and to lok for opportunities to increase income to the Council in future years.
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>305</b>	<b>364</b>	<b>370</b>	



**NEW REVENUE BIDS - RBC**

Department	Strategic Purpose	Description of revenue bid	2016-17 £'000	2017-18 £'000	2018-19 £'000	Comments
Planning - Redditch Town Centre	Give me good things to see, do and visit, help me run a successful business	Provide funding to deliver projects around the Town Centre	10	10	10	To extend the small businesses within the Town Centre budget as agreed in 2015/16 of £20k to further enhance opportunities to promote the Town Centre
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>10</b>	



**CAPITAL BIDS - RBC**

Department	Strategic Purpose	Description	Funding Source i.e. Grant, Borrowing, Reserve, S106	CAPITAL IMPLICATIONS			Comments
				2016-17 £'000	2017-18 £'000	2018-19 £'000	
Community Services - CCTV	Keep my place safe and looking good	Camera Replacement programme	Capital Borrowing	55	0	0	CCTV Camera replacement programme
Leisure and Cultural Services, Abbey Stadium	Provide good things to see, do and visit	Replacement Gym Equipment	Capital Borrowing	85			Includes 25 CV and 9 spin bikes - based on Life Fitness Quotation. Spin bikes based on Start Track quote. This is to replace 15 year old equipment at Abbey Stadium as due to its condition we are experiencing complaints leading to members cancelling memberships. This has an effect on the revenue generated from health and fitness income.
Leisure and Cultural Services Pitcheroak Golf Course	Provide good things to see, do and visit	Installation of Driving Range	Capital Borrowing	10	0	0	This is to try to generate more income to mitigate the shortfalls experienced over the last couple of years. The range will mean that the course will be an all year round facility and schools / residents / club members can enjoy quality practice facilities thus retaining existing golfers and attracting new golfers to the course.
Leisure and Cultural Services Parks & Green Spaces	Provide good things to see, do and visit	Mitigation arising from Water Risk Assessments	Capital Borrowing	10	0	0	As a result of the Rospa report and our own Risk Assessments of the "Hot Spot" inland waterways a range of mitigation methods have been identified to ensure the Council is compliant and the public remain safe
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Crematorium Improvements	Borrowing	200	0	0	To improve the facilities and environment of the crematorium for the public as included in previous reports to members
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Vehicle fleet replacement	Borrowing	0	0	1,138	To provide replacement vehicles and plant to sustain services across the Borough
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Additional refuse freighter	Borrowing	165	0	0	Additional vehicle required to accommodate district wide property developments
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Flood alleviation work in Moons Moat Drive/Hillmorton Close and Yvonne Road	Borrowing	45	0	0	Flood alleviation work in Moons Moat Drive/Hillmorton Close and Yvonne Road.
Environmental Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Car Parking Enhancements	Borrowing	200	200	200	To continue the enhancements to car parking across the Borough to improve the environment to residents
Leisure & Cultural Services	Keep my place safe & looking good	Maintenances of proctors barn lane kerbing and passing place	Borrowing	40	0	0	Surface has degraded and on recent inspections have identified it as high risk in two area and medium in the rest this is recorded on PSS with photograph's
Customer Access and Financial Support	Enabling	Public Buildings Capitl Programme	Borrowing			250	To continue the planned building works on the Councils public buildings
Customer Access and Financial Support	Enabling	Asbestos	Borrowing			40	To continue the management and monitoring of asbestos in the Councils public buildings
Leisure and Cultural Services Playing Pitches	Provide good things to see, do and visit	Regrading of Playing Pitches at Terrys Field to support Redditch United Junior Section.	S106	21	0	0	This is designed to support the development of the junior section of the club to help them sustain high numbers of junior teams which significantly contributes to increasing participation for children and young people.

**CAPITAL BIDS - RBC**

Department	Strategic Purpose	Description	Funding Source i.e. Grant, Borrowing, Reserve, S106	CAPITAL IMPLICATIONS			Comments
				2016-17 £'000	2017-18 £'000	2018-19 £'000	
Leisure and Cultural Services Parks and Open Spaces	Provide good things to see, do and visit	Installation of Outdoor Gym equipment in Astwood Bank (Astwood Park)	S106	9	0	0	To provide outdoor gym facilities for the Community to use to improve fitness and well being in Astwood Park
Leisure and Cultural Services Abbey Stadium	Provide good things to see, do and visit	Investment into Health and Fitness Facilities	S106	330	0	0	To expand the dance studio in the Abbey Stadium to ensure memberships are retained and to increase the number of sessions held and the capacity of the provision
Business Transformation - ICT	Enabling	Replace Backup Solution	Revenue ( available)	50	0	0	The Backup Solution needs to be replaced - funding available through revenue to support this scheme
<b>TOTAL BIDS</b>				<b>1,220</b>	<b>200</b>	<b>1,628</b>	



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## EXECUTIVE

### Committee

12th January 2016

## MINUTES

#### Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton, John Fisher, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith and Debbie Taylor

#### Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Clare Flanagan, Sue Hanley, Rachel McAndrews, Paul McLaughlin, Sam Morgan, Jayne Pickering, Amanda Singleton, Liz Tompkin and Judith Willis

#### Committee Officer:

Debbie Parker-Jones

#### 69. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Greg Chance and Pat Witherspoon.

#### 70. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 71. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### Work Programme

The following reports, which were due to be considered at the meeting or possibly considered at the meeting, had been deferred to a later date:

- Housing Business Case;
- Review of Pay Enhancements for Leisure Assistants; and
- Independent Remuneration Panel Report and Recommendations.

##### Agenda Item 4 – Minutes

A typographical error in the agenda listing was noted, with the Executive Committee minutes of the 15th December 2015 meeting

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Chair

# EXECUTIVE

## Committee

12th January 2016

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and not the 7th December meeting being the required minutes for approval. The correct minutes had however been included in the agenda pack.

### 72. MINUTES

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15th December 2015 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

### 73. CCTV CODE OF PRACTICE

Members received a report which sought adoption of a revised CCTV Code of Practice for Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council Shared Service.

Officers advised that the new Code before Members had been totally revised in order to meet legislative changes under the Protection of Freedom Act 2012, and to adopt the Surveillance Commissioner's Code of Practice. The Code also took into account changes in best practice.

In response to a Member question, Officers confirmed that they would email Members with any future minor revisions to the Code.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the CCTV Code of Practice as appended to the report be approved; and**
- 2) authority be delegated to the CCTV and Lifeline Manager to make minor changes to the Code of Practice to comply with legal requirements and advice from the Surveillance Commissioner.**

### 74. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANTS PROGRAMME - FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

Members considered the Notes and recommendations of the Grants Panel Meetings held on 14th and 15th December 2015 for the award of major grants to voluntary sector organisations for 2016/17. Officers highlighted an error in recommendation 2 of the Notes, the second figure of which in relation to the 'Help me to live my life independently' theme should have read £2,200 and not £2,000.



**EXECUTIVE**

## Committee

12th January 2016

The Panel had considered a total of 44 applications from a variety of organisations. Each application had been scored in accordance with the Council's Grants Programme requirements, with recommendations then made to either approve or reject the applications. There had been some minor underspends across three of the themes, the unallocated budgets for which it was suggested be re-advertised alongside the Stronger Communities Grant applications in January 2016.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the following grants for 2016/17 be awarded:

Organisation	Project Name	Amount
<b>Help Me to be Financially Independent - £75K</b>		
Bromsgrove and District Citizens Advice Bureau	Citizens Advice Redditch – Financial/Debt and Problem Solving Advice	£75,000.00
<b>Help Me to be Financially Independent - £10K</b>		
Jestaminute Community Theatre CIC	“Money Talks”	£5,000.00
<b>Help Me to Live My Life Independently - £35K</b>		
Redditch Play Council	Redditch Play Council	£35,000.00
<b>Help Me to Live My Life Independently - £30k</b>		
NewStarts	Skills for a New Start	£4,000.00
Compass Community and Education Group Ltd	Work Club and Employability Skills Programme	£5,820.00
Redditch Mental Health Action Group	Coaching for all	£6,000.00
Bromsgrove and Redditch Network	Volunteering and Employability	£5,978.24
Inspire Community Training CIC	Inspiring Journey	£6,000.00

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Committee

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<b>Provide Me with Good Things to Do, See and Visit - £6K</b>		
<b>Redditch Wheels Project</b>	<b>Accessible Activities</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>
<b>REACH (Redditch East Aspiring Communities Hub) CIC</b>	<b>REACH Positive Activity Days Out</b>	<b>£2,665.00</b>
<b>Keep My Place Safe and Looking Good - £15K</b>		
<b>The Ditch Youth Project</b>	<b>The Ditch Youth Project</b>	<b>£3,000.00</b>
<b>Sandycroft</b>	<b>DV Support Group</b>	<b>£5,000.00</b>
<b>Connectar Training and Biodiversity Trust</b>	<b>Connectar Training Centre – trainers salary</b>	<b>£5,000.00</b>
<b>Help Me Run a Successful Voluntary Sector Business - £50K</b>		
<b>Touchstones Support CIC</b>	<b>Supporting Bereaved Children</b>	<b>£10,000.00</b>
<b>Carers Careline</b>	<b>Carers Telephone Support Service</b>	<b>£9,306.92</b>
<b>Where Next Association</b>	<b>Where Next</b>	<b>£10,000.00</b>
<b>Bromsgrove and Redditch Network</b>	<b>The Volunteer Centre</b>	<b>£9,867.10</b>
<b>Sandycroft</b>	<b>Sandycroft Support Services</b>	<b>£10,000.00</b>

and

- 2) the following unallocated sums be retained and their availability be re-advertised in parallel with the Stronger Communities Grants applications in January 2016:

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Unallocated sum</b>
<b>Help me to be financially independent</b>	<b>£5,000</b>
<b>Help me to live my life independently</b>	<b>£2,200</b>
<b>Keep my place safe and looking good</b>	<b>£2,000</b>

**EXECUTIVE**

## Committee

12th January 2016

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**75. EARLY HELP COMMISSIONING - CONSULTATION**

The Committee was asked to endorse comments on Worcestershire County Council's consultation on the future of Children's Centres and Early Help 0-19 services, and to approve the Council's entering into a partnership/consortium to submit a tender to deliver the new 0-19 integrated prevention services for children, young people and families, and to enter into a relevant contract should any tender be successful.

Officers explained the implications of the new 0-19 service, which would see substantial changes for early health. Commissioning would take place in all services except family support, and Connecting Families would not form part of this. Members were encouraged to complete their own questionnaires on the Children's Centre Buildings Consultation and to return these to the County Council by the 31st January 2016 deadline. Service users had been asked to complete questionnaires and so far Redditch had provided the highest number of responses across the county. The new contract was to be advertised in February, with the contract to be awarded in May and an anticipated start date for the new service of October 2016.

Members supported the proposed response to the redesign proposals and agreed that a local approach to service delivery was key to the future success of this. They felt that this should be based on either the Clinical Commissioning Group boundaries of Bromsgrove and Redditch, Wyre Forest and South Worcestershire, or that consideration could alternatively be given to a North and South delivery model. Members requested that Officers highlight the importance of the local knowledge element in a rider when submitting the Council's response.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the comments on the future of Worcestershire Children's Centres and 0-19 services, as outlined in section 3.10 of the report, be submitted to Worcestershire County Council; and**
- 2) the Council explore participation in a partnership or consortium arrangement to submit a tender, and if successful a contract be entered into for the delivery of the new 0-19 integrated prevention services for children, young people and families service.**

# EXECUTIVE

## Committee

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### 76. MATCHBOROUGH CENTRE REDEVELOPMENT - CONSULTATION

Members received a report which sought approval to undertake a feasibility study into the redevelopment of the Matchborough District Centre.

It was noted that the former New Town district centres of Church Hill, Matchborough, Winyates and Woodrow had previously been identified as areas for redevelopment. Following on from the success of the Church Hill redevelopment Matchborough District Centre was the next preferred centre for redevelopment, and from a planning perspective this was an excellent opportunity to look at mixed use of the site.

Officers advised that, where possible and in the time available, tenants and shop owners of the Matchborough District Centre had been informally advised as to the position and that the Executive Committee's approval was being sought to undertake a feasibility study. Planning Officers would lead on the study and would work in conjunction with the Place Partnership on this. Ward Members and stakeholders would be consulted and the outcomes of the study would be reported back to Members, together with suggestions from Officers about the next stages of the process of possible redevelopment.

A Member requested that Officers ensure that the following were consulted:

- RSA Academy Arrow Vale;
- Matchborough First School Academy;
- Noah's Ark Nursery;
- Christ Church;
- CCTV; and
- The local Police.

A Member queried what was happening with the S106 money for leisure and when a decision would be made in this regard. Officers stated that they would come back to Members on this, but that they would not expect expenditure to be incurred which might not support any future redevelopment of the area. A request was made by some Members for Member involvement in the stages following the feasibility study, for example on either a working party or sub-committee, which would avoid the need for large numbers of matters being referred to the Executive Committee.

**EXECUTIVE**

## Committee

12th January 2016

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**RESOLVED that**

**a feasibility study be undertaken as to the merits of the redevelopment of the Matchborough District Centre.**

**77. PURCHASE OF CROSSGATES HOUSE**

The Committee considered a report, for recommendation to full Council, which sought approval for Officers to enter into negotiations with Worcestershire County Council to purchase their interest in Crossgates House.

Members noted that the capital investment, which would be funded from capital from the sale of Threadneedle House, would make a revenue saving of £14,745 per annum with pay back after ten years. It was further noted that there was likely to be an increase in the rent following the rent review due in 2016.

Some Members did not support acquisition of the leasehold and raised issues in relation to staff accommodation at the Town Hall, Crossgates House and Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) following the District Council's relocation. Officers provided clarifications in this regard and confirmed that all three sites were fully used at present. Officers agreed to come back to Members on the numbers of Officers based at the BDC offices.

**RECOMMENDED that**

**authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and Corporate Resources and the Head of Legal and Democratic Services to purchase Worcestershire County Council's leasehold interest in Crossgates House.**

**78. HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT, RENT AND CAPITAL 2016-17**

Members were presented, for recommendation to full Council, with the Initial Budget for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) and the proposed dwelling rents for 2016/17. Officers highlighted an error in the Housing Revenue Account Budget 2016/17 at Appendix A to the report, the 2019/20 Balances carried forward figure of which should have stated £20.415m and not £20.145m.

Officers explained the background to the report recommendations and the impact of the 1% rent reduction to be imposed by central government effective from 2016/17. Over a 30-year period the loss of rent income was estimated at £120.873m, which was almost the same as the £122.158m housing debt, and which would have a significant impact on the HRA Business Plan.

**EXECUTIVE**

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It was proposed that Officers be instructed to explore ways of balancing the HRA in 2019/20, including rental income from new housing stock and reviewing service charges. Members proposed an additional recommendation that Officers take to Executive Committee a report setting out the available options in light of the implications on the HRA, such options to include, amongst others, further details in relation to the Council's previously successful Mortgage Rescue and Buy Back Schemes.

For transparency purposes, Officers highlighted that the indicative costs of the Housing Business Case, which it had been hoped would be referred to Executive that evening but which had been delayed to the February meeting, had been included in report before Members that evening.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the draft 2016/2017 Budget for the Housing Revenue Account attached to the report at Appendix A be approved;**
- 2) the four year budget projections 2016/17 to 2019/20, incorporating the 1% rent reduction, be noted and that Officers be instructed to explore ways of balancing the HRA in 2019/20 including rental income from new housing stock and reviewing service charges;**
- 3) the actual average rent decrease for 2016/2017 be 1% (as per the Welfare Reform and Work Bill 2015/16);**
- 4) the capital programme for new housing stock be increased from £0.500 million to £1.052 million in 2016/17 and a programme of £1.064m be created in 2017/18 to ensure that all capital receipts retained under the one for one replacement scheme are applied before the deadline;**
- 5) £2.182 million be transferred to the capital reserve in 2016/17 to fund the future Capital Programme and/or repay borrowing; and**

**RESOLVED that**

- 6) Officers take to Executive Committee a report setting out the available options in light of the implications on the HRA, such options to include, amongst others, further details in relation to the Council's previously successful Mortgage Rescue and Buy Back Schemes.**

**EXECUTIVE**

## Committee

12th January 2016

**79. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2016/17**

A report enabling Members to set the Council Tax Base for 2016/17 was considered. It was noted that the Executive could resolve on this matter.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the whole and parts of the area for 2016/17, be approved; and**
- 2) **in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the figures calculated by the Redditch Borough Council as its tax base for the whole area for the year 2016/17 be 25,144.49 and for the parts of the area listed below be:**

<b>Parish of Feckenham</b>	<b>365.88</b>
<b>Rest of Redditch</b>	<b><u>24,778.61</u></b>
	<b><u>25,144.49</u></b>

**80. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 - 2018/19**

Officers provided Members with an update on the impact of the provisional local government finance settlement 2016/17 which had been published on 17th December. On the back of the initial settlement details Heads of Service were currently working through the budget pressures prior to the budget and Council Tax setting reports in February.

In relation to the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) which the authority received from central government to support services across the Borough, Officers had expected this to reduce to zero by 2019/20, as announced previously, and were considering plans to address this. However, as a result of the latest settlement Redditch would lose all of its RSG in 2018/19, and would move into a position of having to contribute funds totalling £330k back to the Government in 2019/20.

Officers illustrated the impact of the settlement on the Council and the loss of the RSG over the next 4 years compared to previous forecasts together with the impact for Redditch compared to other councils which was significantly higher for Redditch than many other councils nationally. There would be a £3m shortfall in funding compared to the original budget assumptions, and a £5m reduction had the RSG have increased by 1% inflation since 2015/16.

**EXECUTIVE**

## Committee

12th January 2016

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Officers explained that the assumptions on the Council improving its spending power were based on an estimate of the Council Tax base growth exceeding current expectations and therefore increasing available funding to support services. The somewhat optimistic assumptions included Council Tax base increases of approximately 1% initially (which was double the current estimations), rising to 3% increase in future years. Officers felt that this was highly optimistic based on current growth across the Borough. The impact of the growth assumptions on Council Tax resulted in a further £350k shortfall to Government expectations for the Borough finances.

There were also proposals to change the New Homes Bonus Scheme. The Council currently received a 6-year payment for any property built in the Borough and the Government was looking to change this to 4 years. Additionally, there were a number of proposals to reduce New Homes Bonus (NHB) where there was no local plan, where homes had been allowed on appeal or where the growth would have occurred anyway, meaning there was no longer any certainty with this. The potential reduction of income to the Council over the 4-year period was just over £2m. The Government had given assurances that they would look at a 4-year settlement offer, which would sit around an 'efficiency statement'. There was some certainty around the use of capital receipts, although various uncertainties still remained overall. Earmarked balances were also affected.

Officers advised that the first consultation response on the proposed settlement was due by Friday 15th January, which Members would be sent a copy of, with the NHB consultation deadline being 15th March. A joint response from the six county District Leaders expressing their combined concerns was an option, with it being unclear at this stage as to whether 3-year budgets could be produced given the scale of the reductions and timescales involved. Officers stated that they would start with a 1-year budget, and that whilst they could project for 4 years this would not be a balanced budget. One of the key difficulties for Officers was the timescale between the settlement announcement and the setting of the Council Tax and budget. The Leader stated that he had written to the MP about the settlement and what were felt to be some unrealistic assumptions on which this had been based, as well as some inaccuracies with percentages quoted.

Officers would continue to work on customer demand and how this would best be met in the future and thanks was expressed to Officers overall for their work following publication of the settlement.



**EXECUTIVE**

## Committee

12th January 2016

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**RESOLVED that**

**the position be noted.**

**81. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8th December 2015.

It was noted that there were no recommendations to consider as the recommendations at Minute No.'s 52, 53 and 56, in relation to Bereavement Services Review of Cremation Fees and Charges and Proposed Capital Work – Pre-scrutiny, Fees and Charges 2016-17 – Pre-Scrutiny and Review of the Operation of Leisure Services respectively, had been dealt with by the Executive Committee at its last meeting.

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8th December 2015 be received and noted.**

**82. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.**

There were no outstanding referrals to consider.

**83. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT**

In addition to the details set out in the report, Members noted that the Planning Advisory Panel which was due to take place that evening had been cancelled due to lack of business and that a meeting of the Housing Advisory Panel was scheduled to take place later in the month.

**RESOLVED that**

**the report and Officer update be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 8.38 pm

.....  
Chair





## Executive Committee

Tuesday, 2 February 2016

### MINUTES

#### Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton, John Fisher, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith, Debbie Taylor and Pat Witherspoon

#### Also Present:

Councillor Andrew Fry (observing)

#### Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley, Sheena Jones, Jayne Pickering, Guy Revans and Dave Wheeler

#### Committee Services Officer:

Debbie Parker-Jones

#### 84. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

#### 85. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 86. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### Work Programme

The following reports, which were due to be considered at the meeting or possibly considered at the meeting, had been deferred to a later date:

- Housing Business Case; and
- Winyates Centre Consultation.

.....  
Chair

Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 – 2018/19

It was noted that discussions on the Medium Term Financial Plan had taken place at an extraordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny (O&S) Committee meeting the previous evening. Whilst there were no recommendations arising from O&S a copy of the Committee's Summary of Discussions had been emailed to the Executive Committee Members that afternoon, and a hard copy circulated at the meeting.

Owing to a slight formatting problem with the hard copy agendas, Officers had also issued a replacement copy of the 3-year financial summary at page 37 of the agenda as some of the digits in the final column had not printed out.

Roger Hollingworth

The Leader reported the very sad news of the death of Mr Roger Hollingworth, former Leader of Bromsgrove District Council. Members expressed their shock and deep regret at Mr Hollingworth's unexpected passing at the weekend. It was agreed that Councillor Hartnett would send a letter to Mr Hollingworth's family expressing the Council's condolences at the news.

**87. MINUTES****RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 12th January 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

**88. INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS**

Members received a report of the Independent Remuneration Panel which recommended the level of allowances for Councillors for 2016/17. Officers advised that whilst the Council was required to have regard to the Panel's recommendations it was not obliged to agree to them, and could choose to implement them in full or in part, or not to accept them.

Members noted that if accepting the Panel's recommendations in full, the budget for Members' basic and special responsibility allowances for 2016/17 would be approximately £194,500, which would represent an increase of £56,500 on the projected total expenditure for the same allowances in the current year.

# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 2 February 2016

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Members were supportive of the proposed amendment to the travel allowances section of the Members' Allowances Scheme in relation to the use of taxis in exceptional circumstances and where public transport was not available. However, as in previous years, Members did not support the proposed increases to the Basic Allowance and Special Responsibility Allowances, which were felt to be particularly inappropriate in light of the current financial climate.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **the Council has regard to the report and recommendations from the Independent Remuneration Panel for 2016/17;**
- 2) **the Council does not accept the recommendations at appendix 1 to the Panel's report for the following allowances:**  
  
**Basic;**  
**Leader;**  
**Deputy Leader;**  
**Portfolio Holders;**  
**Executive Members without Portfolio;**  
**Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee;**  
**Members of Overview and Scrutiny Committee;**  
**Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups;**  
**Chair of Audit, Governance and Standards Committee;**  
**Chair of Planning Committee;**  
**Chair of Licensing Committee;**  
**Political Group Leaders; and**  
**Borough Council representatives on the Local Government Association and General Assembly and West Midlands Employers;**
- 3) **the Council accepts the recommendations of the Panel relating to travel, subsistence and dependent carers' allowances;**
- 4) **for 2016/17 the Basic and Special Responsibility Allowances in the Council's Allowances Scheme continue at the level set for 2015/16, as set out in the final column of appendix 1 to the Independent Remuneration Panel's report;**
- 5) **the recommendation relating to the Parish Council be noted; and**

- 6) **the Members' Allowances Scheme for 2016/17 remain unchanged, with the exception of the following inclusion into the travel allowances section:**

**“The rate for travel by Taxi Cab shall not exceed:**

- (i) In cases of urgency or where no public transport is reasonably available, the amount of the actual fare and any reasonable gratuity paid, and**
- (ii) In any other case, the amount of the fare for travel by appropriate public transport.”**

**89. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 - 2018/19**

The Committee considered a report which set out the proposed budget for 2016/17 and the impact of the provisional local government financial settlement on the Medium Term Financial Plan to 2018/19. Members also noted the Summary of Discussions arising from the extraordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1st February 2016 in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan. The Chair advised that he had extended an invitation to Councillor Potter, Chair of O&S, to attend Executive Committee, however she was unable to do so owing to a prior appointment and Officers and Members who had attended O&S were also present at the Executive.

Officers gave a detailed presentation on the report and the report appendices, which included:

- the Council's response to the settlement;
- savings and additional income;
- unavoidable pressures;
- new revenue bids; and
- capital bids.

Following announcements made in the government's Autumn Statement in November the Council had been expecting the Revenue Support Grant (RSG) to reduce to zero by the end of the current Parliament in 2019/20, and Officers had been considering plans to address this shortfall in revenue to ensure that a sustainable approach to the delivery of services was in place. Over the last few years the Council had taken every opportunity to deliver savings to meet the reduction in government funding, including the sharing of services with other councils and the transformation of services. Savings of £1.5m per annum had been realised from these initiatives, whilst increasing balances to £1.9m. Officers were continuing to review services and to improve the offer to the Borough's residents whilst delivering savings.

However, under the provisional settlement received in late December funding allocations had changed from 2016/17 and the RSG would disappear for Redditch earlier than anticipated. RSG reductions would be front-loaded and in real terms represented a 121% loss in grant by 2019/20. By 2018/19 the Council would receive only £40k RSG, with payments to the government (negative grant) of £330k having to be made by the Council from 2019/20.

Officers explained the government's new funding methodology and the implications of this, including the Baseline Funding Level, Business Rates Baseline, Settlement Funding Assessment, Council Tax Requirement, Core Funding and Cumulative Reduction. Proposed changes to the New Homes Bonus, which were also subject to consultation, were outlined. Based on current projections this could see a further loss of funding of over £2m by 2020/21. The significant impact of the cuts generally on Redditch in comparison with other authorities nationally was noted. The new methodology for determining authorities' RSG allocations took into account individual authorities' council tax raising ability and the type of services provided, and as such appeared to favour social services authorities.

Officers provided clarification on the report appendices and highlighted an amendment to recommendation 2.1.6 of the report, with the 2016/17 transfer from balances as detailed in the 3-year financial summary at paragraph 3.30 of the report being £579k and not £598k as set out in the recommendation.

The Council's response to the consultation questions at Appendix 1 to the report had been returned in mid-January and a reply from government on this was awaited. Officers advised that the four references to Hewell Road under Savings & Additional Income at Appendix 2 applied to the first entry only, and that the savings from Reserves at Appendix 2 represented reserves which had previously been set aside for intended purposes and not unidentified reserves. Where blank boxes appeared in the Capital Bids table at Appendix 5, Members requested that, to make clear the position, all fields be populated; to show, for example, where bids had previously been approved. Officers stated that details of the final agreed Capital Programme, including any new agreed bids, would be presented to Executive and full Council later in the month.

In relation to future savings, Officers were planning on mapping out the cost of all service demand, with value to the authority and the town's residents being a key factor for consideration. In response to a Member question on underspends, Officers advised that for 2015/16 there was currently an anticipated underspend of £150k, with Officers working on Quarter 3 figures at present. Following the

£2.2m underspend in 2014/15 Officers would, as far as possible, aim to replicate that figure in future years. Comparisons based on the £2.2m would be made for 2015/16 and 2016/17, and Heads of Service were continuing to look at their budgets on a line by line basis for any possible savings. Budgets had to be fluid and any unspent amounts would need to be offered-up by Head of Service.

A Member queried the position in relation to vacant posts and Officers agreed to report back to Executive Members after the meeting on:

- current vacancy numbers;
- the amount of savings made from the vacancies;
- how long the posts had been vacant for; and
- confirmation as to why individual vacancies had not been deleted.

Members expressed their thanks to Officers for their hard work on the budget and for doing everything they could to help the Council move forward in the current financial climate.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **the savings and additional income for 2016/17 of £619k as detailed in the report be approved;**
- 2) **the revenue bids for 2016/17 of £10k as detailed in the report be approved;**
- 3) **the capital bids for 2016/17 of £1.220m as detailed in the report be approved;**
- 4) **the unavoidable pressures for 2016/17 of £305k as detailed in the report be approved;**
- 5) **the increase in Council Tax for 2016/17 of 1.9% be approved; and**
- 6) **the transfer from balances for 2016/17 of £579k as detailed in the report be approved.**

**90. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5th January 2016.

It was noted that there were no recommendations to consider.



**Executive  
Committee**Tuesday, 2 February 2016

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**RESOLVED that****the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 5th January 2016 be received and noted.****91. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.**

Subject to the Committee's receipt of the Summary of Discussions of the extraordinary meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 1st February 2016 in relation to the Medium Term Financial Plan (Minute No. 89 refers), there were no additional referrals for the Committee to consider.

**92. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT**

It was noted that the meeting of the Planning Advisory Panel (PAP) scheduled to take place that evening had been cancelled due to lack of business, and that an update on the Local Plan would be given at the 8th March PAP meeting.

**RESOLVED that****the report and additional update be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 8.14 pm

.....  
Chair



# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME

7 March 2016 to 30 June 2016

(published as at 5th February 2016)



This Work Programme gives details of items on which key decisions are likely to be taken by the Borough Council's Executive Committee, or full Council, in the coming four months. "Key Decisions" are ones which are likely to:

- (i) result in the Council incurring expenditure, foregoing income or the making of savings in excess of £50,000 or which are otherwise significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (ii) be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in the area comprising two or more wards in the Borough;
- (iii) involve any proposal to cease to provide a Council service (other than a temporary cessation of service of not more than 6 months).

If you wish to make representations on the proposed decision you are encouraged to get in touch with the relevant report author as soon as possible before the proposed date of the decision. Contact details are provided. Alternatively you may write to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, The Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH or e-mail: [democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

The Executive Committee's meetings are normally held at 7pm on Tuesday evenings at the Town Hall. They are open to the public, except when confidential information is being discussed. If you wish to attend for a particular matter, it is advisable to check with the Democratic Services Team on (01527) 64252, ext: 3257 to make sure it is going ahead as planned. If you have any other queries, Democratic Services Officers will be happy to advise you. The full Council meets in accordance the Council's Calendar of Meetings. Meetings commence at 7.00pm.

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Bill Hartnett, Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership  
Councillor Greg Chance, Portfolio Holder for Planning, regeneration, Economic Development and Transport  
Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management  
Councillor Yvonne Smith, Portfolio holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services  
Councillor Mark Shurmer, Portfolio Holder for Housing  
Councillor Debbie Taylor, Portfolio Holder for the Local Environment  
Councillor Pat Witherspoon, Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism  
Councillor Juliet Brunner  
Councillor Brandon Clayton

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Budget Monitoring Quarter 3 <b>Key: No</b>	Executive 8 Mar 2016		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207
Council Tax Support Scheme <b>Key: Yes</b>	Executive 8 Mar 2016		Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda Singleton, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support Tel: 01527 64252
Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators 2016-17 <b>Key: Yes</b>	Executive 8 Mar 2016		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3790
Health and Safety Policies <b>Key: No</b>	Executive 8 Mar 2016		Report of the Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development	Becky Talbot, Human Resources and Development Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3385
Proposed feasibility study into the possible redevelopment of the Winyates District Centre <b>Key: No</b>	Executive 8 Mar 2016		Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Laura Buckton, Planning Officer Tel: 01527 534122

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Housing Business Case <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 8 Mar 2016 Council 4 Apr 2016		Report of the Head of Housing Services	Liz Tompkin, Head of Housing Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3304
Applying Article 4 directions to The Council's schedule of locally listed buildings <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive Not before 8th Mar 2016		Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Emma Newfield, Planning Officer Tel: 01527 597031
Borough of Redditch Plan no.4 - Modifications <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Not before 19th Apr 2016 Council Not before 20th Jun 2016		Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning and Regeneration Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3219
Review of Pay Enhancements for Leisure Assistants <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Not before 2nd Feb 2016	May be exempt information relating to individuals' pay	Report of the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services	Dave Wheeler, Leisure Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3313
Leisure Intervention Update <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 19 Apr 2016		Report of the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services	John Godwin, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services Tel: 01527 881762
Reorganisation and Change Policy <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Not before 2nd May 2016 Council Not before 2nd May 2016		Report of the Head of Transformation and Organisational Development	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development Tel: 01527 881256

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Tenancy Policy Key: No	Executive		Report of the Head of Housing	

**Overview & Scrutiny**

Committee

16th February 2016

**WORK PROGRAMME**

(Report of the Chief Executive)

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Subject Matter</b>	<b>Officer(s) Responsible for report</b>
<b>ALL MEETINGS</b>	<b>REGULAR ITEMS</b>	<b>(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)</b>
	Minutes of previous meeting  Consideration of the Executive Committee Work Programme  Consideration of Executive Committee key decisions  Call-ins (if any)  Pre-scrutiny (if any)  Task Groups / Short, Sharp Review Groups - feedback  Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive  Chief Executive  Chief Executive  Chief Executive  Chief Executive  Chief Executive
	<b>REGULAR ITEMS</b>  Update on the work of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel.  Quarterly Tracker Report	Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel  Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service

# Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

16th February 2016

	<p><b>REGULAR ITEMS</b></p> <p>Updates on the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Annual Monitoring Report – Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy</p>	<p>Redditch Borough Council representative on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service</p>
<b>OTHER ITEMS - DATE FIXED</b>		
<b>16th February 2016</b>	Medium Term Financial Plan – Consideration of Executive Committee’s budget recommendations	Relevant lead Director
<b>16th February 2016</b>	Provision of adapted taxi vehicles to passengers with disabilities short, sharp review – scrutiny scoping document	Councillor Baker-Price
<b>1st March 2016</b>	Housing Benefits - Presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>1st March 2016</b>	Local Strategic Partnership – Monitoring Update Report	Relevant lead Director
<b>1st March 2015</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Councillor Potter
<b>12th April 2016</b>	Corporate Dashboard Presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>12th April 2016</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service



**Overview & Scrutiny**

Committee

16th February 2016

12th April 2016	S106 Funding Presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED</b>		
	Tackling Obesity Task Group - Feedback	Councillor Potter
	Leisure Services Options Short, Sharp Review – reconsideration of the group’s final report	Councillor Potter

