



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 12th April,  
2016  
7.00 pm

Committee Room Two  
Town Hall  
Redditch

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**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact  
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# Overview and Scrutiny

## Committee

Tuesday, 12th April, 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

<p><b>1. Apologies and named substitutes</b></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>2. Declarations of interest and of Party Whip</b></p>	<p>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.</p>
<p><b>3. Minutes</b> (Pages 1 - 6)</p>	<p>To confirm the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a correct record.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>4. Performance Dashboard - Presentation</b></p> <p>Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development</p>	<p>To receive a presentation on the subject of the Council's Performance Dashboard.</p> <p>(Presentation to follow)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>5. S106 Funding - Information</b> (Pages 7 - 10)</p> <p>Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning and Regeneration</p>	<p>To receive information on the subject of s106 funding.</p> <p>(Figures attached, verbal report to follow)</p> <p><b>All Wards</b></p>

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<p><b>6. Improving Access for People with Disabilities to Redditch Taxi Fleets Short, Sharp Review - Final Report</b></p> <p>(Pages 11 - 42)</p> <p>Councillor Gay Hopkins</p>	<p>To consider the findings of the Improving Access for People with Disabilities to Redditch Taxi Fleets Short, Sharp Review and to determine whether to endorse the group's recommendations.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>All Wards</b></p>
<p><b>7. Overview and Scrutiny - Recommendation Tracker Report</b></p> <p>(Pages 43 - 56)</p>	<p>To consider updates on the action that has been taken to implement recommendations made as part of the scrutiny process since the last quarterly update was received by the Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>8. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme</b></p> <p>(Pages 57 - 70)</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>(Documents attached).</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>9. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme</b></p> <p>(Pages 71 - 74)</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>

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<p><b>10. Task Groups - Progress Reports</b></p> <p>Councillor Gareth Prosser</p>	<p>To consider progress to date on the current reviews against the terms set by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The current reviews in progress are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>1) Joint Increasing Physical Activity Task Group – Redditch Borough Council’s representative, Councillor Gareth Prosser.</li></ul> <p>(Oral reports)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>11. Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p>Councillor Nina Wood-Ford</p>	<p>To receive a verbal update on the recent work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>(Verbal report)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>

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## 12. 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

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Tuesday, 1st March, 2016

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Jane Potter (Chair), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Natalie Brookes, David Bush, Andrew Fry, Gareth Prosser, Jennifer Wheeler and Nina Wood-Ford

### Officers:

Helen Broughton, Rachel Dobson, Jayne Pickering and Amanda Singleton

### Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley and A Scarce

### 81. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Joe Baker and Paul Swansborough and it was confirmed that Councillor Natalie Brookes was attending as substitute for Councillor Baker.

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

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

### 83. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED that

**the minutes of the meeting held on 16th February be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

### 84. LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP - MONITORING UPDATE REPORT

The Chair reminded Members that following a recommendation made a number of years ago the Committee was responsible for holding the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) to account and received this report on an annual basis.

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Chair

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Officers introduced the report and provided background information in respect of the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the recent mini refresh of the SCS's priorities which had been undertaken during 2015. During the presentation of the report the following areas were highlighted:

- There were various groups and bodies that formed the LSP or contributed to the work of the partnership.
- The Redditch Partnership Executive Group (RPEG) was chaired by the Chief Officer from the YMCA. This would assist with the Connecting Families Project moving away from being Council led as the programme developed.
- Connecting Families was a new way of working, which was being rolled out across Worcestershire with a pilot scheme in Redditch.
- The Redditch Economic Development Theme Group (REDTG) was chaired by the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Greg Chance and involved a number of other elected Members and local business representatives.
- Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust (RCWT) was supported by a dedicated officer from Worcestershire County Council (WCC). A significant number of projects were commissioned by this group.

The Wellbeing in Partnership Newsletter had been produced following a number of requests for the production of a directory of local groups and projects. Members were advised it was not practicable to produce such a directory due to the resources needed to set up and maintain such a document. The newsletter was a simple and quick format in which to highlight what was currently available.

Following presentation of the report Members raised a number of points and discussed these in detail:

- The action that could be taken to monitor the impact of the work of the LSP.
- The difficulty for Members knowing where to refer residents as there were so many different projects and voluntary organisations.
- The option for a "high level" directory to be produced in order for Members to have some contact details for specific projects.
- The measures in place to ensure projects did not overlap or duplicate work, with particular reference being made to the Connecting Families project and the work of Early Help.



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- The role of the Locality Teams and how the officers assessed what support would be most appropriate for a family to in the first instance.

**RESOLVED that  
the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy Monitoring  
Update Report March 2016 be noted.**

## **85. HOUSING BENEFITS - PRESENTATION**

The Chair reminded Members that this item had been brought before the Committee as a result of discussions at the training event held at the beginning of the municipal year whilst Members were considering topics for further scrutiny. Officers proceeded to deliver a detailed presentation which covered the impact of changes to welfare support; (the presentation is attached at Appendix 1 to these Minutes).

Following presentation of the report Members discussed a number of points including the allocation of the Spare Room Subsidy in respect of families with shared child care arrangements. It was confirmed that ordinarily the subsidy would be allocated to the parent in receipt of the Child Benefit, in accordance with specific guidelines. Members also questioned whether people with severe health problems, which necessitated use of the spare room of their home, were required to pay the Spare Room Subsidy. Officers confirmed that whilst there were strict guidelines which needed to be adhered to, in exceptional circumstances officers could work with the individuals and / or their family to identify possible support.

The Committee noted that there would be further significant changes taking place in the coming months, which had been announced in July 2015, and asked that an update report be received when those changes were in place.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) a further presentation be delivered on the subject of welfare reforms and housing benefit changes in due course; and**
- 2) the report be noted.**

## **86. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2015/16**

The Chair introduced the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's draft Annual Report 2015/16. In so doing she thanked Members of the Committee and the Democratic Services Officers with lead

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responsibility for scrutiny for their hard work and support over the past 12 months.

During her presentation of the report, the Chair highlighted the following areas:

- The success of the LGBT Task Group and the production of a leaflet by LGB&T Support Services Redditch, which would make a difference to the lives of so many people in the Borough.
- The improved Budget Scrutiny process and the detailed work which had been carried out. Officers in the Financial Services department were thanked for their hard work on this process.
- The disappointing response from the Committee in respect of the Leisure Services Short, Sharp Review.
- The work of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel.
- The regular updates received from the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), Councillor Nina Wood-Ford.
- The attendance by Portfolio Holders on two occasions which had been most useful and a positive step forward.

Following presentation of the annual report Members discussed the Committee's relationship with the Executive Committee and the role of being a critical friend. Members also considered future plans and ideas for short, sharp reviews and task groups together with specific training needs for the following year.

## **RESOLVED that**

**the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report 2015/16 be approved.**

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

Officers confirmed that there were no updates in relation to Overview and Scrutiny within the Executive Committee minutes from 22nd February 2016. In respect of the Work Programme Officers confirmed that the latest version, which had been tabled at the meeting, contained a number of updates and new items, which Officers highlighted to Members, whilst reminding them that there was an opportunity for pre-scrutiny of any items which they felt were suitable. Members discussed the Leisure Intervention Update which was due to be considered by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 19th April. Officers agreed to confirm whether the

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report would be available in time for the Committee to pre-scrutinise in April.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Leisure Intervention Update be included within the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme for pre-scrutiny in April 2016.**

**88. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

Officers confirmed that there were no updates to the Work Programme; however Members were reminded that there would be a presentation in respect S106 Funding and the Corporate Dashboard, to which all Members had been invited.

**RESOLVED that**

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

**89. TASK GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS**

Improving Disabled People's Access to Redditch's Taxi Fleet Short, Sharp Review – Chair Councillor Gay Hopkins

Councillor Hopkins informed Members that the Short, Sharp Review was moving at a fast pace and had already held two meetings and begun to interview relevant witnesses. The Members had formulated some ideas for the final report, which would be presented at the Committee meeting due to be held on 12th April 2016.

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

Councillor Prosser informed Members that progress continued to be slow and a date was yet to be set for an interview with the relevant Cabinet Member as there had been difficulties in finding a convenient date for all Members.



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**S106 FUNDING – BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources
Ward(s) Affected	All wards
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

To present members with information regarding elements of Section 106 schemes and funding. Further information about the planning aspects of Section 106 agreements will be provided in a verbal update to the Committee meeting and the current financial position is included in Appendix 1.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked to NOTE the contents of the report.**

**3. KEY ISSUES****Financial Implications**

- 3.1 Appendix 1 shows the current balance of Section 106 funding allocated to Redditch Borough Council, this totals £1.166m. Of this sum £600k has been allocated to capital projects (which is highlighted in green). The remaining £566k relates to commuted sums and will be spent on maintaining the areas adopted by the Council as specified in the Section 106 Agreement (highlighted in amber).
- 3.2 The schemes highlighted in blue represent anticipated income of £591k. These developments have not yet met the trigger point in the agreement for the sums to become due.
- 3.3 The Section 106 schedule is managed within the financial services team and updated as additional schemes are agreed and funding received. A regular officer meeting is held to ensure funding is being utilised in accordance with the agreements in place.

**Legal Implications**

- 3.4 Failure to spend the funds as stated in the agreement, may lead to the authority having to pay back any sums received to the developer.

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**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.5 Once the trigger point in the scheme has been reached the developer is invoiced for payment. Once payment has been received a capital bid must be approved by Members to allocate the funds to the project.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.6 The schemes undertaken will support all residents and customers of the Borough.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 4.1 Failure to properly manage the Section 106 scheme could result in the funds not being spent per the agreement and could result in a challenge from the developer and the funds having to be returned
- 4.2 Failure to monitor the progress of the development may result in the Council not billing the developer in a timely manner.

**5. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Current S106 Funds

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

S106 spread sheet

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager  
email: sam.morgan@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk  
Tel.: 01527 64252 x3790

Planning Application - S106 Agreements	Redditch Borough Council Description	Detail	Expected Income	Actual Income	Spent	Remaining
02/448	G WIMPY LTD 38 DWELLINGS FORMER MOATFIELD SCHOOL EA	POS/mtce POS/Community fac/Play facilities		-87446	75706	-11740
02/535	BARRATT HOMES LTD 82 DWELLINGS FORMER BRIDLEY MOOR	play fac/comm fac/POS - approved an in progress works at Birchensale		-116508	112850	-3658
03/296	DAVID PAYNE HOMES	WALKWOOD ROAD HUNT END Off site open space/sports facilities/community facilities		-14000	7000	-7000
03/602	Star and Garter Site	Enhancement W/rehill Woods/Oakenshaw Park/Greenlands POS		-22500	18855	-3645
03/202	Texas Site, Greenlands	Sports facilities/Greenlands park/allotments/subways		-109500	101857	-7643
04/265	Plymouth Road	Offsite improvement/open playspace		-19886	15000	-4886
05/018 - 05/019	British Mills, 18 apartments, Prospect Road	Offsite improvements/Open/Play space		-36000	33705	-2295
06/494/495	Grange Works Beoley Rd West, St Georges	Town Centre enhancements(Lyndsey Berry)/Education facilities		-66680	37407	-29273
04/418	Residential Dev former Railway Goods Yard,	Off-site pedestrian routes contribution Entrance sign/POS/Offsite open space/junior ball court		-42773	0	-42773
96/330	ALLEN HOMES - NINE DAYS HOMES	Off Site play equipment - written off as statute barred - but stil in CGRA		-3240	0	-3240
10/137	Dorothy Terry House & 203 Evesham Rd	Bus shelter		-10000	0	-10000
09/148	The Hills, Tanhouse Lane, Church Hill	Education/Open space/Play areas/Sports facilities		-76972	0	-76972
10/154	Wellington Works, 15 High Street, Astwood Bank	Education/Open space/Play areas/Sports facilities		-84395	48733	-35662
10/210 2013/066/RM	Former Dingleside Middle School	Open space/Sports facilities		-337534	0	-337534
10/253/FUL	Marfield Farm School	Open Space contribution/Play area/sports prvn/legal fees		-94819	400	-94419
10/297	5-7 Bates Hill, Town Centre, Redditch - Westgrove Investments	Crime Prevention and Community Safety/street lighting/CCTV/Open spaces	-20000	0	0	0
11/219 superceded by 2014/114	Sainsburys Supermarket	Abbey Retail Park - Legal fees/underpass/road signage/travel plan	-47500	0	0	0
09/123	Claybrook School	Sports/play area/subway/open space/legal fees		-100054	0	-100054
2012/161	42 Bromsgrove Road			-600	0	-600
2012/297	475 Evesham Rd			-500	0	-500
2012/307	150 Evesham St			-13948	0	-13948
2013/076	Land at 1378-1380 Evesham Road	Astwood Bank		-67567	3135	-64432
2013/094/FUL	Land at The Vicarage, Church Road, Webheath, Redditch	Chancery Two Limited	-50318	0	0	0
2013/327/ful	Oak House Herbert Street Redditch	Rosewood Solutions Limited	-5581	0	0	0
2013/289/ful	Land off Dixon Close, Redditch	Central & Country (Redditch) Limited	-67340	0	0	0
2013/078	Harris Close, Ipsley, Redditch			-172119	0	-172119
2014/114/FUL supercedes 11/219	Land at Abbey Retail Park, Alvechurch Highway, Redditch	Sainsbury's	-15000	0	0	0
2014/115/FUL	Land off Harris Close Redditch Taylor Wimpy		-179811	0	0	0
2014/189/Ful	land at prospect Hill Redditch			-8682	0	0
2014/169/FUL	Edgioake Lane - Kendrick Homes "Suntrap"			-40498	0	-40498
2014/210/FUL	Lowans Hill Farm	Brockhill Lane, Redditch	-35376	0	0	0
2014/272/FUL	Cedar Park Road - Ambulance Station		-25326	0	0	0
2014/323/FUL	Former Swimming Baths	Hewell Road, Redditch	-31175	0	0	0
2014/036/FUL	Land at Jinnah Road,	B&Q Plc & Asda Stores Ltd		-103106	0	-103106
2014/311/FUL	Former Methodist Church,	Evesham Road, Headless Cross Redditch	-36702	0	0	0
2015/042/FUL	Land Off Dixon Close Enfield Redditch		-68492	0	0	0
			<b>-591303</b>	<b>-1620645</b>	<b>454648</b>	<b>-1165997</b>

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**IMPROVING ACCESS FOR PEOPLE WITH DISABILITIES TO REDDITCH TAXI  
FLEETS SHORT, SHARP REVIEW – COVERING REPORT**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Bill Hartnett, Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership (including Voluntary Sector and Health Services)
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities, and Democratic Services and Simon Wilkes, Head of Regulatory Services
Ward(s) Affected	No specific ward relevance.
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

This report provides an overview of the findings of the Improving Access for People with Disabilities to Redditch Taxi Fleets Short, Sharp Review. More detailed information about the evidence basis for the group's recommendations can be found in the group's final report attached at Appendix 1.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** to the Licensing Committee that

**the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy and the Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policy should be amended:**

- 1.1) **to allow applications for new hackney carriages to be made for vehicles that are less than six years old, meet European M1 safety standards and have facilities for carrying a disabled person in a wheelchair within the vehicle. (*This relates to the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy only*); and**
- 1.2) **to require drivers to display stickers in their vehicles that provide information about how to report complaints;**
- 1.3) **the Driver Licence Policy – Application for a Hackney Carriage and / or Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence – should be amended to require that refresher training should be provided on driving standards and disability awareness to taxi drivers every three years;**

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- 2.1) there should be a media campaign to guide disabled people and taxi drivers when travelling by taxi about their rights and responsibilities;
- 2.2) WRS should publish a list of drivers who currently operate licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles on the WRS and Redditch Borough Council websites in a similar format to Brighton and Hove City Council and Eden District Council;
- 3.1) WRS should undertake a review of the conditions attached to taxi operators' licences; and
- 3.2) The Licensing Committee should review the effectiveness of the disability awareness training provided to taxi drivers.

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

- 3.1 In February 2016 Councillor Tom Baker-Price submitted a proposal form for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This form outlined suggested terms of reference for a review of action that could be taken to improve taxi services delivered to customers with disabilities in the Borough. Members had concluded that a review of this subject matter would be timely as it followed on from a distressing case involving a lady with multiple disabilities who had struggled to book a taxi to transport her home from a supermarket in November 2015.
- 3.2 Four Councillors were appointed to serve on this review; Councillor Gay Hopkins (Chair) and Councillors Tom Baker-Price, Natalie Brookes and Jennifer Wheeler. To ensure that the group's findings and proposals could be acted on as soon as possible, to the benefit of local residents with disabilities, a decision was taken to launch this exercise as a short, sharp review.
- 3.3 As part of the exercise Members took into account the relevant findings of a previous review of access for people with disabilities to Redditch town centre, which was completed in 2012. The impact of the previous group's proposals in respect of taxi services provided to customers with disabilities is detailed in the group's final report attached at Appendix 1.

**Financial Implications**

- 3.4 All financial implications arising from the group's recommendations are detailed in the final report.

**Legal Implications**

- 3.5 All legal implications arising from the group's proposals are detailed in the final report.

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**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.6 In line with standard practice any of the group's proposals that receive support from the Council's Licensing Committee and which require changes to Licensing Policies will be subject to further consultation with relevant stakeholders.
- 3.7 This short, sharp review has been a very intense exercise. A total of 11 meetings of the group were held over period of six weeks creating a significant workload for both Members and Officers.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.8 The group has proposed numerous actions which are designed to enhance the services that are received by customers with disabilities who travel by taxi in the Borough.
- 3.9 There are numerous equalities and diversity implications which are detailed in the group's final report.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

No specific risks have been identified.

**5. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – the Improving Access for People with Disabilities to Redditch Taxi Fleets Short, Sharp Review's final report.

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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## Overview & Scrutiny

### **Improving Access for People with Disabilities to Redditch Taxi Fleets Short, Sharp Review.**

April 2016

**REDDITCH** BOROUGH COUNCIL

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<b>Membership of the Task Group</b>	
Councillors Gay Hopkins (Chair), Tom Baker-Price, Natalie Brookes and Jennifer Wheeler.	
<b>Support Officer</b>	
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<b>Completed</b>	
April 2016	
<b>Contact</b>	
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<u>Address</u> : Overview and Scrutiny Team, Democratic Services, Redditch Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH	
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**FOREWORD**

This short, sharp review has been a very intense piece of work, which has taken place in just six weeks. Natalie Brookes, Jenny Wheeler, Tom Baker-Price and myself have met twice a week and in that short time have covered a very comprehensive piece of work. We have interviewed legal, equalities, the Chairs of both Disability Action Redditch and the Redditch Older People's Forum. We have consulted with the taxi operators and requested feedback from the public, particularly elderly and disabled people who use our taxi services. We have had help, feedback and guidance from Sue Garratt and Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

Everyone concerned in this review has worked with passion to provide disabled people with a good service that meets their needs. This is a complex thing to achieve and will take a lot of work to get this right. The recommendations we have made may not be enough to provide a complete answer but we hope they will make a difference to the service in a way that is needed to provide an equal service to that which is received by people who are not disabled.

I would like to thank the people who have given us their time, feedback and advice. The panel have worked really hard in a short timeframe to supply these ideas that we hope will improve the experience for people with disabilities when travelling by taxi and make this a pleasurable experience.

Also it has been a herculean task for Jess Bayley to have had all the paperwork, notes and research ready twice a week. She has also had to organise all the meetings and interviews very quickly. We are all grateful for her hard work, help and advice which has helped to get this project ready in time.

We know we don't have all the answers. Maybe there is more that Overview and Scrutiny can do by scoping some of the issues we have uncovered. We are advocating some policy changes to licensing that we hope can be implemented to make Redditch a town that gives disabled residents a fair and friendly service.



**Councillor Gay Hopkins,  
Chair of the Improving Access for People with Disabilities to Redditch Taxi Fleets  
Short, Sharp Review**



**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS****CHAPTER 1: LICENSING POLICY CHANGES****Recommendations 1.1 – 1.2**

**The Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy and the Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policy should be amended**

- 1.1) **To allow applications for new hackney carriages to be made for vehicles that are less than six years old, meet European M1 safety standards and have facilities for carrying a disabled person in a wheelchair within the vehicle. (*This relates to the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy only*).**
- 1.2) **To require drivers to display stickers in their vehicles that provide information about how to report complaints.**

**Financial Implications:** In line with standard practice Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) will need to undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders before implementing either of these recommendations. Such consultation entails the cost of officer time though it is anticipated that this could be met within existing budgets.

The group is aware that new wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAV) are more expensive to purchase than new or second hand saloon vehicles. By making the change to policy proposed in recommendation 1.1 the costs involved should become more reasonable as second hand WAVs have a cheaper resale value. This may enable local taxi firms to afford to purchase WAVs.

The group has been advised that the stickers detailed in recommendation 1.2 could be purchased for as little as £140 + VAT (for a bulk purchase of 400 stickers).

**Legal implications:** There are no specific legal implications.

**Recommendation 1.3**

**The Driver Licence Policy – Application for a Hackney Carriage and / or Private Hire Vehicle Driver’s Licence – should be amended to require that refresher training should be provided on driving standards and disability awareness to taxi drivers every three years.**

*(Members would be happy for this recommendation to be implemented after the action detailed in recommendation 3.2 below has been implemented)*

**Financial Implications:** As with recommendations 1.1 – 1.2 above WRS will need to undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders before making any changes to policy. Such consultation entails the cost of officer time though it is anticipated that this could be met within existing budgets.

The group has been advised that combined refresher training covering driving standards and disability awareness could be delivered at a cost of £55 – 60 per person. Members are proposing that, subject to the outcomes of consultation, these costs should be covered by the driver and / or their employer.

**Legal implications:** There are no specific legal implications.

**CHAPTER 2: COMMUNICATIONS****Recommendation 2.1**

**There should be a media campaign to guide disabled people and taxi drivers when travelling by taxi about their rights and responsibilities.**

**Financial Implications:** The group has been advised that the Council’s Communications Team would probably be able to co-ordinate this campaign free of charge. There would be the costs of officer time involved in producing any communications on this subject.

**Legal implications:** There are no specific legal implications, though Members are anticipating that legal requirements in respect of people with disabilities travelling by taxi would be covered within this guidance.

**Recommendation 2.2**

**WRS should publish a list of drivers who currently operate licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles on the WRS and Redditch Borough Council websites in a similar format to Brighton and Hove City Council and Eden District Council.**

**Financial Implications:** There would be the costs of officer time in terms of updating the two websites to provide information on this subject.

**Legal implications:** Members have been advised that the Council cannot promote particular firms. To address this the group is suggesting that the same style of wording that has already been adopted by the two other Councils named in the recommendation should be adopted.

**CHAPTER 3: FURTHER REVIEW WORK****Recommendation 3.1**

**WRS should undertake a review of the conditions attached to taxi operators' licences.**

**Financial Implications:** There would be the costs of officer time involved in undertaking a review.

**Legal implications:** No specific legal implications have been identified.

**Recommendation 3.2**

**The Licensing Committee should review the effectiveness of the disability awareness training provided to taxi drivers.**

**Financial Implications:** There would be the costs of Members' and Officers' time in terms of undertaking this proposed review.

**Legal implications:** No specific legal implications have been identified.

### **INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In February 2016 Councillor Tom Baker-Price submitted a proposal form for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. This form provided suggested terms of reference for a review of action that could be taken to improve taxi services delivered to customers with disabilities in the Borough. Members had concluded that a review of this subject would be timely as it followed on from a distressing case involving a lady with multiple disabilities who had struggled to book a taxi to transport her home from a local supermarket in November 2015.

The group was tasked with addressing a small number of objectives:

- To investigate ways to prevent the overcharging of disabled passengers for taxi journeys.
- To identify action that could be taken to increase the number of licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles (WAVs) operating in the Borough.
- To review how best to reduce the waiting time for WAVs.

To ensure that the group's proposals could influence local policies and working practices as soon as possible it was agreed that this exercise should be undertaken as a short, sharp review.

The group gathered evidence from a variety of sources. This included considering relevant licensing policies particularly the *Driver Licence Policy – Application for a Hackney Carriage and / or Private Hire Vehicle Driver's Licence*, the *Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy* and the *Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policy*. Members considered reviews of similar subjects undertaken by other local authorities including Eden District Council's *Wheelchair Accessible Transport – Scrutiny Review*, (2012) and Shropshire Council's *Policy Review – Wheelchair Accessible Hackney Carriages* (2011). Reference was also made to reviews of similar subjects that had been undertaken at the national level including the Law Commission's report *Taxi and Private Hire Services* (2014) and relevant extracts from the report by the House of Lords' Select Committee on the Equality Act 2010 and Disability which was published on 24th March 2016. It should be noted that at the time of writing neither the recommendations from the Law Commission or those from the House of Lords' Select Committee had been approved by the Government.

In order to obtain first hand evidence about the local situation interviews were held with representatives of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), the Council's Legal Services team and the Policy team. Councillors Anita Clayton and Pat Witherspoon were also invited to attend interviews in their capacity as the Chairs of Disability Action Redditch (DAR) and the Redditch Older People's Forum respectively.

Members were keen to consult with service users in order to learn more about the level of demand for taxi services both from wheelchair users and from people with other forms of disability. For this reason the group invited residents to submit evidence for their consideration, which was advertised in the local press and on social media. Local community groups supporting elderly and disabled residents were also contacted directly and invited to submit comments for the group's consideration. Members were disappointed to only receive four responses from local residents and three responses from local community groups, though the group recognises that the limited timeframes available during this consultation process may have restricted the level of feedback that was received. However, Members did feel that the comments which were submitted

were useful and these helped to inform the group's final recommendations. Members also welcomed the exposure that this received on social media which indicated that the subject was of interest to the local community; information about the review and consultation exercise was viewed 631 times on the Council's Facebook account.

The group recognised that as part of the review it was important to engage with local taxi operators. Consequently all the taxi operators in the Borough were invited to send a representative to attend a meeting with the group on 29th March 2016 to discuss the services that were provided to passengers with disabilities. Members were disappointed with the turnout at this meeting as only one taxi operator out of 17 local firms was represented at the meeting. However, Members would like to thank the gentleman who attended this meeting for his honest feedback, which again helped to inform their recommendations.

#### Background:

Throughout the review the group was keen to establish the level of demand locally for services that meet the needs of people with disabilities. The House of Lords' Select Committee reported that there were 11.6 million disabled people living in Great Britain in 2011 (the latest year for which figures are available). This covered a range of disabilities across different age groups.

At the local level statistics were more difficult to obtain. Members were however advised that, in the feedback provided in the 2011 census for Redditch, 8 per cent of people had reported that their day to day activities were limited a lot, 9.1 per cent of people had reported that their day to day activities were limited a little and 82.9 per cent of residents had reported that they had no limitations. The census did not address the types of disability that people might have had and the group recognises that these figures, five years after the census was conducted, cannot now be regarded as entirely reflective of local circumstances. However, the information does provide a useful indication of the potential need for services for people with disabilities at the local level.

This review was not the first scrutiny exercise in Redditch to investigate the travel requirements of people with disabilities. In 2012 Members completed a review of access for people with disabilities by all forms of transport to Redditch town centre. The group proposed two recommendations that were relevant to taxi service provision:

- 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.
- Recommendation 4: Taxi drivers should be offered disability awareness training, which would include information about manually assisting people with disabilities, by Redditch Borough Council.

The Council's Licensing Committee considered these proposals and, following consultation with relevant stakeholders, these recommendations were implemented. Detailed information about the impact of these recommendations at the local level is provided in Chapter One of this report.

The group also investigated the current provision of WAVs in the Borough. As of February 2016 Members were advised that there were five licensed hackney carriage vehicles that were WAVs, representing 2.5 per cent of the overall hackney carriage vehicle fleet in the Borough. There were also 18 licensed private hire vehicles that were WAVs, representing 10 per cent of the private hire vehicle fleet in Redditch. Combined this represents 5.7 per cent of the local fleet, or 23 out of a total of 399 licensed vehicles in the Borough.

#### Legal Context

During the review Members were keen to establish the legal rights of passengers with disabilities and the requirements of taxi drivers. As part of their investigations Members discovered the following:

- It is illegal under the Equality Act 2010 for a taxi driver to refuse to transport a passenger with an assistance dog unless they have an exemption certificate on medical grounds. (Members have been advised that at present no licensed drivers in Redditch have exemption certificates).
- Under this legislation the Government and public authorities have a duty to “have due regard” to the need to eliminate discrimination and advance equality of opportunity.
- Section 165 of the Equality Act 2010, pertaining to transporting passengers in wheelchairs in licensed taxis, has never been brought into force. This covers areas such as how passengers should be transported in a wheelchair and requires drivers to provide reasonable assistance to the passenger as and when required.
- Disabled passengers are, however, protected from discrimination under the general provisions of the act prohibiting any form of discrimination in the provision of goods and services.
- Members were advised by Council Officers that it is illegal for taxi drivers to overcharge disabled passengers for their journey on the basis of their disability. This is easier to enforce for hackney carriages for which the Council sets the tariff. Private Hire Vehicle charges are agreed as a verbal contract, usually during an initial telephone conversation, and there needs to be proof of overcharging in order to demonstrate that a criminal offence has taken place.

In recent months questions have frequently been raised in Parliament as to why Section 165 of the Equality Act 2010 has not yet been brought into force. In January and March 2016 questions were tabled by both Richard Fuller, MP for Bedford, and Karen Lumley, MP for Redditch, on this subject. The House of Lords’ Select Committee’s report also questioned the delay in bringing into force Section 165, which the Committee noted had first been considered as part of the Disability Discrimination Act in 1995. The following points have been raised by the Department of Transport and Andrew Jones, Parliamentary under Secretary of State at the Department of Transport, in response to the MPs and / or the Committee concerning the delay:

- The Government is considering how to best enact Section 165 of the Equality Act 2010.
- There were concerns about the burdens this regulation could place on taxi drivers and companies as small businesses. The Government was therefore investigating whether there were alternative ways of improving driver behavior.
- There were also concerns about whether provisions in Section 165 would meet the diverse needs of people with different types of disabilities.

The group was advised during the review that a lack of consensus about what constitutes a WAV may be a further consideration in this matter. The Law Commission's report noted that the dimensions for WAVs are based on those of a "reference wheelchair". These are a length of 1200mm, a width of 700mm, a sitting height of 1350mm and the height of the footrest at 150mm. These dimensions appear to be adequate for many standard wheelchairs, however, the Law Commission did receive reports that they were inadequate for some modern wheelchairs, particularly electric wheelchairs.

Members were interested to learn that the House of Lord's Select Committee was not convinced by the reasons that have been provided to date for the delay in enacting Section 165 of the Equality Act 2010. Indeed within the Committee's report the following has been stated:

*"The reasons offered by the Government for failing to bring section 165 into force 20 years after its enactment are entirely unconvincing. Ministers should be considering the burden on disabled people trying to take taxis, not the burden on taxi owners or drivers. Section 165 and the remaining provisions of Part 12 of the Act should be brought into force forthwith."*

The group would be interested to learn of the response that the Select Committee receives to these proposals and would suggest that the Licensing Committee be kept informed of progress with this matter in case any changes occur which will have implications for practice at the local level.

**CHAPTER 1: LICENSING POLICY CHANGES**

<b>Recommendations 1.1 – 1.2</b>	<p><b>Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy and the Private Hire Vehicle Licensing Policy should be amended</b></p> <p><b>1.1 To allow applications for new hackney carriages to be made for vehicles that are less than six years old, meet European M1 safety standards and have facilities for carrying a disabled person in a wheelchair within the vehicle. (<i>This relates to the Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy only</i>).</b></p> <p><b>1.2 To require drivers to display stickers in their vehicles that provide information about how to report complaints.</b></p>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	<p>In line with standard practice WRS will need to undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders before implementing either of these recommendations. Such consultation entails the cost of officer time though it is anticipated that this could be met within existing budgets.</p> <p>The group is aware that new WAVs are more expensive to purchase than new or second hand saloon vehicles. By making the change to policy proposed in recommendation 1.1 the costs involved should become more reasonable as second hand WAVs have a cheaper resale value. This may enable local taxi firms to afford to purchase WAVs.</p> <p>The group has been advised that the stickers detailed in recommendation 1.2 could be purchased for as little as £140 + VAT (for a bulk purchase of 400 stickers).</p>
<b>Legal Implications</b>	<p>There are no specific legal implications.</p>

**Local Demand for WAVs**

From the start of the review Members were keen to increase the number of licensed WAVs operating in the Borough in order to meet local demand. The group was advised that any action that was proposed needed to be reasonable and proportionate. Proposals also needed to be underpinned by an understanding of the level of demand for WAVs in the local area.

The group attempted to ascertain the level of demand for WAVs within the Borough during the review. Given the limited feedback received from the public this was difficult to do. However, the information that was provided by the public and some expert witnesses on behalf of the public indicated that there was demand locally for more



licensed WAVs to be available for commercial bookings. The following concerns were raised for Members' consideration:

- One mother had reported that she had taught her child to "transfer" into a vehicle from their wheelchair so that they did not need to rely on WAVs.
- Another parent reported that "...*half the time they can't even accommodate my daughter's wheelchair...*"
- For the lady who had been stranded at a local supermarket in the case which inspired the launch of this review attempts were made to contact seven taxi firms for assistance to no avail.

However, Members were also informed that WAVs were not always the most appropriate form of transport for people with different types of disabilities, including ambulatory disabilities. For example Members were advised that people with conditions such as osteoarthritis often preferred to travel in a saloon car because it was more comfortable than a WAV. Some of the residents and expert witnesses who submitted evidence suggested that they preferred accessing saloon cars because they were not required to use a step or to climb up into a vehicle at an elevated height.

The taxi operator who attended a meeting with the group in March reported that he rarely received requests for a WAV from passengers. In many cases Members were advised that customers could access the vehicle without needing to remain in their wheelchairs and were happy in these circumstances for their wheelchair to be secured safely in the boot. On the rare occasions when the operator received requests for a WAV he would refer the customers to another firm which operated licensed WAVs.

Some of the elderly and disabled respondents to the group highlighted their preference for using Dial a Ride services to travel in the Borough. Dial a Ride was consistently praised for being an excellent service valued by its customers. The group acknowledge that it is possible that this service may impact on the level of demand for WAVs locally, though Members feel it should be noted that Dial a Ride services do have to be booked in advance and only operate during certain hours of the day. Outside these hours and during peak periods of demand for services customers may not be able to access Dial a Ride and instead may need to utilise taxi services.

Based on all of the feedback that they received Members concluded that whilst there appeared to be demand locally for an increase in the number of licensed WAVs the evidence available did not suggest that every taxi in the Borough should be a WAV. The group accepts that their conclusion differs from the House of Lords Select Committee which in March 2016 recommended that "...*no taxis are licensed unless they are wheelchair accessible...*" The group would contend that based on the evidence they have obtained this would appear to run counter to the needs of some disabled people.

#### Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy

In 2013 the Licensing Committee agreed to amend the *Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy* to enable WAVs to be licensed for a lengthier period of time than standard saloon vehicles (for 12 rather than 9 years). This policy amendment was made in response to a recommendation made by the Access for Disabled People Task Group in 2012. At the same time a requirement was also introduced in the policy which stipulated that "...*applications for additional licences for Hackney Carriages will be granted only to approved new vehicles which meet the European "M1" safety standards and have facilities for carrying a disabled person in a wheelchair within the vehicle*".

The aim of these amendments to the policy was to facilitate an increase in the number of licensed WAVs operating in the Borough. However, the group was advised by WRS that as a consequence of implementing the recommendation made by the previous Task Group “...there has been no increase in the number of vehicles, no additional purchases or new licences granted.”

Members were disappointed to learn about the limited impact of the previous scrutiny proposal and investigated this matter further in order to learn lessons and to work out how to progress in future. It quickly became apparent that a key obstacle to the increase in the number of WAVs in this context was the requirement in the policy for applications for additional licences for hackney carriages to be for new WAVs. New WAVs are considerably more expensive to purchase than standard saloon vehicles: the group has been advised that a new WAV can cost between £12,000 for a standard WAV and £45,000 (for an FX4 or London black cab). Furthermore under the terms of the policy drivers who already hold a hackney carriage vehicle licence are permitted to transfer their licence to a vehicle of a similar type, a practice known as “grandfather rights”, and these vehicles can be up to six years old. The group has been advised that on average a standard second hand saloon vehicle can be purchased for £6,000 – 8,000. In addition to the different costs involved in purchasing a new WAV compared to a second hand saloon car Members have learned that WAVs are considerably more expensive to operate. Shropshire Council, in their review of wheelchair access and hackney carriages, found that on average a WAV costs £1,000 more per annum to operate than a standard saloon vehicle. The group believes that these additional costs are deterring taxi firms from investing in WAVs.

Members investigated the action that had been taken by other local authorities in an attempt to increase the number of licensed WAVs in their areas to find out whether a similar approach could overcome the problems encountered in Redditch. Some local authorities, like Worcester City Council, had a similar arrangement to Redditch Borough Council in as much as new vehicles had to be wheelchair accessible. This did not impact on grandfather rights and a significant number of licensed vehicles in the city continued to be saloon cars. At other local authorities, such as Wyre Forest District Council and Stratford-on-Avon District Council, licensing policies were amended so as to require all licensed vehicles to be WAVs by a set date. In both these cases the policy requirements had been subject to legal challenge. The group concurred that based on feedback about local demand for WAVs neither of these approaches would meet the needs of residents or drivers in Redditch.

Instead the group is proposing that the *Hackney Carriage Vehicle Licensing Policy* should be amended so as to enable applications for additional licences for hackney carriages to be granted for WAVs that are up to six years of age. This could address operators’ concerns about costs as Members have been advised that a second hand WAV can be purchased for as little as £8,000. Given the current limited provision and the group’s finding that there is a certain level of demand locally for WAVs Members believe that the extra running costs for a WAV would be offset by the trade that firms would receive for transporting customers in wheelchairs. The group is therefore contending that this policy change would both increase the availability of WAVs for customers with disabilities and have a beneficial impact on local taxi firms’ businesses.

### Stickers

A key finding during the course of the review was that customers did not know how to submit a complaint if they were dissatisfied with the service they had received. Members first became concerned that there may be limited awareness of the complaints process when they were advised that WRS had received no complaints about taxis in respect of services provided to passengers with disabilities in the past five years. Members concurred that as with most services it was likely that there had been some dissatisfied customers and poor travelling experiences even if the majority of services had been good. The lack of complaints was considered concerning by the group as without this feedback it would be difficult for WRS or taxi firms to make improvements to services to meet the needs of local customers.

During the investigation Members received information, both from expert witnesses and from the public, about their experiences of travelling by taxi. It should be noted that some respondents highlighted that they had only had positive experiences when travelling by taxi. Typical of this positive feedback was the community group supporting elderly and disabled people which reported that when their members used taxis they had “*no problems*”. However, a number of respondents did advise the group that they had had negative experiences when travelling by taxi. Despite this they had not submitted formal complaints. The following reasons were provided by residents and expert witnesses for the lack of complaints:

- Passengers did not always know the names of the drivers or the vehicle’s licence plate numbers so did not feel they had sufficient information to report a complaint.
- In some cases customers used the same company for every journey and got to know the drivers well. Under these circumstances they did not feel comfortable making a complaint about an individual that they knew.
- Customers reported feeling scared about making their complaints directly to the driver.
- There were also concerns that if a customer made a complaint they might be identified and the taxi driver / operator might not be prepared to transport them again in future.
- Members were advised that unfortunately discrimination was frequently experienced by people with disabilities. There was a risk that in these circumstances poor services could become normalised and accepted.

To address this problem the group is proposing that stickers highlighting the complaints process should be provided to drivers to display inside their vehicles. During their investigation the group found that similar stickers have been introduced by Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council, Blackpool Council and Birmingham City Council. There had been some opposition to the introduction of stickers in these areas on the basis that they could remove the paintwork from the vehicles. However, the group is contending that if the stickers are displayed in a suitable location inside the vehicle this should not be a problem. Concerns had also been raised in Blackpool and Sandwell that this could lead to vexatious complaints and cause distress to the driver. The group, though, feels that WRS, as a professional service, would be able to distinguish vexatious complaints if and when they arose.

Members have received suggestions that these stickers could invite customers to submit both compliments and complaints. Whilst the group recognise that it is nice for firms to receive positive feedback Members did not feel that it would address any service needs. By contrast, the limited number of complaints indicates to the group that more action

needs to be taken to raise awareness of the complaints process so that problems can be addressed as and when they occur. The group is therefore proposing that these stickers should invite customers to report their experience that day and should provide relevant contact details and the licence numbers for the vehicle.

Members have been advised that it should be possible for this type of sticker to be produced at a cost of £140 (+VAT) for a batch of 400. This represents a minimal amount per driver and Members hope that the cost could be covered within existing budgets, though it is accepted by the group that licence fees may need to be adjusted to cover the costs. This figure is based on the stickers being produced digitally and WRS would need to provide an excel spreadsheet containing the data required.

<p><b>Recommendation 1.3</b></p>	<p><b>The Driver Licence Policy – Application for a Hackney Carriage and / or Private Hire Vehicle Driver’s Licence – should be amended to require that refresher training should be provided on driving standards and disability awareness to taxi drivers every three years.</b></p> <p><i>(Members would be happy for this recommendation to be implemented after the action detailed in recommendation 3.2 below has been implemented)</i></p>
<p><b>Financial Implications</b></p>	<p>As with recommendations 1.1 – 1.2 above WRS will need to undertake consultation with relevant stakeholders before making any changes to policy. Such consultation entails the cost of officer time though it is anticipated that this could be met within existing budgets.</p> <p>The group has been advised that combined refresher training covering driving standards and disability awareness could be delivered at a cost of £55 – 60 per person. Members are proposing that, subject to the outcomes of consultation, these costs should be covered by the driver and / or their employer.</p>
<p><b>Legal Implications</b></p>	<p>There are no specific legal implications.</p>

A requirement for all drivers to participate in disability awareness training, or to be able to demonstrate having equivalent training, was introduced in 2013 in line with the recommendation from the Access for Disabled People Task Group. Members have been advised that every licensed driver has now either participated in this training or can demonstrate that they have secured equivalent training. Any newly licensed drivers are required to undertake the training at Worcester County Hall before they can start to work as a taxi driver in the Borough.

Members welcomed the news that this training had been delivered. The group has been advised that Redditch Borough Council was the first local authority in the county to require licensed taxi drivers to participate in this training. At a national level Members learned that many Councils do not require their drivers to participate in such training despite the fact that it is considered best practice. The Law Commission reported in

2014 that “...the latest statistics from the Department for Transport indicate that just under a third of authorities require disability awareness training for taxi drivers, and even fewer impose such a requirement on private hire drivers.” Under these circumstances the group believes that Redditch is leading the way locally in terms of the requirements placed on taxi drivers to meet the needs of customers with disabilities.

However, Members received mixed feedback from respondents about the impact that this training has had on the quality of services that are provided to customers with disabilities. In some cases respondents reported that they had had no problems and generally received good services. Typical of this feedback was a lady who reported that “...I have found that some of the taxi drivers are lovely and have really clean cars. In my experience when I travel on my own the drivers are generally helpful – you get the occasional driver who is obstreperous. I use a walker and they always help me get it into and out of the car when I have to go to the Doctors.” Members were concerned, though, to note that some customers were continuing to receive a poor service. Members received complaints that drivers were “...rude and unhelpful...” or drivers “...do not know how to help us...” Concerns were also raised about where taxis stopped to collect and deliver passengers with disabilities; “...there is a problem with where the vehicles stop when they come to pick us up or drop us off. They don't always stop at locations where there is a dropped kerb and this can create even more difficulties when getting out of the vehicle.” The group was advised that in one case a customer, who had ordered a taxi without advising the taxi firm that they were disabled, had found that the driver was not happy about having to place their wheelchair in his car because it had only recently been cleaned. When questioned one expert witness informed the group that they had observed no noticeable difference in the quality of the service that had been provided to disabled customers or in the behavior of drivers in the previous five years which covered the period in which the requirement to undertake training had been introduced.

The group was pleased to find that they received no complaints about drivers refusing to transport customers with assistance dogs, though they did receive evidence from a resident who was distressed that some drivers refused to transport pet dogs on the basis that they could make the vehicle dirty. Members were concerned to receive anecdotal reports that some customers with disabilities appeared to have been over charged for journeys in the town.

By contrast with this mixed feedback, and without prompting, Members received consistently positive reports about the services provided by Dial a Ride drivers. Residents reported that the services they provided were invaluable. Typical of these comments was the lady who stated that “...the drivers are helpful and the service is always excellent...” Members were advised that the Dial a Ride drivers received disability awareness training from the same training providers as taxi drivers. However, unlike the taxi drivers, Dial a Ride drivers were required to retake this training as well as particular driving tests every three years. The group is suggesting that if taxi drivers were required to undertake refresher training at similarly regular intervals this might have a beneficial impact on the quality of local services.

The group has been advised that this combined refresher training could be delivered at a cost of £55 – 60 per driver. Members recognise that taxi operators and drivers will need to be consulted about this proposal and the costs involved would be an aspect to raise during these discussions. However, the group is suggesting that these costs should be met by the taxi drivers and / or operators as an occupational expense rather than by the Council.

Concluding Remarks

Members were concerned about the extent to which the legal requirements in respect of drivers and passengers with disabilities, as detailed in the Equality Act 2010, could be enforced. These concerns were reflected in the Law Commission's report:

*“As the law currently stands, much of the behavior complained of by disabled passengers would infringe the provisions of the Equality Act 2010, in particular the requirement not to discriminate in the provision of services. However, the only means of enforcing this is through pursuing an action in the civil courts. This is costly, complex and, without the support of a representative organisation or charity, not feasible for most individuals. Furthermore, even if action were to be taken against a driver or dispatcher, the court would not have the power to take action against the licence.”*

The group had hoped to address this problem by proposing that the Council's licensing policies be amended to ban drivers from refusing to transport passengers with assistance dogs or from overcharging disabled passengers in line with legislative requirements. Members had felt that this would have enabled the Council to address this problem through less costly enforcement action at the local authority level. However, the group has been advised that it is considered bad practice for a local authority to mix law and policy which are two distinct areas. Instead, further information about these requirements could be incorporated into relevant guidance and the handbooks that are provided to drivers. The group has accepted this advice but would call upon the Licensing Committee to note their concerns in respect of this matter and to ensure that where possible the guidance materials are updated accordingly.

**CHAPTER 2: COMMUNICATIONS**

<b>Recommendation 2.1</b>	<b>There should be a media campaign to guide disabled people and taxi drivers when travelling by taxi about their rights and responsibilities.</b>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	The group has been advised that the Council's Communications Team would probably be able to co-ordinate this campaign free of charge. There would be the costs of officer time involved in producing any communications on this subject.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	There are no specific legal implications, though Members are anticipating that legal requirements in respect of people with disabilities travelling by taxi would be covered within this guidance.

As part of the review Members were eager to establish the extent to which customers and drivers were familiar with the rights of disabled passengers travelling by taxi.

The group recognised that the disability awareness training provided to taxi drivers might raise awareness within the trade of the rights of disabled passengers. However, Members were not convinced that all drivers and operators were completely familiar with the legal rights of passengers. This was partly as a result of evidence received by the group to suggest that some drivers and operators were over charging passengers with disabilities for undertaking journeys in the Borough. For example one lady reported that when she phoned a taxi firm about the possibility of transporting a friend in a wheelchair she was advised by a taxi firm that "...*wheelchair users are now charged a minimum fee of £10.00!*"

Members were also concerned that some customers with disabilities might not be aware of their rights when travelling by taxi. The group discovered that there appeared to be no written guidelines available locally which outlined the rights of disabled passengers.

When consulted about the value of communications on this subject a number of expert witnesses suggested to the group that some form of written guidance would be useful. Concerns were raised with the group that often both the taxi driver and the passenger or their relatives were not aware of their respective responsibilities and if they were to fulfil these responsibilities the services provided to disabled customers might improve. For example the group was advised a number of times that drivers frequently would not provide assistance to passengers entering or alighting from the vehicle though were generally willing to carry wheelchairs, walkers and carrier bags for the passenger. However, Members were also informed that taxi drivers might be worried about touching the passenger without permission and were concerned that they could be sued if any accidents occurred whilst they were assisting the passenger. To address this problem it was suggested that passengers and their relatives or carers should be informing the operator or driver of their requirements, when accessing, travelling in and leaving the vehicle.

The group learned that other local authorities have previously produced written guidance concerning the transportation of customers with disabilities by taxi. For example the

Eden District Council scrutiny group reported that Shropshire Council had produced *Mobility Guidance for Shropshire* prior to the commencement of the Equality Act 2010. The target audience for Shropshire Council's guidance was the taxi trade. Members are suggesting that this guidance would be a useful reminder for taxi drivers and, if operators are willing, this written guidance could be made available to view at their premises.

Members are also suggesting that this written guidance would be useful for elderly and disabled passengers and their relatives and carers. Various forms of communication would need to be used to engage with this audience. For example the group was advised that people with some forms of disability were often housebound when they did not have access to a carer and under these circumstances were unlikely to pick up leaflets and more likely to access information on websites or on social media. However, it was suggested that some elderly residents might be more likely to learn about their rights and responsibilities through coverage in the local press. Members are also suggesting that it might be useful for posters to be produced containing basic information on this subject which could be placed on display in the reception area at GPs' surgeries.

Written communications would need to be informed by an understanding of the legislative position in respect of the rights of passengers with disabilities travelling by taxi. The group has been advised that the Council's Communications team would be in a position to co-ordinate a media campaign on this subject. Members are suggesting that they should be advised in this process by the Council's Policy team and WRS to ensure that the content of these communications is accurate.

<b>Recommendation 2.2</b>	<b>WRS should publish a list of drivers who currently operate licensed wheelchair accessible vehicles on the WRS and Redditch Borough Council websites in a similar format to Brighton and Hove City Council and Eden District Council.</b>
<b>Financial Implications</b>  <b>Legal Implications</b>	There would be the costs of officer time in terms of updating the two websites to provide information on this subject.  Members have been advised that the Council cannot promote particular firms. To address this the group is suggesting that the same style of wording that has already been adopted by the two other Councils named in the recommendation should be adopted.

During the course of their investigations the group became concerned that there might be limited awareness within the community of which taxi firms and drivers currently operate WAVs. Members learned that in the case which inspired this review attempts were made to contact seven separate taxi firms to book a WAV but none could be located. Other concerns were raised with the group that some WAVs were known to be unavailable at particular times of the day as they were reserved for use as school transportation. Under these circumstances customers with disabilities could sometimes struggle to identify who to approach to order a WAV for a commercial booking.

To address this problem the group is contending that it would be useful for information about the WAVs that operate locally and relevant contact details that can be used to



book these vehicles to be made available for the public to access. The group did consider suggesting that this information should be made available in paper form. However, Officers have advised that drivers and their licensed WAVs do move between taxi firms and if this information was recorded on a leaflet the details would soon be out of date. The production of leaflets can also require a certain level of financial investment and Members do not feel that this expenditure would be justified if the information was to become out of date quickly. Therefore the group is suggesting that instead this information should be published electronically on the Council and WRS websites for the use of the public. Information on websites can easily be updated with any costs being limited to that of the officer time involved in amending the details electronically.

The group has been advised that the Council needs to be careful about publishing selective lists of firms because the local authority needs to strike a balance between service provision generally and its regulatory function. Under these circumstances it has been suggested to Members that it might be more appropriate for this information to be published on a third party's website, such as that of DAR. Members have noted these points but were concerned that this approach would not necessarily be the best way to promote this information to the target audience; Members believe that residents are more likely to check the Council's website and the website of the licensing authority for this information.

As part of their investigations Members discovered that a couple of other Councils already publish information, including contact details for taxi drivers who operate WAVs, on their websites. This includes Brighton and Hove City Council and Eden District Council. Members are suggesting that their example demonstrates that it is possible for local authorities to provide such information on their websites without compromising the authority's impartiality or position as a regulatory body. The group is proposing therefore that officers adopt a similar approach to these two Councils when publishing this information on the WRS and Redditch Borough Council websites. Members are asked to note that if this recommendation is approved reference would need to be made to the Data Protection Act. Drivers would also need to provide permission for contact details to be shared with the public in this manner.

**CHAPTER 3: FURTHER REVIEW WORK**

At the end of their review the group identified two key areas that would be suitable for further investigation. Unfortunately, due to the limited timeframes available for this exercise it was not possible for the group to scrutinise these matters in detail. Consequently they are proposing that WRS and the Licensing Committee should undertake this additional investigatory work.

<b>Recommendation 3.1</b>	<b>WRS should undertake a review of the conditions attached to taxi operators' licences.</b>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There would be the costs of officer time involved in undertaking a review.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	No specific legal implications have been identified.

Action that could be taken to improve local services for customers with disabilities were discussed during the course of the consultation meeting that was attended by a representative of a local taxi firm. One of the suggestions that was raised during these discussions was that the Council should consider enhancing the responsibility of local taxi operators for the behavior of the drivers they employed. Members were advised that this might have a beneficial impact on the quality of local services provided to passengers with disabilities whilst also enabling companies to take more control of the way that their businesses operated.

As this suggestion was made during the penultimate meeting of the group Members had very little time to investigate the full implications of this proposal or how the suggestion might be addressed in practice. However Officers did suggest to the group that the role of taxi firms could potentially be enhanced if appropriate changes were made to the conditions attached to taxi operators' licences. Currently a small number of conditions apply to these licences and Members have been advised that local taxi firms comply with these requirements.

The group has been informed that a review of these conditions could be carried out and that there would be resources within WRS to enable this review to be conducted internally. Members would therefore encourage Officers to undertake this review and to report their findings, particularly any implications for the services provided to customers with disabilities, for the consideration of the Licensing Committee in due course.

<b>Recommendation 3.2</b>	<b>The Licensing Committee should review the effectiveness of the disability awareness training provided to taxi drivers.</b>
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There would be the costs of Members' and Officers' time in terms of undertaking this proposed review.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	No specific legal implications have been identified.

During the course of the review Members did express some reservations about the disability awareness training that was being delivered to drivers and the extent to which this was having a positive impact on the quality of services received by customers with disabilities. Notwithstanding the fact that this training represents best practice Members were concerned to receive complaints about the behavior of drivers who were rude and unable or unwilling to assist disabled passengers (as detailed in relation to recommendation 1.3 above). The group was keen to ensure that any training that is provided is meaningful and has the desired impact on the quality of local services.

To assess the impact of the training Members were keen to obtain further information about the content of the training that is delivered to drivers. The group was advised that the training was provided by Worcestershire County Council and involved a mixture of demonstrations and interactive learning. Members were also informed that the course covered the needs of people with different types of disability including mobility, sensory and cognitive impairments. However, Members concurred that it would have been useful to obtain more detailed information about the content of the training and how drivers were advised to apply this learning in order to assess its effectiveness.

The group was surprised to learn that no system was in place to enable the Council to monitor the impact of the training. Members were also concerned to find that the Council's policy team had not been involved in reviewing the content of the training, despite the fact that this team takes a lead on equalities for the Council and has developed expertise from delivering equalities training to staff.

In this context, and given that taxi drivers have now been required to undertake this training for the past three years, Members are suggesting that it would be appropriate for the Licensing Committee to review the effectiveness of the disability awareness training that is currently provided. This will provide the Committee with a chance to assess the extent to which the training is having the desired impact on the services provided by drivers to customers with disabilities and whether any improvements could be made to this training. Members recognise that, if the Licensing Committee is inclined to approve this recommendation, it may be useful to undertake this review prior to taking any further action on the group's proposal for refresher training, as detailed in recommendation 1.3 above.

**CONCLUSION**

Members of the Improving Access for Disabled People to Redditch's Taxi Fleets Short, Sharp Review have completed an intense and detailed scrutiny review of the services provided to customers with disabilities.

Throughout the review the group has attempted to promote actions that are reasonable and proportionate. Members are hoping that their proposals, if implemented, will meet the needs of residents with a range of disabilities and will enhance the quality of local taxi services. Equally the group is hopeful that their recommendations, if they are endorsed, will have a positive impact on business for local taxi firms.

Members recognise that some of their recommendations require detailed consideration and that taxi drivers will be keen to review and comment on their proposals. It is therefore imperative that further consultation with local taxi operators is undertaken in due course.

However, the group hopes that Members will agree with their findings and they urge the Licensing Committee to approve their recommendations.

**APPENDIX 1****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</p>		

	that can be learned from experiences in other areas” creating a need to review this policy area.
<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> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Ways to prevent overcharging.</li> <li>• How to increase the number of WAV.</li> <li>• How best to reduce the waiting time for WAV.</li> </ul> <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)**

**APPENDIX 2**  
**Acknowledgements**

Members would like to thank the following for providing evidence or other forms of support during the course of the review:

Jack Carradine, Senior Marketing and Communications Officer  
Councillor Anita Clayton (in her capacity as Chair of Disability Action Redditch)  
Rebecca Dunne (Policy Manager)  
Dave Etheridge, Senior Practitioner – Licensing, (Worcestershire Regulatory Services).  
Clare Flanagan, Legal Services Manager  
Sue Garratt, Licensing and Support Manager, (Worcestershire Regulatory Services)  
Anne-Marie Harley, Communications Manager  
Emily Payne (Equalities Officer)  
Tom Phelan, (Worcestershire Regulatory Services)  
Linda Ratchell, Print and Reprographics Assistant  
Councillor Pat Witherspoon (in her capacity as Chair of the Redditch Older People's Forum)

The group would like to thank the taxi operator who attended a meeting with the group on 29th March. The evidence he supplied was invaluable and contributed to the group's findings.

Members are also eager to thank the four residents and three local community groups that submitted evidence for their consideration during the course of the review. Again this information was really useful and helped to inform the group's recommendations.

**APPENDIX 3**  
**Timeline of Activities**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Task Group Activity</b>
25th February 2016	Considering the terms of reference and the approach to the review.
3rd March	Interview with the Licensing and Support Manager (Worcestershire Regulatory Services) and considering written feedback from the Legal Services Manager.
8th March	Interview with Councillor Pat Witherspoon and considering the content of a report by the Law Commission: <i>Taxi and Private Hire Services</i> (2014).
11th March	Interview with Councillor Anita Clayton and considering a report produced by Shropshire County Council: <i>Policy review - Wheelchair Accessible Hackney Carriages</i> (2011).
15th March	Reviewing progress to date with the review.
17th March	Interview with the Policy Manager and Equalities Officer.
22nd March	Reviewing progress to date and considering draft recommendations.
24th March	Considering feedback received from the public and local community groups regarding experiences of elderly and disabled people travelling by taxi in Redditch. Also consideration of relevant extracts from the report published that day by the House of Lord's Select Committee on the Equality Act 2010 and Disabilities.
29th March	Consultation meeting with taxi operators.
30th March	Considering and agreeing the group's final recommendations.



**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**

12th April 2016

**QUARTERLY MONITORING RECOMMENDATIONS TRACKER**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities, and Democratic Services
Ward(s) Affected	No specific ward relevance.
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

This report provides an update on the action that has been taken to implement recommendations made through the scrutiny process since the previous quarterly update was provided.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

**the report be noted.**

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

- 3.1 At the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members monitor the implementation of scrutiny recommendations on a quarterly basis. The latest update on progress with the implementation of scrutiny recommendations is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.2 Wherever possible an estimated date for the final implementation of outstanding recommendations has been provided. In cases where an action requested through a scrutiny recommendation has been resolved the recommendation has been recorded as being completed.
- 3.3 The Committee will be aware that there are some recommendations where it would be reasonable for Officers to require further time to implement. For example, Officers would require some time to implement recommendations made at a recent meeting of the Committee. Where possible an explanation has been provided for the delay in implementation.
- 3.4 Members are invited to consider the updates provided regarding these recommendations and to identify whether any further action is required to facilitate the implementation of any of these recommendations.

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY  
COMMITTEE**12th April 2016

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- 3.5 The Committee may conclude that, based on the update provided by Officers, it is no longer feasible to implement the action proposed in a recommendation. In these cases Members may want to agree to remove the recommendation from the tracker report and to ask Officers to take no further action.
- 3.6 The Committee is asked to note that once recommendations have been implemented they will be removed from the tracker, though any updates contained in previous editions of the report will remain available to view on the Council's website.

**Financial Implications**

- 3.7 There are no direct financial implications directly relating to this report.

**Legal Implications**

- 3.8 There are no legal implications directly relating to this report.

**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.9 There are no direct service or operational implications that have been identified for this report.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.10 No direct customer or equality and diversity implications have been identified for this report.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

No risks have been identified.

**5. APPENDICES**


Appendix 1 – Recommendation Tracker.


**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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## Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker


Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
Access for Disabled People (August 2012)					
Arts and Culture (April 2013)					
Recommendation 9	The “Creative Redditch” artwork to be used on the next bus shelter to be installed in the town centre.	Community Safety	N/A	☹	<p><u>Previous update:</u> There are no plans to install Euroshell type bus shelters that could display the work in town centre at this time. Officers have explored the option for the creative Redditch artwork to be used on the shutter for the former Poundstretcher unit. However, in December 2014 Officers reported that the prospects for using the Creative Redditch piece at the former PoundStretcher store appeared to be slim.</p> <p><u>June 2015 update:</u> Since the last update the landlord of the former Pound Stretcher store on Alcester Street has complied with direction from Planning Enforcement to repair damaged glazing on the shop front and there is felt to be some scope to work with them further to enhance the shop front appearance possibly through the use of artwork such as the “Creative Redditch” piece. This proposal has not yet been costed and so the feasibility remains under consideration by officers at this point.</p>

Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
					<p><u>September 2015 update:</u> The Community Safety Team is working with the Town Centre Coordinator to assess the feasibility of installing the “Celebrating Redditch” piece and other artwork on or inside the windows of a vacant shop unit on Alcester Street, close to the Palace Theatre. If feasible, the installation will complement a proposal from the Town Centre Partnership to take on this unit to provide space for small businesses. This proposal is subject to the award of business rate relief for the premises.</p> <p><u>January 2016:</u> No further update was provided in advance of the publication of this report.</p> <p><u>April 2016</u> Due to the timescales, and the Town Centre Partnership hoping to take over the lease by the beginning of July 2016 it was not deemed feasible to install the proposed art work at the former Poundstretcher store.</p>
<b>Voluntary and Community Sector (July 2014)</b>					
Recommendation 4	The Council to consider employing an apprentice to support the work of the Grants Officer.	Community Services and HR.	Will be completed soon..		<u>Previous update:</u> There has been a delay recruiting to this post, partly due to long-term staff sickness absence. Officers are hoping to recruit to an apprentice post, to

Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
					<p>shared between Community Services and the Policy team, early in the New Year.</p> <p><u>June and September 2015 update:</u> A decision has been taken to postpone recruiting to this post until autumn 2015 due to long-term staff absence.</p> <p><u>January 2016 update:</u> The post of Grants and Voluntary Sector Co-ordinator is now vacant and is currently being reviewed. An apprentice will be recruited once this review has taken place and it is anticipated to be at the start of the new financial year.</p> <p><u>April 2016 update:</u> Officers have started the process to recruit an Apprentice to be in post as soon as possible.</p>
<b>Voluntary and Community Sector (July 2014)</b>					
Recommendation 6a	Dedicated space to be introduced on the intranet to share information about the work services are doing with VCS groups.	Community Services to co-ordinate	Completed		<p><u>June and September 2015 update:</u> Officers have started work with IT and the local Voluntary and Community Sector groups to ensure this space shares important and valuable information. There is currently a delay in populating this space due to a long term staff absence. This will be re-visited once the service is fully staffed.</p>

Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
					<p><u>October 2015 Update to Committee:</u> Due to the staffing matters outlined under recommendation 4 above, this will be actioned once a Co-Ordinator is in post.</p> <p><u>January 2016 update:</u> The same update applies as in October (please also refer to the update in respect of recommendation 4 above).</p> <p><u>April 2016 update:</u> A shared site has been established on the Orb that will include both the work that services are doing with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) and also promote the variety of VCS services available across the Borough in order that teams can refer residents to them.</p>
<b>Voluntary and Community Sector (July 2014)</b>					
Recommendation 10	A Voluntary Sector event to be held and to include a prize giving ceremony.	Community Services to work with Voluntary and Community Sector groups.	Completed	☹️	<p><u>June and September 2015 update:</u> Officers are planning to engage with local groups to get feedback on this type of event. Due to long term staff absence, this work and feedback from the consultation will be provided once the service is fully staffed.</p> <p><u>October 2015 update to Committee:</u> Due to the staffing matters outlined under recommendation 4 below, this will be actioned once a Co-ordinator is in post. In</p>



Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
					<p>the interim, conversations have taken place with the Bromsgrove and Redditch Network to potentially link this action to National Volunteering Week.</p> <p><u>January 2016 update:</u> The same update applies as in October (please also refer to the update in respect of recommendation 4 above).</p> <p><u>April 2016 update:</u> In discussion with BARN this will be achieved via the Pride in Redditch awards.</p>
LGBT Task Group Recommendations (July 2015)					
Recommendation 1	Redditch Borough Council should participate in the Stonewall Workplace Equality Index every year.	Policy team	September 2016	☺	<p><u>September 2015 update:</u> Forms need to be submitted by organisations participating in the Workplace Equality Index during the calendar year before the index is published. Due to the limited time available prior to the deadline for the 2016 index a decision has been taken to postpone participation until next year. The Chair of the Task Group was consulted about this proposal.</p> <p><u>April 2016 Update:</u> This will be picked up during 2016/17.</p>

Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
Recommendation 2	<p>Worcestershire County Council should take part in the Stonewall Education Equality Index.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council should also encourage schools to take part in the Stonewall School Champions Programme and / or to use the Birmingham LGBT Schools Toolkit.</p>				<p><u>September 2015 Update</u></p> <p>As agreed by the Executive Committee the Leader of the Council wrote to the Leader of Worcestershire County Council in July 2015 to request that this recommendation be considered and approved.</p> <p>A positive response was received from the Leader of Worcestershire County Council on 3rd August 2015. This noted that the deadline for participation in the Stonewall Education Equality Index 2015 has now passed. Consideration will be given as to whether to participate in the index in 2016. The response also noted that some schools already participate in LGBT support schemes. Therefore advice is being sought as to the best way forward in respect of this element of the recommendation.</p> <p><u>January 2016 Update:</u> No further update was provided in advance of the publication of this report.</p> <p><u>April 2016 Update:</u> No further update were available.</p>





Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
Recommendation 3	There should be a greater celebration of the positive history of the LGBT community during the annual LGBT History Month celebrations with a focus on the specific theme in each given year. This should include holding events at the Palace Theatre.	LGBT Support Services Redditch and LGBT Hate Crime Forum.	February 2016.	☺	<p><u>September 2015 Update:</u></p> <p>The next LGBT History Month is due to take place in February 2016. The Chair of the Task Group presented the group's findings for the consideration of the Worcestershire LGBT Hate Crime Forum on 18th August. There appeared to be general consensus that the community should work together on the next LGBT History month in 2016.</p> <p><u>January 2016 Update:</u> No further update was provided in advance of the publication of this report.</p> <p><u>April 2016 update:</u> The LGBT History Month Celebration Event took place at the Palace Theatre on Friday 4 March, 1.00-7.30pm. The programme of events included a creative workshop by HoW College, an art exhibition by OUTward Expressions, Bingo delivered by LGBT Redditch Support Group, a range of stalls and display boards with the event finishing with a brilliant performance by Rainbow Voices Choir. The event was well attended and the feedback was positive.</p>

Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
Recommendation 4	A leaflet advertising the support networks available for the LGBT community in Redditch, should be produced.	LGBT Support Services Redditch	Completed and ongoing.	☺	<p><u>September 2015 Update</u></p> <p>LGBT Support Services Redditch has already started to produce a leaflet to promote the support networks available to the community.</p> <p><u>January 2016 Update:</u> No further update was provided in advance of the publication of this report.</p> <p><u>April 2016 Update:</u> A leaflet, produced by LGB&amp;T Support Services Redditch was launched in February/March 2016 to coincide with LGB&amp;T History Month. This leaflet was produced with the help of cross-party funding from local County Councillors.</p>
Recommendation 4a	Redditch Borough Council should support any groups that produce this literature by allowing such leaflets to be made available for residents to collect in public venues, such as Redditch Town Hall, and making this information available to view on relevant web pages of the Council's website.	Policy team	Subject to completion of recommendation 4 above.	☺	<p><u>September 2015 Update</u> The Executive Committee has indicated that they would be happy for the Council to display this type of leaflet, subject to inclusion of appropriate material within the documentation.</p> <p><u>January 2016 Update:</u> No further update was provided in advance of the publication of this report.</p> <p><u>April 2016 Update:</u> The leaflet is available the Town Hall and the LGBT Redditch Support Group have distributed the leaflets to other public places.</p>

Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
Recommendation 5	The specific mental health needs of the LGBT community should be addressed in equalities training provided to frontline Council staff. This should be covered in one of the equalities briefing sessions that the policy team is due to deliver in forthcoming months.	Policy team	To be confirmed		<p><u>September 2015 update:</u> Relevant Officers have been advised about this proposal and have been asked to incorporate this session into the Council's forthcoming equalities training sessions.</p> <p><u>January 2016 Update:</u> No further update was provided in advance of the publication of this report.</p> <p><u>April 2016 Update:</u> This will be picked up via training sessions that will be delivered in 2016.</p>
Recommendation 6	<p>Local partners should help to promote the following to members of the LGBT community, including on the Redditch and Bromsgrove Wellbeing website:</p> <p>a) gay and bisexual men are eligible for free Hepatitis B vaccinations available at the Arrowside Sexual Health Clinic;</p> <p>b) lesbian and bisexual women are entitled and should be encouraged to attend cervical screening tests.</p>	Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust	Ongoing / completed		<p><u>September 2015 update:</u></p> <p>The Chair of the Task Group attended a meeting of the Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust on 15<sup>th</sup> September to promote this recommendation to partners. During this meeting the Chair was advised that the Redditch and Bromsgrove Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG) have circulated the group's report for the consideration of GP Practices in the CCG area. The report's findings are also being taken into account as part of ongoing work on a local CCG strategy.</p> <p><u>January 2016 Update:</u> No further update was provided in advance of the publication of this report.</p>

Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
					<p><u>April 2016 Update:</u> The LGB&amp;T Support Services Redditch group's leaflet contained information about the free Hepatitis B vaccinations and encouraging lesbian and bisexual women to attend cervical screenings. Copies of this leaflet have been passed on to the Redditch Partnership Manager to distribute amongst partner organisations.</p>
<b>Fees and Charges</b>					
Recommendation	Members proposed that the fees and charges detailed in the Fees and Charges 2016/17 report be endorsed.	Financial Services	Completed	☺	Fees and charges that involved an increase of 3% or less came into effect as of 1st January 2016. Fees and charges involving an increase over 3% came into effect as of 1st February 2016.
<b>Bereavement Services Fees and Charges – pre-scrutiny</b>					
2 recommendations were proposed in respect of fees and charges	Changes were proposed to fees and charges for Bereavement Services in respect of fees for adults and fees for cremations and burials of those aged 18 and under.	Financial Services / Bereavement Services	Completed	☺	The new fees for Bereavement Services came into effect as of 1st April 2016.

<b>Project / recommendation and date proposed</b>	<b>Action</b>	<b>Team responsible</b>	<b>Date for completion</b>	<b>Rating</b>	<b>Comments</b>
Three recommendations were proposed in respect of capital works at Redditch Crematorium.	<p>The following capital works were proposed for Redditch Crematorium :</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) facility and heating improvements;</li> <li>2) £344k of funding be allocated to enable capital works in the crematorium in 2016; and</li> <li>3) A proportion of the income from the increased fees to be allocated to covering the capital works costs.</li> </ol>	Bereavement Services / Environmental Services	To be confirmed		<u>April 2016 Update.</u> Considerable work has taken place to look at providing an alternative chapel location for when the current chapel has to close to facilitate the works. Due to various issues this is not currently considered as being feasible and so alternative working arrangements are being sought with our partners. The Place Partnership architect will be working to finalise the detail of the scheme and the timing of the project will be considered in terms of complying with procurement processes, availability of contractors as well as limiting the impact on partners and customers.
<b>Review of the Operation of Leisure Services – Pre-Scrutiny</b> (Officer report)					
Four recommendations from Officers were endorsed through pre-scrutiny	<p>The following actions were proposed in the recommendations that were made by Officers, endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and approved by the Executive Committee:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Officers were asked to undertake further work on identifying the health and well-being impact on our community of the provision of leisure offer;</li> </ol>	Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources / Leisure Services	July 2016		<u>April 2016 Update:</u> A report outlining the findings of this leisure intervention work will be reported for the consideration of the Executive Committee in July 2016.

Project / recommendation and date proposed	Action	Team responsible	Date for completion	Rating	Comments
	<p>2) Officers were asked to report back on opportunities for improvements as identified in the detailed schedules.</p> <p>3) Officers were asked to undertake a review of the revenue received and any opportunities to increase revenue by assessing alternative pricing models; and</p> <p>4) Officers were asked to discuss with the Academies how the provision in the dual use sites can be better provided to support the wider community.</p>				



## Executive Committee

Tuesday, 8 March 2016

### MINUTES

#### Present:

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

#### Officers:

Clare Flanagan, John Godwin, Sue Hanley, Jayne Pickering, Amanda Singleton and Lindsey Wood

#### Committee Services Officer:

Debbie Parker-Jones

#### 98. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Yvonne Smith.

#### 99. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Witherspoon declared an Other Disclosable Interest in Agenda Item 6 (Redditch United Football Club) as detailed at Minute No. 103 below.

Jayne Pickering, Director of Finance and Resources, advised that she would be withdrawing from the meeting during consideration of the Redditch United Football Club item as her son played football for the Club's first team.

#### 100. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

##### Work Programme

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

- Housing Business Case; and
- Applying Article 4 Directions to the Council's Schedule of Locally Listed Buildings.

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Chair

Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators report

It was noted that the Treasury Management Strategy, Investment Strategy and Prudential Indicators report, which had originally been scheduled for Executive that evening, had instead been referred to the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee on 28th January 2016 as approval of these was required before the new financial year. The resulting recommendations had been considered by full Council on 22nd February.

Agenda Item 6 – Redditch United Football Club

Members were advised that this was a Key Decision which had not appeared on the published Executive Work Programme as the Club had been seeking external finance towards the scheme and it had not been known if this would be successful. As progress had been made with this a decision was needed quickly in order to secure the funds. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been informed of the position.

**101. MINUTES****RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 22nd February 2016 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

**102. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th February 2016.

It was noted that there were no recommendations to consider.

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th February 2016 be received and noted.**

**103. REDDITCH UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB - VALLEY STADIUM CONCESSIONARY RENT**

Members were asked to agree to the surrender of the existing Redditch United Football Club lease and the granting of a new 30-year lease at a concessionary rent, to support the Club in its project to provide facilities to the wider community of Redditch, including



# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 8 March 2016

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the provision of a third generation (3G) Astro Turf Pitch (ATP) at the Valley Stadium.

As detailed under Leader's Announcements (Minute No. 100 refers), this was a Key Decision which had not appeared on the published Executive Work Programme as the Club had been seeking external finance towards the scheme and it had not been known if this would be successful. As progress had been made with this a decision was needed quickly in order to secure the funds. The Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been informed of the position.

Members noted the key areas for community benefit detailed in paragraph 3.6 of the report. It was agreed that the surrender of the existing lease and grant of the new lease at a concessionary rent was justifiable on the basis of the resulting benefits to the community and well-being of the Borough. The Heads of Terms for the new lease, as appended to the report and which also set out the terms of future rent reviews, were noted. Without the concessionary rent being agreed the business case prepared by the Club would not be seen as realistic and achievable by the funding bodies as it would prevent the Club from borrowing the amount of capital required to finance the match-funding element of the project.

Members expressed their thanks to all those at the Club and to Chris Swan, owner and Chairman, for their continuing hard work to improve the Club and its facilities. Best wishes were also sent to Mr Swan's wife Sallie, Vice-Chairman of the Club, who was currently unwell. Thanks were also expressed to the Football Association in supporting the Club's efforts and to Officers for their continuing endeavours in working with the Club, and Members looked forward to seeing the benefits that the new facilities would bring to the town. This included the launch of a full-time academy at the Valley Stadium, which was being run in partnership with Bournville College.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) the existing Redditch United Football Club Limited lease be surrendered and a new 30-year lease be granted to the Club; and**
- 2) within the terms of the new lease for the Valley Stadium there be no increase of rent applied over and above the current rent of the site, and the rent of £2,000 per annum be reviewed in line with section 3.4 of the report until the expiry of the new lease in 2046.**

(Prior to consideration of this item, Councillor Pat Witherspoon declared an Other Disclosable Interest in this matter in view of the

fact that her grandson played football for one of Redditch United's junior teams. Councillor Witherspoon remained in the room and participated in the consideration of, and voting on, this matter.

Jayne Pickering (Director of Finance and Resources) withdrew from the meeting for this item and took no part in the consideration/discussion of this, as her son played football for the Club's first team.)

**104. PROPOSED FEASIBILITY STUDY INTO THE POSSIBLE REDEVELOPMENT OF THE WINYATES DISTRICT CENTRE**

Members received a report which sought approval to undertake a feasibility study into the redevelopment of the Winyates 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 Members' approval to undertake a feasibility study into the possible redevelopment of the Matchborough Centre, there was also an interest to possibly redevelop the Winyates District Centre.

Members stated that the proposed feasibility study had briefly been touched upon at the Planning Advisory Planning meeting which had taken place immediately prior to Executive. It was noted that this was the initial feasibility study only and that the outcome of this would be reported back to Members in due course, together with suggestions from Officers about the next stages of the process of possible redevelopment.

Officers explained the process which would now take place. In response to Member questions Officers advised that there was deemed to be sufficient staff capacity to progress both the Matchborough and Winyates feasibility studies at the same time, and that the Winyates study would neither take priority over, nor have any detrimental effect on, the Matchborough study. Members wished to play a key part in the process and Officers advised that Members, particularly the relevant Portfolio Holders and Ward Members, would be sent a timescale for the future stages. Officers would also keep Members fully apprised and involved with developments throughout the process. The terms of existing leasehold agreements and the status of properties sold under right-to-buy were noted as legal issues which would be considered as part of the process.

**RESOLVED that**

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

**105. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2017/18**

The Committee received a report which set out a broad range of options for consultation in order to inform the development of the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme (CTSS) 2017/18.

In April 2013 council tax benefit had been replaced by a new local council tax support scheme. Local councils were required to design their own CTSS and to carry out consultation on the options being considered for inclusion in the Scheme. From April 2014 changes were made to the Council's CTSS which resulted in support being capped at 80% of Council Tax liability for all working age claimants. The Council had implemented a Hardship Fund to support the most vulnerable, with £13,066 of the fund having been awarded for 2015/16 as at 31st January 2016. Changes to the Scheme in April 2014 had offset an estimated funding gap for 2014/15 of £91k for the Council.

It was no longer possible to know how much funding was received towards the Scheme via the Government's Revenue Support Grant and by 2019/20 there would be no government funding for the Scheme. The total cost of the Scheme in Redditch was in the region of £6.5m. The proposals being considered for consultation were not intended to reduce the overall cost of support provided to residents, but to reduce the administrative burden to the Council where possible and to bring the Scheme in line with national changes to welfare support.

Officers explained both the process and different consultation phases involved, which would culminate in adoption of the final Scheme by 31st January 2017 at the latest. All possible options which might ultimately be included in the Scheme had to be consulted on as no changes which had not previously been consulted on could be included at a later stage. All options were purely options for consideration, with no decisions needing to be made as to what might be included in the draft Scheme at this stage. A range of consultation documentation had been prepared and all relevant frontline staff would be briefed on the position so that they were able to assist residents with any enquiries. All current claimants would also be written to by the Council and directed to the website and Officers for information and assistance.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the options as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be put to public consultation in order to inform potential changes to the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme for 2017/18 and/or later years;**
- 2) the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support be authorised to consult on the options set out in Appendix 1;**
- 3) the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support report back to the Executive on the outcome of that consultation and any proposals for changes to the Scheme, for further consideration and resolution by the Executive, to consult on a draft Scheme;**
- 4) further to the outcome of the Executive's decision on the draft regulations, the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support be authorised to carry out the statutory consultation required on the draft Scheme; and**
- 5) the final Scheme be presented to the Executive to make recommendations to Council to allow for the necessary regulations to be published by 31st January 2017.**

**106. HEALTH AND SAFETY POLICIES**

Members were asked to consider, for recommendation to full Council, the following health and safety policies which were either new policies or existing policies which had been revised to incorporate recent changes in legislation:

- Fire Safety Policy and Procedures;
- Manual Handling Policy and Procedures;
- Accident Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy and Procedures;
- Display Screen Equipment Policy and Procedures;
- Contractor Safety Policy and Procedures;
- Lone Working Policy and Procedures; and
- Substance Misuse (Drugs, Alcohol & Other Substances) at Work Policy.

Officers confirmed that all of the policies had been approved by the Council's Joint Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee and the trade unions. As an employer the Council had a legal duty to have the policies in place. Whilst the Corporate Health and Safety Policy was an overarching policy, there was a requirement to also have specific policies. Officers advised that, whilst not

# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 8 March 2016

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explicitly stating this, all of the policies were intended to apply to councillors as well as members of staff, and that the same advice and procedures therefore applied to Members.

Members raised concerns in relation to the possible risks and practical issues which they faced with lone working, for example when visiting residents' homes. As Members were not specifically addressed in the Lone Working Policy and Procedures it was agreed that Officers would undertake an additional piece of work on this. The matter would be raised at the next meeting of the Joint Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee on 18th March 2016, and as Councillor Yvonne Smith was a member of the Committee Officers would seek her input into this. Member awareness in considering the safety implications when carrying out their duties was deemed to be key. The importance of attending relevant training offered by the Council was highlighted by one Member, with previous training in this area having been poorly attended. Officers highlighted that the Lone Working Policy included use of the Lifeline facility, which not all Members were aware of.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the Fire Safety Policy and Procedures at Appendix 1 to the report be approved;**
- 2) the Manual Handling Policy and Procedures at Appendix 2 to the report be approved;**
- 3) the Accident Incident Reporting and Investigation Policy and Procedures at Appendix 3 to the report be approved;**
- 4) the Display Screen Equipment Policy and Procedures at Appendix 4 to the report be approved;**
- 5) the Contractor Safety Policy and Procedures at Appendix 5 to the report be approved;**
- 6) the Lone Working Policy and Procedures at Appendix 6 to the report be approved; and**
- 7) the Substance Misuse (Drugs, Alcohol & Other Substances) at Work Policy at Appendix 7 to the report approved; and**

## **RESOLVED that**

- 8) further consideration be given by Officers and the Joint Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee in**

**respect of elected Members and the Lone Working Policy  
and Procedures.****107. FINANCE MONITORING QUARTER 3 2015/16**

The Committee received a report which detailed the Council's final financial position for both General Fund and Revenue for the period April to December 2015 (Quarter 3 15/16).

There was an overall underspend of £303k for the period, which was forecast to be a significant saving by the end of the financial year. This related in part to essential spend only across the Council following announcement of the financial settlement, together with vacancies and additional income generated in a number of service areas. These savings had not been made at a loss to the Council's frontline services. In addition to the £303k underspend it was anticipated that there would be a saving on the Council's borrowing costs of £124k, due to slippage in the capital programme. In relation to the £1k variation currently showing for Landscape and Ground Maintenance under 'Keep my place safe and looking good', Officers stated that a great deal of work was being undertaken with reallocating the costs for the Place Teams' work, which might result in a final underspend variance.

The capital expenditure in the third quarter showed that most projects were currently work in progress, with there being an anticipated £1.081m underspend by the end of 2015/16. Requests would be made to carry over budgets to the next financial year within the strategic purpose 'Keep my place safe and looking good' on the Crematorium Enhancements and the town landscape scheme, due to works not being able to take place in the winter months.

A Member queried whether all vacant posts had now been deleted. Officers advised that they were currently carrying out an exercise with Heads of Service to ascertain whether all vacant posts had been filled, and if not whether the posts had been given up. Heads of Service had been given until 18th March by which to confirm the position. Accordingly, if vacancies remained then the cost of these were currently included in the projected year-end figures.

It was noted that the General Fund Balance as at 31st March 2015 had been £2.005m, and that should the projected savings be made in the current financial year the revised balance for 31st March 2016 would be £2.432m. Whilst there was no room for complacency the Council was felt to be in as good a financial position as possible in light of the latest funding settlement, with both Officers and Members continuing to look at savings wherever possible.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) capital budget for 2016/17 is increased by £60k to £160k for a Demand Case Management IT system, funded by HRA reserves; and

**RESOLVED that**

- 2) the current financial position for Revenue and Capital, as detailed in the report, be noted.

**108. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANTS 2016-17**

Members considered a report which made recommendations from a meeting of the Grants Panel on 24th February, for allocation of the remainder of the budget for major grants for 2016/17.

At its meeting in January the Executive Committee had considered recommendations for the allocation of major grants for 2016/17. The full amount was not allocated at that time and it was agreed that the unallocated sums be retained and their availability be readvertised in parallel with the Stronger Communities Grant applications.

**RESOLVED that**

**the following major grants be awarded for 2016/17:**

<b>Theme</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Project name</b>	<b>Amount</b>
<b>Help me to be financially independent</b>	<b>What's Your Point</b>	<b>Young People - plan for financial independence</b>	<b>£1,569</b>
<b>Help me to be financially independent</b>	<b>Compass Community and Education Group</b>	<b>Money Matters</b>	<b>£3,325</b>
<b>Help me to live my life independently</b>	<b>What's Your Point</b>	<b>Introduction to mindful relaxation</b>	<b>£850</b>
<b>Keep my place safe and looking good</b>	<b>Redditch Community Amateur Boxing Club</b>	<b>Young Peoples Projects</b>	<b>£2,000</b>

**Executive  
Committee**

Tuesday, 8 March 2016

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

There were no outstanding referrals to consider.

**110. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT**

It was noted that the meeting of the Planning Advisory Panel scheduled for earlier that evening had taken place.

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 8.30 pm

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Chair



# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME

**3 May 2016 to 31 August 2016**

(published as at 4<sup>th</sup> April 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
Opening Hours <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 7 Jun 2016		Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda Singleton, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support Tel: 01527 64252
Write off of Debts 2015-16 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 7 Jun 2016		Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda Singleton, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support Tel: 01527 64252
Housing Business Case <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 7 Jun 2016 Council 20 Jun 2016		Report of the Head of Housing Services	Liz Tompkin, Head of Housing Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3304
Borough of Redditch Plan no.4 - Modifications <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 7 Jun 2016 Council 20 Jun 2016		Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning and Regeneration Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3219
Applying Article 4 directions to The Council's schedule of locally listed buildings <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive 7 Jun 2016		Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Emma Newfield, Planning Officer Tel: 01527 597031

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
Leisure Intervention Update <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 12 Jul 2016		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207
Council Tax Support Scheme - Draft Scheme <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive 12 Jul 2016		Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda Singleton, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support Tel: 01527 64252
Health and Safety Policies <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 12 Jul 2016 Council 25 Jul 2016		Report of the Head of Transformation and Organisational Development	Becky Talbot, Human Resources and Development Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3385
Council Tax Support Scheme - Final Scheme <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 1 Nov 2016 Council 21 Nov 2016		Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda Singleton, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support Tel: 01527 64252
Reorganisation and Change Policy <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 7 Jun 2016 Council 20 Jun 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 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive		Report of the Head of Housing	

**Overview & Scrutiny**

Committee

12th April 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 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

12th April 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>12th April 2016</b>	Corporate Dashboard Presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>12th April 2016</b>	Improving Disabled People's Access to Redditch's Taxi Fleet Short, Sharp Review – Final Report	Councillor Hopkins
<b>12th April 2016</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>12th April 2016</b>	S106 Funding Presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>31st May 2016</b>	Overview and Scrutiny Training	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>5th July 2016</b>	Leisure Intervention – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Director
<b>OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED</b>		

# Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

12th April 2016

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	Housing Benefits Presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
	Tackling Obesity Task Group - Feedback	Councillor Potter
	Leisure Services Options Short, Sharp Review – reconsideration of the group's final report	Councillor Potter

