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Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

Tue 13 Feb 2018 7.00 pm

Committee Room Two Town Hall Redditch



If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact Jess Bayley and Amanda Scarce

Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH Tel: (01527) 64252 (Ext. 3268) or 881443

e.mail: jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk / a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk



Tuesday, 13th February, 2018
7.00 pm
Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs: Jane Potter (Chair)

Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair)

Matthew Dormer Andrew Fry Pattie Hill Gareth Prosser Paul Swansborough Jennifer Wheeler Nina Wood-Ford

- 1. Apologies and named substitutes
- 2. Declarations of interest and of Party Whip

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and / or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests, and any Party Whip.

- **3. Minutes** (Pages 1 26)
- 4. Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2020/21 Pre-Scrutiny (report to follow)
- 5. Housing Revenue Account Budget 2018/19 (Pages 27 32)
- **6.** Referral from Council Proposed Scrutiny Review (Pages 33 42)

Members are asked to consider a referral from the meeting of Council held on 29th January 2018. This relates to a Notice of Motion that was received in respect of transitional support for young people leaving care in Redditch. The Committee is asked to consider and determine how to approach scrutinising this matter in further detail.

7. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme - Selecting Items for Scrutiny (Pages 43 - 64)

(The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 16th January 2018 together with the latest edition of the Executive Committee's Work Programme have been attached. The minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 6th February 2018 will follow).

8. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 65 - 68)

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9. Task Groups, Short Sharp Reviews and Working Groups - Update Reports

- a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group Chair, Councillor Jane Potter
- b) Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review Chair, Councillor Gareth Prosser
- c) Performance Scrutiny Working Group Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

10. External Scrutiny Bodies - Update Reports (Councillor Nina Wood-Ford)

- a) West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- b) Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC).



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Thursday, 11th January, 2018

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Jane Potter (Chair), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Natalie Brookes, Michael Chalk, Matthew Dormer, Andrew Fry, Paul Swansborough and Nina Wood-Ford

Also Present:

S Harris, A Robert, C Bentley and A Pollard

Officers:

Jayne Pickering

Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley

59. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Hill, Prosser and Wheeler. The Committee was advised that Councillor Brookes was attending as a substitute for Councillor Wheeler and Councillor Chalk was attending as a substitute for Councillor Prosser.

60. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

61. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Thursday 7th December 2017 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

	Chair	

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62. HEREFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSFORMATION PLAN - PRESENTATION

The Committee welcomed Officers from the Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust and invited them to deliver a presentation (Appendix 1). During the delivery of this presentation the following matters were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- Since the last update to the Committee progress had been made and there was now a Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP).
- A key focus of the partnership was on improving health and wellbeing within the area covered by the plan whilst tackling the financial challenges facing partners in the health service.
- Access and outcomes were important and shaped how the STP was measured at a national level.
- Work had been undertaken since the last update to solidify governance arrangements. There needed to be collective decision making for the STP and to help ensure that this occurred an independent Chair had been recruited to the board.
- An Engagement Officer had also been recruited, supported by external funding, to help improve the approach of partners to consultation in respect of the STP.
- Work was taking place on a Local Maternity Systems Plan, which would involve consulting with women, assessing levels of demand locally and designing services to meet community needs moving forward.
- Consultation was also being undertaken in respect of Cancer Services as it was recognised that this was a challenging area in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- Such work sometimes entailed engaging with specialist groups based outside the area, such as the West Midlands Palliative Care end of life group, in order to obtain relevant expertise about how improvements could be made to local services.
- National care was an area that required further investigation.
 The STP had been able to access external funding to help address the impact of demand for services during the winter period and this had been invested in ambulatory services.
- Neighbourhood teams had been introduced across the two counties, including two in the Borough. This involved integrated partners pooling resources to meet health needs within their locality.

Following delivery of the presentation Members requested further information on a number of areas:

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- The current situation with regard to the Urgent Care Plan for the Alexandra Hospital in Redditch. Members were advised that partners had planned how to manage pressures on winter services as a whole system rather than as individual organisations and this had helped services to meet demand.
- The need to make appropriate plans to enable older patients to return to their homes with the assurance that they would receive appropriate care. A pilot initiative to address this, involving partnership working, had been held in Malvern but it had been concluded that this would be more appropriate to deliver at the Alexandra Hospital.
- The need for more work to be undertaken to review transport links between the north and south of Worcestershire and the impact that this might have both on patients and on staff.
- The extent to which representatives of Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service had been involved in the work of local neighbourhood teams. The Committee was informed that representatives of the fire service had delivered presentations to the teams on subjects such as fire safety in the home and greater involvement was being piloted in some neighbourhood teams.
- The Local Maternity Systems Plan and the potential impact that this might have on staffing levels. Members were advised that this work was based on national strategies and was in the preliminary stages.
- The recent announcement at the national level by email that more training places were being commissioned for medical staff. Worcester University had a plan to train more medical staff and the STP was investigating action that could be taken to encourage trained staff to remain in the area once they qualified.
- The difficulty with national shortages in respect of a number of specialist medical professions and the impact that this had in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- The introduction of new Health Care Assistant roles and the positive impact that this would have on the workforce.
- The availability of perinatal mental health services. Members were advised that the STP had an opportunity to bid for funding to enhance these services, which were currently available in Worcestershire though there were no such services in Herefordshire.
- The potential for neighbourhood teams to encourage people to report to the most appropriate medical professional to meet their needs, helping GPs to concentrate on the most serious cases where their skills were needed.

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- The role of social prescribers in helping to refer patients to alternative sources of support that could help to enhance their health and wellbeing in the long-term.
- The length of time that had been spent working on STPs in the country to date and the extent to which these plans had had a positive impact on health services.
- The negative press that had been received nationally in respect of STPs and the need for health services to improve communications about positive outcomes from work on the STPs in order to reassure the public.
- The extent to which population growth, as a result of housing development, had been taken into account when developing the STPs. Members were advised that Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) had a statutory duty to consult with local Councils and these issues should be picked up through this process.
- The approach taken to monitoring the performance of the STP. The Committee was informed that there were constitutional targets and data was provided in the form of a dashboard, the latest copy of which could be provided for Members' consideration.
- The value of receiving a further update on progress with the STP in approximately six months' time.
- The potential for representatives of the two neighbourhood teams in Redditch to attend the meeting of the Committee when the next update on the STP would be provided.

RESOLVED that

- 1) a further update in respect of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sustainability and Transformation Partnership be provided to the Committee in approximately six months' time;
- representatives of the local neighbourhood teams for Redditch be invited to attend the meeting when this update is delivered; and
- 3) the report be noted.

63. PLACE PARTNERSHIP - PRESENTATION

Members welcomed the Managing Director of the Place Partnership Limited to the meeting and invited him to deliver a presentation (Appendix 2). Whilst this presentation was provided the following matters were raised for Members'; attention:

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- The Place Partnership Ltd was a public sector mutual in which partners had equal shares.
- The organisation had been incorporated in March 2015, a Managing Director was appointed in June 2015 and the company had been launched in September of that year.
- The partnership had succeeded the previous partnership arrangement that had been managed by Worcestershire County Council on behalf of some partners.
- A range of partner organisations were shareholders in the company including Councils, West Mercia Police and Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service.
- The partnership provided property services on behalf of partners and had inherited some excellent staff from those organisations. All staff were now on the same terms and conditions.
- The partnership had introduced a graduate programme and were due to recruit three new members of staff to this programme in 2018.
- The partnership had around 500 contracts, though officers were working to simply this by reducing the number to approximately 15. This included a contract with 188 schools.
- The partnership delivered services across a wide geographical area encompassing Herefordshire, Shropshire, Warwickshire and Worcestershire, though customers were located as far away as Altrincham in Greater Manchester.
- The Place Partnership had been involved in recent work on the One Public Estate exercise.
- A key consideration when managing Property Services was to maximise use of space and this could enable organisations to achieve efficiencies.
- There was a shareholders' agreement, a service agreement, between the company and the shareholders, and properly constituted articles all of which underpinned the governance arrangements.
- Each shareholder had a representative who sat on the board, which met on a quarterly basis, as well as acted as a voice for their organisation. The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources had this role on behalf of Redditch Borough Council.
- There was also a regular forum for shareholders, which was attended by the Chief Executive and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management. These forums provided an opportunity to consider matters such as the partnership's business plans.
- When the partnership had been launched it had been anticipated that in total services would be delivered at a cost of

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- £25 million by year five. In fact, by year two the partnership had running costs of £21 million.
- The partnership was achieving a greater level of savings for partner organisations than the previous shared service arrangement.
- The partnership had inherited some systems that were not considered to be fit for purpose. Action had been taken over the previous two years in an attempt to address this.
- The partnership had worked on a range of projects, including Hindlip Park and Evesham Fire Station each of which had been complicated but had helped to generate new jobs at a limited cost to the public purse.
- The partnership had been scrutinised by the Royal Institute for Chartered Surveyors (RICS).
- The organisation had received recognition as Property Manager of the Year in a national competition.

Once the presentation had been delivered Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- The weaknesses of the partnership and how these could be addressed. Officers acknowledged that improvements could be made, though it was noted that the organisation had only existed for two years. This would take time and would involve a focus on improving customer services.
- The role of staff in helping to improve customer services. A new staff group, Your Place Matters, had been introduced to enable employees to discuss such matters.
- The potential for the partnership to also meet customer services by engaging with the customer to develop service action plans.
- The performance management arrangements for the partnership. The Committee was advised that the initial agreement underpinning the partnership had made no reference to Key Performance Indicators (KPIs) though these had been developed locally. Members requested a copy of these KPIs for information.
- The potential to include KPIs in the new service agreements that were due to apply from 1st April 2018 and the need to link these to the Council's strategic purposes.
- The potential for conflicts of interest to arise where shareholders had both representatives on the board and an interest in achieving savings and generating revenue. Independent members had been recruited to the board to help achieve an appropriate balance and address any potential for conflicts of interest to occur.

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- The meetings of the board and the potential for Councillors to attend these. Members were advised that partner organisations learned about meetings of the board through their representative.
- The progress that had been achieved with the One Public Estate project and the extent to which Members would be engaged with this. Officers advised that a draft document was in the process of being considered by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and was currently due to be considered by the Executive Committee in March, though the item was also scheduled for pre-scrutiny.
- The process that needed to be followed to report matters of concern to the Place Partnership. Members were advised that it was best to report issues to the organisation's contact centre.
- The existence of lead members of staff at the partnership who co-ordinated enquiries relating to a particular local authority area. This individual could help to ensure that any concerns relating to assets within that area were addressed.
- The level of profit that had been achieved by the partnership to date. Members were advised that in the first year of operation there had been a loss of £99,000. However, the audit had recently been completed of the year 2 accounts and this revealed that there had been a profit of £145,000 that year which was being reinvested in services.
- The provision of the same level of dividend to all shareholders regardless of the level of their contribution.
- The potential to generate more business by bidding for new contracts or undertaking specific pieces of work for external customers.
- The potential for the Redditch Fire Station to be regenerated as part of work on the One Public Estate project.
- The need for funding from the Council's capital programme to invest in capital projects delivered by the Place Partnership on behalf of the authority.
- The availability of £200,000 in a Localities Development budget which could be invested by the partnership in projects that met needs within the community.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted

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64. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2018/19 TO 2021/22 - UPDATE REPORT (EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF FINANCE AND CORPORATE RESOURCES - TO FOLLOW)

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources delivered a presentation which updated the Committee on the current position in respect of the Council's budget (Appendix 3) and in so doing she highlighted the following matters:

- The Council was currently able to retain any additional growth over the baseline for growth of business rates. However, the baseline was due to be reset to the level at which business rates had already grown which would reduce the benefit of any growth to the Council in financial terms.
- The level at which the Council could increase Council Tax before triggering a referendum had been increased to three per cent. Within the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) Officers would be working on the basis that there would be a 2.99 per cent increase in Council tax.
- Worcestershire Councils had been in contact with the Government to try to find out why the Worcestershire Business Rates Pilot bid had been unsuccessful. This might help to ensure the success of any future bids.
- As a consequence the Council was remaining in the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership's (GBSLEP's) business rates pool in 2018/19.
- Many local authorities had raised concerns about the need to pay the Government a negative grant from 2019/20 onwards and the government was therefore consulting on alternative funding models that could be introduced.
- Under the Local Government Funding Reform there would be a number of considerations that would be addressed by the government. However, the service specific cost drivers referred to in the Government's consultation papers were more like to apply to social care providers than to district Councils.
- The Council had assumed that £196,000 would be recovered in New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding but unfortunately fewer planning applications had been approved in the period relating to Band D properties or higher than had been anticipated meaning that the Council could not receive this NHB funding.
- In original forecasts the budget had been designed to take into account a one per cent pay rise per annum but this had since increased to two per cent in line with the national pay agreement.

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- The Senior Management Team (SMT) would shortly be meeting to discuss the budget in further detail which would involve a line-by-line review.
- The Council needed to achieve a balanced budget for 2018/19 in the MTFP. The subsequent three years covered in the plan did not necessarily have to balance.
- The Council's proposed budget would be considered by the Executive Committee on 6th February. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would have an opportunity to scrutinise these proposals and could report any recommendations on to Council on 19th February 2018.

Once the presentation had been delivered Members requested further information about the following matters:

- The Government's consultation in respect of the negative grant. Officers advised that this would involve the Government reviewing the options available and consulting with local authorities about these.
- The number of Councils that would need to pay a negative grant under existing arrangements from 2019/20. Officers advised that the majority of local authorities were in this position, with Redditch Borough Council due to pay the Government a similar amount to the majority of other district Councils in Worcestershire.
- The housing development that had taken place in Redditch over the last year and the reasons why this had not been taken into account when reviewing NHB contributions.
 Officers advised that the majority of these houses had been Band A, B and C properties which were not covered by the NHB scheme.
- The potential for more Band D properties to be built subject to changes being made to the Council's Local Plan.
- The availability of land within the Borough on which to build new properties.
- The development of lots of properties just outside the Borough's borders which would mean that local authorities in those neighbouring areas would receive any associated NHB funding.
- The potential benefits of both residential and commercial development just over the border on the Borough, particularly in respect of economic development and employment opportunities.

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RESOLVED that

the Medium Term Financial Plan Update Report 2018/19 to 2020/21 update report be noted.

65. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

Officers advised that due to the inclement weather the meeting of the Executive Committee that had been due to take place on 12th December had been cancelled. For this reason there were no minutes from that meeting for Members' consideration.

An updated copy of the Executive Committee's Work Programme published on 8th January 2018 was tabled for Members' consideration. Officers advised that the One Public Estate exercise had been postponed and was now scheduled for the Executive Committee's consideration on or after March. At the advice of officers the Executive Committee meeting that had been scheduled to take place immediately prior to Council on 19th February 2018 had been cancelled and the work programme had been updated to reflect this.

Members briefly debated the meaning of key and non-key decisions. There was general consensus that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should focus on pre-scrutinising any reports on the work programme that were likely to have significant implications for the Council, which could be both key and non-key decisions.

66. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Members considered the Committee's work programme and noted that the meeting of the Committee in March would now take place on 1st March 2018. This meeting had been brought forward to provide Members with an opportunity to pre-scrutinise the Leisure Business Case. The One Public Estate report had also been rescheduled for consideration at this meeting.

Officers from Worcestershire County Council were due to attend the meeting of the Committee on 1st March to deliver a presentation on the subject of Safeguarding and Early Help services. There was general consensus that that this was likely to be a subject of interest to all Members. It was therefore agreed that all Members should be invited to attend this meeting.

RESOLVED that

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all Members should be invited to attend the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee due to take place on 1st March 2018.

67. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS

a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group - Chair, Councillor Potter

Councillor Potter advised that there had been no meeting of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group since the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 7th December 2017. The following meeting of the group would take place on 30th January 2018.

b) <u>Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review - Chair, Councillor</u> Prosser

In the absence of the Chair Councillor Dormer provided an update on the progress with the review.

Members were advised that there had been no further meetings of the group since the last meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The next meeting of the group would take place on 17th January. Members had originally intended for this to be their last meeting. However, a key expert witness had recently returned from maternity leave and would be interviewed at this meeting. It was possible that the evidence this witness would provide would change the direction of the review. For this reason the group was requesting an extension to their deadline to provide time for feedback from the witness to be taken into account.

c) <u>Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor</u> <u>Dormer</u>

Councillor Dormer explained that two meetings of the group had taken place since the previous meeting of the Committee.

During the first of these meetings officers had been interviewed about the difficulties that Members were experiencing when attempting to access the dashboard on their iPads as well as the problems the group had experienced accessing the dashboard at a recent meeting. Members had been advised that there had been some technical issues with wifi access, though it was anticipated that these problems had

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now been resolved. Officers had also introduced a new tab which could be used to help navigate the dashboard more quickly. It was understood that all Members could access this tab on the dashboard on their iPads.

At the latest meeting of the group Members had interviewed officers about a number of measures relating to the work of the North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit (NWEDR). Many of the measures that were discussed involved data where there would be a significant lag in obtaining information from external sources. Members had requested that where this occurred brief commentary was added for clarification.

For the next two meetings of the group Members had invited officers to attend meetings to discuss measures relating to sickness absence and rent arrears.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the deadline for completion of the Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review be extended to 1st March 2018; and
- 2) the update reports be noted.

68. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS (COUNCILLOR NINA WOOD-FORD)

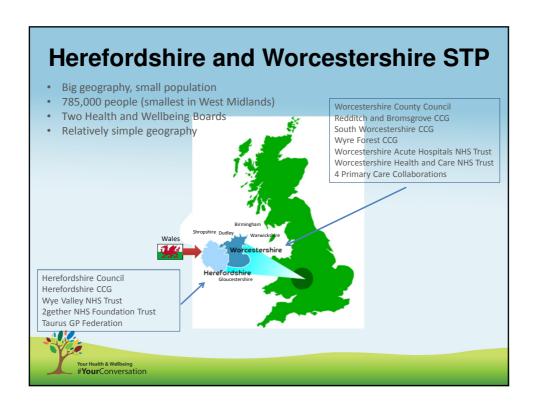
Councillor Wood-Ford confirmed that there had been no meetings of either the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee or the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC).

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 9.09 pm

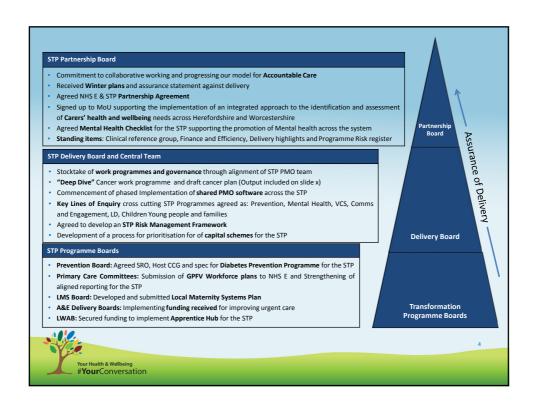
Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sustainability and Transformation Partnership (STP) update

Sue Harris, STP Communication and Engagement Lead Ali Robert, STP Programme Manager









Engagement: ongoing focus of our STP

- · More staff engagement
- Continued dialogue with voluntary and community sector colleagues, especially around improving support for carers
- Targeted discussions with young people and under represented groups
- Capacity and demand modelling to support developments around community hospitals/community services
- More detailed work around travel and transport challenges and alternatives
- Greater understanding of technology options and how these could be used
- Topic specific engagement and consultations
- · Maximising local engagement approaches





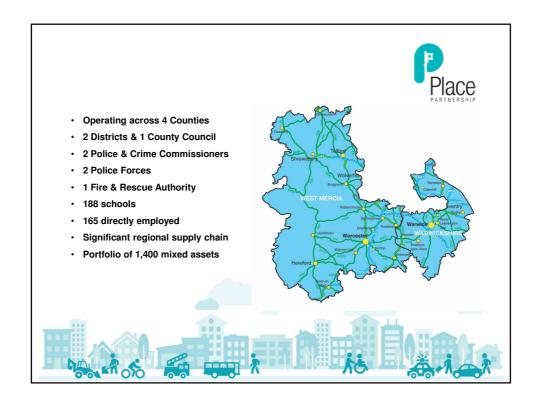


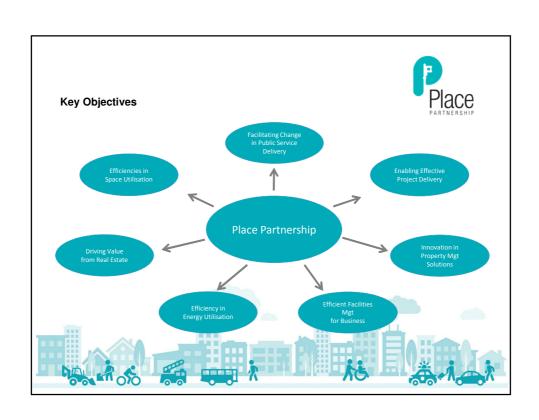
· A Public Sector Mutual

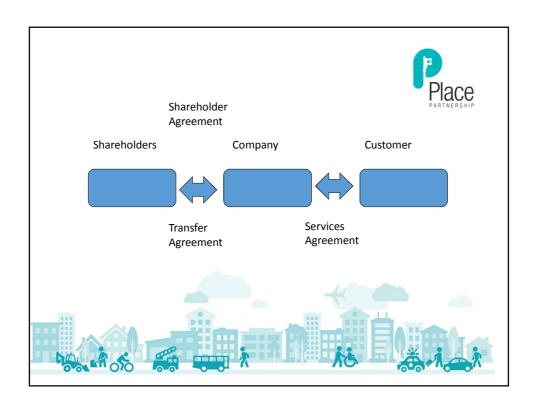
Development of the One Public Estate programme

Joint use of shared land and property assets to transform the local economy.













Principal achievements

- · Significant recurring savings to partners to date
- · Transforming the estate
- · Worcestershire One Public Estate Partnership
 - Redditch Detailed Place Review Report Delivered
 - · City of Worcester Place Review Report being finalised
 - Wyre Forest Place Review Report under development
 - · Wider opportunities OPE phase 6





Principal savings opportunities.....

- 1. "6 into 1" streamlined management structure COMPLETED 28/2/16.
- 2. FM services integrator model, better procurement, better systems and processes Launch date: 2/2018. Expected recurring savings: £1m per annum.
- 3. New profit generating business, reducing partners' net effective estate operating costs gaining traction, particularly in OPE work
- 4. Better more efficient real estate, more effective use of real estate medium term
- 5. The right real estate for all partners





Recent Project Experience



- Proposed joint operational communications centre
- National strategic importance
- Sensitive site in greenbelt
 Frees up land, adds values, delivers significant
- savings Practical completion: December 2017





- Joint venture with District Council Redevelopment of contaminated land
- Land release for new Waitrose
- Significant operational efficiencies
 Work commenced January 2016, PC November 2016
- Operational in December 2016



Overview & Scrutiny

Budget Update
Jan 2018

Impact of Settlement

- Local Government Funding Reform consultation paper published
- Implementation 2020/21
- Business Rates Baseline reset 2020/21
- From 2020/21 all grants to be included in Business Rates Retention
- Business Rate retention at 75% not 50% but reset will reduce benefit of any growth
- Council Tax referendum now at 3% (previously 2%) 2018/19 & 2019/20
 Increase included in Budgets £40k
- Business Rate Pilots Worcestershire not approved as a pilot. Potential for further rounds of bidding
- Redditch to remain in GBS Pool for 2018/19
- No changes to NHB
- Consultation in Spring 2018 in relation to "negative " grant currently £330k in 2019/20

Impact of Settlement

- Local Government Funding Reform consultation paper published – implementation 2020/21
 - Measuring need
 - Common cost drivers
 - Service specific cost drivers
 - Weighting formula
 - Advises that further detail on transition and locally raised income to follow in future papers
 - Set new baseline for funding allocations
 - Simple/ transparent/ Contemporary/ Sustainable/ Stable

New Homes Bonus

- No Change to Scheme for 2018/19
- Deadweight remains at 0.4%
- 2018/19 band D 31,617
 - -0.4% = 126.5 units
 - Growth 84 units
 - Therefore Below Baseline
 - Grant advised of £22k for 2018/19
 - Short £196k (£22k not £218k). £218k based on average of previous 3 years

Current Position

- Current Gap £500k in 2018/19 £800k in 2020/21
- Assumes £220k from the Leisure Company
- Assumes 2% pay award for all staff for 2018/19 & 2019/20
- Assumes 2.99% Council Tax 2018/19-2019/20 then £5 to 2021/22

Next Steps

- Further work on detailed savings / additional income to be prepared for Feb meeting
- Detailed rationale to demonstrate pressures
- · Review of reserves statement
- Balances £1.8m minimum £750k
- Balance the financial projections to 2021/22
- Agree budget February 19th 2018



REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

13th February 2018

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BUDGET 2018/19

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mark Shurmer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
	Holder for Housing
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering, Director Finance & Resources Judith Willis, Head of Community Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To present Members with the Initial Budget for the Housing Revenue Account and the proposed dwelling rents for 2018/2019.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to consider the contents of the report and to determine whether to make any recommendations for the consideration of Council on 19th February 2018 in respect of this matter.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 This report only considers those items included in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). General Fund items will be considered separately when setting the Council Tax.
- 3.2 The rent increase that would have applied in 2018/19, if it were not for the Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016, would have been 4%, September CPI plus 1% which would have generated over £900k additional income to fund the Housing Service.
- 3.3 As members are aware the system of housing revenue account subsidy ceased on the 31st March 2012 and was replaced with a devolved system of council housing finance called self-financing. The proposal in the form of a financial settlement meant a redistribution of the 'national' housing debt. This resulted in the Council borrowing £98.9m from the Public Works Loan Board.

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- 3.4 Self-financing has placed a limit (Debt Cap) on borrowing for housing purposes at the closing position for 2011/12. This is set at £122.2m. The figures at Appendix A allow for the payment of interest on this sum. It is worth advising members that the Government have announced a policy of lifting this cap and enabling Councils in high need to bid for additional borrowing from 2019/20.
- 3.5 The Welfare Reform and Work Act 2016 set out that rents within the social housing sector are to be decreased by 1% each year for 4 years commencing on 1st April 2016. This decrease is to take place on the 1st April for 2016, 2017, 2018 and 2019. 2018/19 will be the third year of a 1% rent reduction.
- 3.6 There has also been an increased number of right to buy sales reducing rent income to the HRA, which is set to continue.

2018/19

- 3.7 For 2018/19, based on the legislative changes, the actual average rent decrease for 2018/19 will be 1%. The average rent on a 52 week basis will be £77.80 for 52 weeks or £84.29 on a 48 week basis. This compares to the average for 2017/18 on a 52 week basis of £78.59 and £85.14 on a 48 week basis. See Appendix B for examples of rent by property type.
- 3.8 The impact of the 1% rent reduction over four years has a significant negative impact on the HRA. The HRA projected budget for 2018/19 has been included in Appendix A. This identifies that reserves will be required to balance the account.
- 3.9 New housing stock purchased through the right to buy one for one replacement scheme will help balance the account and work is currently being undertaken to explore the extent that this can be maximised.

Capital Resources

3.10 In April 2013 the Government gave local authorities the option to retain these receipts in agreement that they would be used to replace the sales with either new build, buy back of properties or purchase on the open market (new stock). In the case where these receipts are not used then the Council will have to pay a back the capital receipts to the Government together with interest at 4% above base rate. Redditch has opted to retain the receipts.

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3.11 The transitional period for the Major Repairs Allowance expired at the end of 2016/17 and was replaced from 2017/18 by component depreciation. Component depreciation is similar to a sinking fund where money is set aside annually so that there is enough to replace key components when required. The key components being bathrooms, kitchens, roof, wiring, boiler, central heating system, windows and structure. This should ensure there are sufficient resources set aside to meet future investment requirements. The cost is built into the projection attached as Appendix A.

Housing Repairs Account

3.12 The budgeted contribution to the Housing Repairs Account (Repairs and Maintenance) as shown at Appendix A is £5.1m for 2018/19, including inflationary increases where appropriate.

Right to Buy Scheme - Rent Income

3.13 In 2017/18 41 council homes have been sold to date. The budget and three year forecast assumes 75 right to buys per annum and this equates to a rent loss of £200k per annum. Over three years the rent loss totals nearly £600k.

Housing Revenue Account Balances

3.14 The Section 151 Officer has previously advised Members on the minimum level of revenue balances to be maintained in lieu of unforeseen events affecting the Housing Revenue Account and the Council's housing stock. Members have previously approved the retention of a minimum balance of £600k.

Legal Implications

- 3.15 Section 76 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that the Council sets its budget relating to the Housing Revenue Account such that the account does not plan to be in a deficit position.
- 3.16 Section 21 of the Welfare and Reform Act 2016 requires 'In relation to each relevant year, registered providers of social housing must secure that the amount of rent payable in respect of that relevant year by a tenant of their social housing in England is at least 1% less than the amount of rent that was payable by the tenant in respect of the preceding 12 months.'

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Service/Operational Implications

3.17 The Council needs to approve the rents in a timely manner in order to allow officer time to notify the tenants of the annual rent. Tenants must have 28 calendar days' notice of any change to their rent charge.

Customer/Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.18 The rent decrease will be applied by the same percentage regardless of property size. The 2018/19 Budget provides for continuity of existing services. The equality and diversity implications of the changes will be evaluated and considered as part of the decision making process.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There is a risk to the HRA Capital Programme if sufficient resources do not exist within the Housing Revenue Account to provide funding now that the Council is unable to borrow to fund the housing capital programme.
- 4.2 The risk continues to be recorded in the Risk Register for the Council.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix A - Housing Revenue Account Budget 2018/19

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Chris Forrester

Email: <u>chris.forrester@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</u>

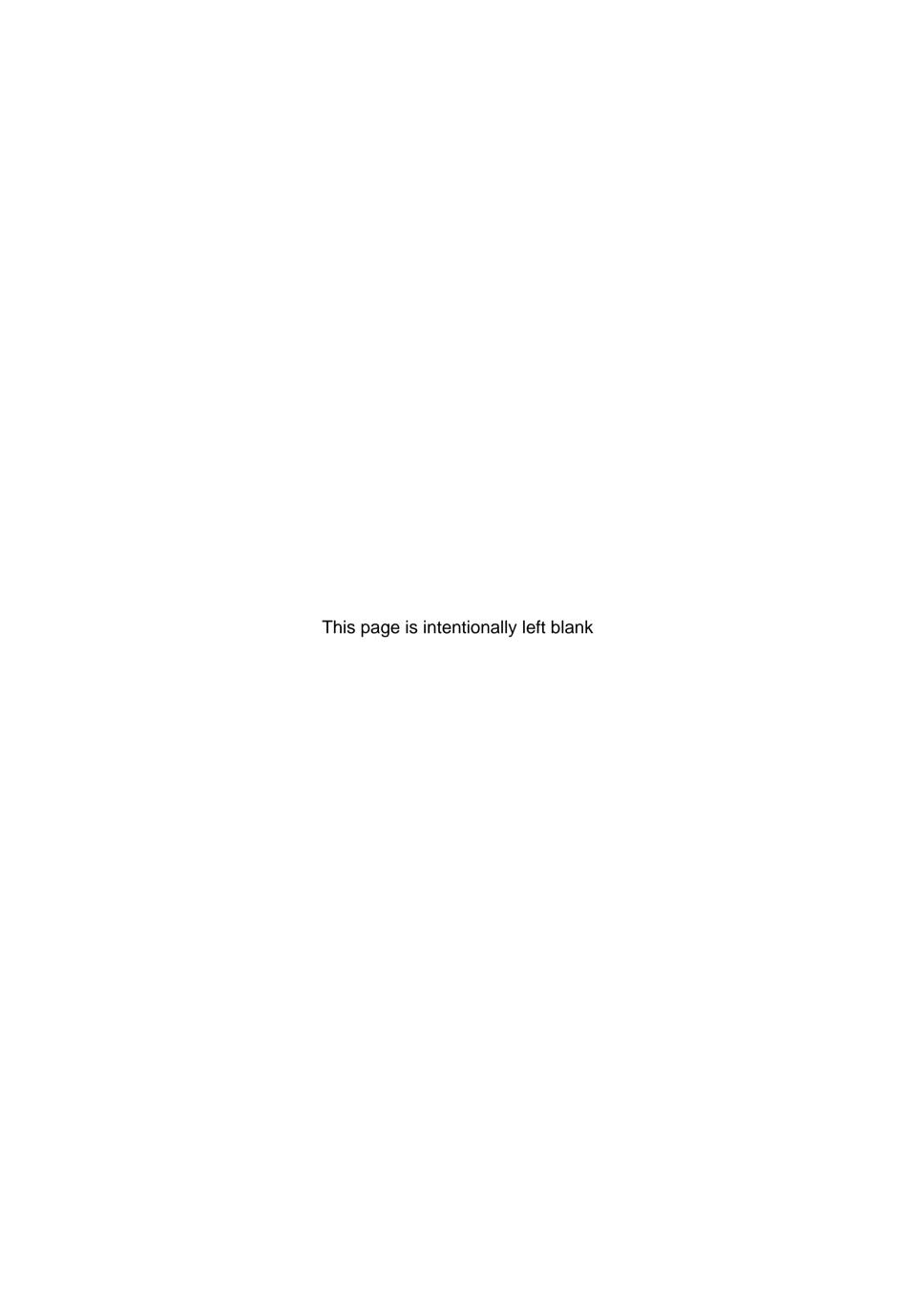
Tel: 01527 64252

Name: Judith Willis

E Mail: judith.willis@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel: 01527 64252

	2017/18	2018/19
	Budget £'000	Budget £'000
INCOME		
Dwelling Rents	23,387 499	22,805 483
Non-Dwelling Rents Tenants' Charges for Services & Facilities	591	463 648
Contributions towards Expenditure	54	18
Total Income	24,531	23,954
EXPENDITURE		
Repairs & Maintenance	5,037	5,187
Supervision & Management	7,353	8,542
Rent, Rates, Taxes & Other Charges Provision for Bad Debts	189 400	149 400
Depreciation & Impairment of Fixed Assets	5,597	6,129
Interest Payable & Debt Management Costs	4,179	4,179
Total Expenditure	22,754	24,586
Net cost of Services	-1,778	632
Net Operating Expenditure	-1,778	632
Interest Receivable	-53	-36
Revenue Contribution to Capital Outlay (RCCO)	1,050	280
Transfer to/(from) general reserves	0	-876
Transfer to/(from) Earmarked Reserves	781	0
(Surplus)/Deficit on Services	0	0
HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BALANCE		
Surplus as at beginning of year	1,476	1,476 -876
Surplus/(deficit) for year Surplus as at end of year	0 1,476	600
CAPITAL ACCOUNT		
<u>Expenditure</u>		
Repairs & Maintenance Capital Programme		3,000
Disabled Adaptations		696
Environmental Improvements Housing Growth (1-4-1 purchases)		375 1,902
neading Crown (1 - 1 paronados)		5,973
Financing		5.400
Major Repairs Reserve (MRR)		-5,123 -280
Direct Revenue Financing (RCCO) Right To Buy Receipts		-280 -571
		-5,973



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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

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TRANSITION SUPPORT FOR YOUNG PEOPLE LEAVING CARE IN REDDITCH

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Joe Baker, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services.
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No (though Councillor Baker participated in the vote on the Notice of Motion to Council on 29 th January 2018 which proposed that this matter should be referred to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).
Relevant Heads of Service	Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Ward(s) Affected	All wards.

1. <u>SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS</u>

This report provides Members with an opportunity to consider a referral that has been received from Council calling for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to undertake a review of transition support for young people leaving care in Redditch. Members are asked to identify their preferred approach to scrutinising the matter in further detail.

2. **RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

- 1) Subject to developing appropriate terms of reference a Task Group be established to investigate transition support for young people leaving care in Redditch.
- 2) Subject to developing appropriate terms of reference a Short, Sharp Review be established to investigate transition support for young people leaving care in Redditch.
- The Overview and Scrutiny Committee should review the subject of transition support for young people leaving care in Redditch at consecutive Committee meetings.
- 4) An alternative approach to scrutiny, to be identified and clearly specified during the meeting, be taken in relation to this matter.

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3. **KEY ISSUES**

Background

- 3.1 At the meeting of the Council held on Monday 29th January 2018 Members considered a Notice of Motion that had been submitted proposing action that could be taken by the Council to provide transition support for young people leaving care in Redditch.
- 3.2 During the Council meeting an amendment was proposed to the Motion which called for the matter to be investigated further through the Overview and Scrutiny process. This amendment was endorsed by every Member present at the meeting (further information about the debate regarding this matter can be found at Appendix 1 to this report).

Financial Implications

3.3 There are no direct financial implications for the Council.

Legal Implications

- 3.4 Paragraph 9.2 of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules requires the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to consider a matter referred by the Council at either the first or second ordinary meeting of the Committee following the referral. This is the first such meeting since the referral was made.
- 3.5 Paragraph 9.5 of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Procedure Rules requires the Committee to respond, as soon as its work programme permits, to requests to review particular areas of Council activity from the Council. However, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee can determine how this matter is scrutinised.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.6 The Notice of Motion called for the outcomes of the investigation into transition support for young people leaving care in Redditch to be reported to Council in six months' time. A review of this subject will therefore need to conclude by July 2018.
- 3.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to note that as agreed in 2016/17 whilst meetings of the working groups continue to take place there are only sufficient officer resources to facilitate one Task Group or Short Sharp Review at any one time. The Civil Contingencies Short, Sharp Review is scheduled to be completed in March 2018. Therefore there would be capacity after 1st March 2018 to undertake a Task Group or Short, Sharp Review of this matter.

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Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.8 The Council highlighted the particular vulnerability of young people leaving care during their debate about the Motion. There was general consensus during the meeting that a scrutiny investigation of this matter would be worthwhile as the findings could help to improve the lives of young care leavers living in the Borough.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

No specific risks have been identified.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Extract from the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 29th January 2018.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Jess Bayley, Democratic Services Officer Email: <u>jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</u>

Tel: (01527) 64252 Ext: 3268





Monday, 29 January 2018

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Jennifer Wheeler (Mayor), Councillor Nina Wood-Ford (Deputy Mayor) and Councillors Joe Baker, Tom Baker-Price, Roger Bennett, Natalie Brookes, David Bush, Michael Chalk, Debbie Chance, Greg Chance, Anita Clayton, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Gay Hopkins, Wanda King, Jane Potter, Gareth Prosser, Antonia Pulsford, Mark Shurmer, Rachael Smith, Yvonne Smith, Paul Swansborough, David Thain and Pat Witherspoon

Officers:

Claire Felton and Sue Hanley

Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

EXTRACT FROM THE MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF COUNCIL HELD ON 29TH JANUARY 2018

68. MOTIONS ON NOTICE (PROCEDURE RULE 11)

a) Transition Support for Young People Leaving Care in Redditch

A Notice of Motion had been submitted by Councillor Tom Baker-Price in respect of transition support for young people leaving care in Redditch. This was seconded by Councillor Jane Potter.

In proposing the motion Councillor Baker-Price highlighted the difficulties experienced by many young people who left the care system, including the risks they faced in respect of falling into poverty due to their limited access to support networks. By reducing the net liability for Council Tax of care leavers until their 21st birthday, and by introducing a transitional discretionary discount scheme to enable reduction of liability for Council Tax up to and including zero from their 21st to their 25th birthdays, it was suggested that the Council could help to nurture independence amongst young care leavers.

C	Chair

Monday, 29 January 2018

The Children's Commissioner for England had suggested that these types of schemes could be helpful for young people leaving care. Worcestershire County Council had recently considered a Notice of Motion on a similar subject and this had received support. Motions proposing similar reviews had also been presented for Members' consideration at Wyre Forest District Council and Worcester City Council and these had been welcomed. It was estimated that if this type of scheme was introduced across the whole of Worcestershire the cost would be £17,000 per annum.

In seconding the motion Councillor Jane Potter noted that all local authorities, not just the County Council, had legal responsibilities in respect of care leavers. Young people leaving care could experience a difficult start in life and it was important to ensure that they continued to have access to sufficient support into their early adulthood.

During consideration of the Motion an amendment was proposed by Councillor Mark Shurmer which was circulated in writing at the meeting. In proposing this amendment Councillor Shurmer commented that he recognised the vulnerability of young people leaving care and their need to have access to appropriate support. However, Members were advised that there were additional implications in respect of the proposed changes to Council Tax liabilities for care leavers which he felt merited further investigation. In this context Councillor Shurmer was proposing that the subject should be reviewed in detail by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, with the findings to be reported back to Council in six months' time.

Councillor Shurmer also noted that not every local authority that had received a proposal to introduce a similar scheme had agreed to do so. Members were advised that this could create a postcode lottery in terms of the support available to care leavers across the country. To address this Councillor Shurmer was also proposing that the Council should write to the Government requesting that consideration be given to introducing national legislation that would assist care leavers.

In seconding the amendment Councillor John Fisher concurred that it was important to provide appropriate support to young care leavers. The proposed scrutiny review would provide the Council with an opportunity to learn more about the options available to the Council in terms of potential discretionary Council Tax discount schemes. A cross-party scrutiny review could also investigate the financial implications for the Council of any such scheme and the options available to the Council in terms of funding the scheme. This would

Monday, 29 January 2018

need to take into account the number of care leavers in Redditch Borough.

Following presentation of the amendment Members discussed the proposals and concerns were raised about the potential delay that could be caused by undertaking a scrutiny review of the matter. However, it was suggested that by asking for this review to be completed to report back to Council in six months' time no delays would occur as these were the same timescales as those that had been included in the original Motion. Furthermore, it was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could launch a Short, Sharp Review to investigate this matter within the timescales available.

Reference was also made to the Notice of Motion that had been agreed by Worcestershire County Council in respect of care leavers earlier in the month. Discussions had subsequently been held between the Leader of the County Council and all of the Leaders of the District Councils and the matter was due to be considered further when Leaders of the District Councils in Worcestershire met in February.

During consideration of this matter a five minute adjournment took place to provide all Members with an opportunity to consider the amendment to the Motion. Following this adjournment Councillor Tom Baker-Price, as the mover of the original Motion, confirmed that he was willing to accept the amendment as the substantive Motion.

In accordance with Council Procedure Rule 17.5, the amended Motion in respect of transition support for young people Leaving Care in Redditch was the subject the following named vote:

Members voting FOR the resolution:

Councillors Joe Baker, Tom Baker-Price, Roger Bennett, Natalie Brookes, Michael Chalk, Debbie Chance, Greg Chance, Anita Clayton, Brandon Clayton, Matthew Dormer, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Gay Hopkins, Wanda King, Jane Potter, Gareth Prosser, Antonia Pulsford, Mark Shurmer, Rachael Smith, Yvonne Smith, Paul Swansborough, David Thain, Jenny Wheeler, Pat Witherspoon and Nina Wood-Ford.

Members voting AGAINST the resolution:

No Members voted against the resolution.

Monday, 29 January 2018

Members ABSTAINING on the resolution:

No Members abstained in the vote on this resolution.

Accordingly the Motion was approved and Members

RESOLVED that

The motion be agreed in the following terms:

This Council notes with deep concern the Children's Society's 'Wolf at the Door' report (2015) and the representations made by Kelly Pickard the Children's Commissioner on the subject of council tax for care leavers.

We would like to reaffirm the commitment this Council has to partnership working with Worcestershire County Council, to ensure young people who have left care are appropriately housed and supported in their transition.

The Children and Social Work Act 2017 clearly places corporate parenting responsibilities on District Councils for the first time, requiring them to have regard to children in care and care leavers when carrying out their functions.

This Council is the Council Tax billing and housing authority for the Borough of Redditch and as such recognises this group is particularly vulnerable to falling into debt when moving into independent accommodation for the first time.

This Council therefore requests the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to carry out a full investigation and review.

The objectives are to explore the available options that can be put in place to enable more support to be given; to determine how the process could work in liaison with the County Council; and to assess the financial impact to the Borough, including how we would recover a commensurate share of the necessary funding from the County Council.

In order to provide the maximum support possible to care leavers, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, working with officers, are asked to bring forward proposals to this Council utilising powers granted to this Council under section 13A of the local government financing act 1992 to ensure the following:

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- 1. Reduce their net liability for Council Tax under the national scheme and after Council Tax support to zero, until the care leaver's 21st birthday.
- 2. Introduce a transitional discretionary discount scheme to enable a reduction of liability for Council Tax, up to and including zero, from their 21st birthday until the care leaver's 25th birthday.

These proposals are to be presented to Council within six months of the adoption of this motion.

In order to eliminate the current postcode lottery of exemption, the Council will also write to the Government requesting that consideration is given to introducing national legislation to help care leavers.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 8.52 pm





Committee

Tuesday, 16 January 2018

MINUTES

Present:

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

Officers:

Derek Allen, Ruth Bamford, Michael Birkinshaw, Ray Cooke, Clare Flanagan, Sue Hanley, Jayne Pickering, Deb Poole, Guy Revans and Judith Willis

Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

71. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Baker.

(Councillor B Clayton arrived after the start of the meeting and apologised for being late).

72. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

73. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader explained that, due to the size of the agenda and the likely length of the meeting, he was tabling his announcements in writing.

74. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 31st October 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

Chair	

Committee

Tuesday, 16 January 2018

75. SUPPLEMENTARY PLANNING DOCUMENT CONSULTATION (GOOD DESIGN)

The Head of Planning and Regeneration presented the draft high Quality Design Supplementary Planning Document (SPD) for the committee's consideration. The report supplemented a number of policies within the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 (BORLP4). The SPD had been considered by the Planning Advisory Panel (PAP) and the points raised by Members during meetings of this body had informed the content of the document. Officers were seeking to undertake a period of public consultation, the outcomes from which would be reported for the consideration of the Executive Committee in due course. It was anticipated that this consultation would last for at least six weeks.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed the SPD and questioned the extent to which parking provision in residential developments was addressed. Concerns were raised that in recent years parking provision available to developments had been considered inadequate by some residents and this had led to complaints being made to their local Councillors. The Committee was advised that under previous legislation and guidance Councils had been required to encourage developers to design houses in a way that would enable use of more sustainable methods of transport. National guidance had subsequently changed, with greater emphasis now being placed on the role of the developer in determining parking requirements alongside other considerations. However, parking was not a key focus of this particular SPD.

The existence of a local list of heritage buildings was also discussed. The Committee was advised that this did not form part of the SPD, though a local list had been approved at a previous meeting of the Committee and was available to view from the Council's website.

RESOLVED that

the public consultation for the draft High Quality Design SPD be approved.

76. WATER SAFETY POLICY

The Leisure Services Manager presented the Inland Water Safety Policy. The policy had already been considered by the Joint Corporate Health, Safety and Welfare Committee and all of the points raised by this body had been taken into account. The

Committee

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National Water Safety Forum had also been consulted about the content of the policy.

The policy was one of the last two recommendations remaining to be addressed arising from an investigation that had been undertaken by ROSPA. Officers were aiming to bring forward a report in respect of the other outstanding recommendation, relating to re-engineering works at the weirs, the following year.

RECOMMENDED

the approval and adoption of the Inland Water Safety Policy.

77. VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANT PROGRAMME 2018/19 - FUNDING RECOMMENDATIONS

The Head of Community Services presented the funding recommendations from the Council's Grants Panel in respect of the Voluntary and Community Sector Grant Programme 2018/19. Members were advised that there had been some unallocated sums and the Grants Panel had brought forward proposals to ensure that this funding would still be invested in Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations.

Members noted that a number of applicants had been unsuccessful. Each year there were more applicants than there was funding available and the Grants Panel used particular criteria to ensure that funding was distributed appropriately.

RESOLVED that

1) the following grants for 2018/19 be awarded to the successful applicants as set out in the table below:

Organisation	Project Name	Amount Requested
Help me to be financial	ly independent £4k	
REACH CIC	Savvy Savers	£ 4,000
Help me to live my life i	ndependently £40k	
REACH CIC	Building Futures	£10,000
Redditch Wheels Project	Skatepark Future	£10,000
Redditch Boxing Club	Fight for peace 'Personal Development Programme'	£ 9,900
Your Ideas Youth & Community Project	Your Ideas Holiday Activities	£10,000
Help me to live my life i	ndependently £30k	

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REACH CIC	Positive Change Training Course	£4032			
Relate	Counselling Services	£6000			
Redditch Mental Health Action Group	Wellbeing Coaching	£6000			
Onside	Redditch Community Advocacy Project	£6000			
Disability Resource Centre (DRC)	Fit for Life	£5,000			
Provide me with good t	hings to do see and visi	it £6k			
The Ditch	The Ditch Youth Project	£3,000			
Redditch Federation of Anglers	Community Fishing Development	£3,000			
Keep my place safe an	Keep my place safe and looking good £15k				
P&E Sports CIC	Youth 4 Youth	£ 4,860			
NewStarts	Redditch Reach	£5,000			
Bromsgrove and Redditch Network	BROS: Home Soil	£4,999.60			
Help me run a successful voluntary sector business £50k					
Carers Careline	Carers Telephone Support Service	£ 4,404.00			
Where Next	Where Next	£10,000			
Touchstones	Supporting Bereaved Children in Redditch	£10,000			
Britten Street Hub CIC	Inclusion project	£9,960			
Home Start North East Worcestershire	Supporting Families	£10,000			

- 2) the unallocated sums of £100.00, £2,968.00 and £140.40, be included in the Stronger Communities Grants funding theme for 2018/2019; and
- 3) the unallocated sum of £5,636.00 relating to the Help Me Run a Successful Voluntary Sector Business Theme be retained and its availability be re-advertised in parallel with the Stronger Communities Grants applications in January 2018.

78. FLEXIBLE HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT GRANT (INCLUDING HOMELESSNESS REDUCTION ACT NEW BURDENS FUNDING)

The Strategic Housing Manager presented a report in respect of the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant. The report included information about additional funding that had been provided by the Government to help the Council address additional responsibilities in respect of homelessness set out in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. Officers were proposing that £60,000 of this funding should be allocated to recruiting two new trainees in the Private Sector Housing team. Local organisations that delivered services

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tackling homelessness in the community would be provided with an opportunity to bid for funding from some of the remaining budget.

Officers confirmed that £50,000 had already been spent on temporary accommodation. In previous years the Government had provided a Temporary Accommodation Advisory Grant for this purpose, but that funding had been combined with this grant in 2018/19. In the long-term local authorities would be required to concentrate on preventing homelessness and it was anticipated that the need for Councils to provide temporary accommodation would decline as a consequence.

RESOLVED

- to NOTE that the 2018/19 grant funding implications will be included as part of the medium term financial plan report to Council in February 2018, subject to Council approval of the budget;
- 2) that the Flexible Homelessness Support Grant is made available in line with the table initiatives in 3.9, and that the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 New Burdens Funding be allocated as set out in section 3.13.
- 3) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Community Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, to use any unallocated Grant during the year or make further adjustments as necessary to ensure full utilisation of the Grants for 2018/19 in support of existing or new schemes; and

RECOMMENDED that

4) the Homelessness and Homelessness Prevention Grant Policy as set out in Appendix 1 be approved with delegated authority granted to the Strategic Housing Manager following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing to award the grants.

79. FEES AND CHARGES 2018/19

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the proposed fees and charges for 2018/19 and explained that in some cases Officers were proposing that the charges should be increased by 3.9 per cent in line with budget assumptions. However, there were some cases where Officers were suggesting no increase to the fees or an increase over 3.9 per cent.

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Members were advised that a typographical error had occurred in the report as incorrect figures had been listed for hiring mechanically swept private road / car park mini-sweepers and mechanically swept private road / car park HGV sweepers. This should have been recorded as £30 and £50 respectively per hour rather than as £0.00 in both cases.

The proposed installation fee for lifeline services, due to increase by 38.89 per cent was discussed with concerns being raised about the potential impact on customers. Officers advised that this increase had occurred following benchmarking with other authorities and to ensure that the service achieved full cost recovery. Additional support could be offered to customers who might struggle to meet the costs.

The fees for Bereavement Services had also increased by up to 22.2 per cent and questions were raised about the causes of this. The Committee was advised that these increases had occurred following a rise in the fees charged by organisations that supplied services to the Council at the Crematorium. The fees would enable the Council to recover these costs as well as contribute to meeting administrative and maintenance costs at the site.

Fees had not been published in the papers for Building Control due to recognition of the commercially sensitive nature of these services which were provided in competition with external organisations. A request was made for a sample of these fees to be provided in exempt papers for future editions of this report to enable Members to assess how these charges were changing, though it was acknowledged that the fees for this service could vary according to changing levels of demand within the market.

In many cases there were no proposals for there to be an increase in the fees charged for Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS). Officers explained that there was a lot of case law in relation to licensing fees which specified that these fees needed to be self-financing. When calculating Licensing fees issues such as administration costs were taken into account. There were also a number of licensing fees that were set at a statutory level and which the Council could not amend.

Increases had also not been proposed to a number of fees for services provided by the Palace Theatre. Officers advised that a benchmarking exercise had been undertaken and this had discovered that many of the venue's fees were comparable to that of similar venues. To ensure that the theatre remained competitive Officers were advising that these fees should not increase.

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RECOMMENDED that

1) all fees and charges that are included in Appendix 1 which have a proposed increase for 2018/19 over the currently agreed budget assumption of 3.9% be approved;

RESOLVED that

- 2) the fees and charges as presented in Appendix 1 that have no increase for 2018/19 be approved; and
- 3) the fees and charges as presented in Appendix 1 that have reduced for 2018/19 be approved.

80. PERFORMANCE UPDATE REPORT

The Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development presented a report outlining the approach Officers were keen to adopt to update Members on the Council's corporate performance. Officers were proposing to present this report to the Executive Committee every two months, each of which would focus on a different strategic purpose. The reports would also include information obtained from the Corporate Dashboard.

Following presentation of the report the Committee discussed Members' familiarity with the Dashboard. There was general recognition that Members of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group were well acquainted with the dashboard but other Councillors had had more limited exposure. Members suggested that it would be helpful for training to be provided to enable Members to review and utilise the data available on the dashboard more effectively.

The regularity with which the data on the dashboard was updated was also discussed by Members. Some Councillors had accessed the dashboard and had found that data did not always appear to be up to date. It was acknowledged that sometimes officers might only be able to obtain data on a quarterly or yearly basis but this was not always clear from the commentary provided for a measure on the dashboard. Officers noted that this would be raised with the lead officers for those measures to ensure that clarification could be provided.

RESOLVED that

the approach to performance reporting to Executive through use of the Measures Dashboard and a bi-monthly report, detailed in the draft template attached at Appendix 1, be approved.

Committee

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81. ACQUISITION AND INVESTMENT STRATEGY

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the Acquisition and Investment Strategy and in so doing highlighted that this supported the Council's commercialism strategy. Whilst the report was requesting authority to allowing borrowing of up to £20 million for the strategy there were no projects currently in development and all opportunities would be rigorously assessed to minimise risks to the Council. Officers confirmed that borrowing would only be undertaken should an investment meet the strict criteria as included in the strategy.

The focus of any investment would be on options within Redditch, or areas contiguous to the Borough in order to take advantage of any opportunities that occurred just over the border. The Place Partnership Ltd was working closely with the Council and would provide advice, where appropriate.

Confirmation was provided that the Budget Scrutiny Working Group had pre-scrutinised the content of this strategy. The group had not proposed any amendments to the policy nor had they made any recommendations in respect of this matter.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Acquisition and Investment Strategy be approved;
- 2) the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Head of the North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit be responsible for identifying suitable opportunities and developing the viability appraisal and business case for the Council; and
- 3) the Executive Committee have delegated powers to approve business cases and complete acquisitions.

82. COUNCIL TAX BASE 2018/19

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the Council Tax Base 2018/19 report. Members were advised that the local authority was required to set a calculation in respect of the Council Tax Base for Band D properties and above. The information had to be shared with Feckenham Parish Council. The calculations also underpinned the figures in respect of Council Tax that would be charged in the year ahead, which would be reported to Council on 19th March 2018.

RECOMMENDED that

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- 1) the calculation of the Council's Tax Base for the whole and parts of the area for 2018/19, be approved; and
- 2) in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the figures calculated by the Redditch Borough Council as its tax base for the whole area for the year 2018/19 be 26,058.20 and for the parts of the area listed below be:

Parish of Feckenham 372.20

Rest of Redditch 25,686.00
26,058.20

83. FINANCIAL REGULATIONS AND CONTRACT PROCEDURE RULES

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the updated Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules and in so doing explained that this had provided an opportunity to refresh the Council's rules. As a result of the proposed changes the level at which staff needed to obtain written quotations in line with competition requirements had fallen from quotes over £5,000 to those between £3,001 and £25,000. Information had also been added to the Contract Procedure Rules setting out requirements in respect of services working with consultants. The report also clarified that in future virement between staffing budgets would not be permitted. A formal training process would be introduced to ensure that staff were familiar with the changes.

The frequency with which the Financial Regulations and Contract Procedure Rules should be reviewed was briefly discussed. Officers advised that these would be reviewed every two to three years, though amendments might sometimes need to be made more frequently in response to legislative changes. Members noted that it would be useful for an internal audit of the new rules and regulations to be undertaken once they had been embedded to monitor the impact and compliance amongst officers.

Members noted that the report had suggested that the rules should apply from 29th January 2018. However, this was the date on which the Council meeting would take place to determine the policy and there was no guarantee that this would occur. It was therefore agreed that the recommendation from the Executive Committee should be amended to reflect this.

RECOMMENDED that

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the updated contract and financial procedure rules be approved. The rules would then apply following Council approval.

84. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN UPDATE - PRESENTATION

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources tabled a presentation which outlined the Council's current budgetary position (Appendix 1). Whilst delivering this presentation the following points were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- Further information would be available from the Government about the forthcoming Local Government Funding Reform in the spring.
- The service specific cost drivers referred to in paperwork relating to the Local Government Funding Reform were more relevant to Worcestershire County Council as the local provider of social services.
- The Business Rates Baseline Reset in 2020/21 would lead to any growth in business rates in previous years being absorbed into the baseline.
- Officers had built into the budget an assumption that the Council would increase Council Tax by 2.9 per cent following a change to the level of increase in Council Tax that would trigger a referendum to three per cent.
- Worcestershire County Council was consulting with the Government about the reasons why the Worcestershire Business Rates Pilot bid had been unsuccessful. This would help the authorities to amend their proposals for any future opportunities to bid.
- The Council had anticipated, based on performance in previous years, that it would meet the baseline target for growth of Band D properties in order to secure funding from the New Homes Bonus. Unfortunately failure to do so had implications for the Council's budget.
- CMT were in the process of reviewing the Council's budget for 2018/19 on a line-by-line basis. The Council had to achieve a balanced budget in the first year of the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP), though this was not necessarily required for the subsequent three years.
- The Council's proposed MTFP for 2018/19 to 2020/21 would be presented for the consideration of the Executive Committee on 6th February. This would be subject to detailed scrutiny on the 13th February and a final decision would be taken by Council on 19th February.

Following delivery of the presentation the Chair explained that he had asked Officers to investigate the potential for the Council to work with other local authorities to lobby the Government over the

Committee

Tuesday, 16 January 2018

deadweight rules in respect of the New Homes Bonus. Unfortunately, whilst there had been significant development in the Borough the majority of these developments involved Band A-C properties.

RESOLVED that

the presentation be noted.

85. FINANCE MONITORING QUARTER 2 2017/18

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the Finance Monitoring Quarter 2 report which set out the Council's financial position in the period June to September 2017/18. The report highlighted a shortfall of £124,000 which Officers were working hard to address. In addition, the Council's auditors had suggested that the authority needed to revise the allocation of charges to the capital programme which had an impact on the corporate financing budget. Officers advised that there had been significant developments in respect of the budget since September 2017 as managers were addressing the impact of any shortfalls

As part of the Council's work to achieve savings senior officers were undertaking a line-by-line analysis of the budget during quarter three of the financial year. The outcomes of this work would be reported for Members' consideration in the quarter 3 report in March 2018.

The inclusion of vacant posts within the Council's budget was briefly discussed. Officers advised that there would always be some vacant posts due to the departure of staff over time. However, senior officers were working hard to ensure that these posts did not remain vacant for long.

RESOLVED that

 the Executive Committee note the current financial positions for the quarter April – September 2017 as detailed in the report; and

RECOMMENDED that

2) the virement of £104k from Customer Access and Financial Services Public Capital Building project to Environmental Services Capital Crematorium project. This is due to part of the public buildings contract now being included as part of the bigger crematorium project to minimise disruption.

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86. WHISTLEBLOWING POLICY

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing) for the Committee's consideration. Members were advised that the policy had been refreshed to update titles and reporting routes. The document also provided transparency about the process that should be followed by staff in the event that they had concerns about something happening at the local authority.

RECOMMENDED that

the Confidential Reporting Code (Whistleblowing) be approved.

87. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee was advised that all of the recommendations arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 26th October 2017 had already been considered. There were no recommendations arising from the meeting of the Committee held on 7th December 2017.

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

Officers confirmed that there had been no recommendations arising from the latest meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, which took place on 11th January 2018.

89. CORPORATE PARENTING STEERING GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE

In the absence of Councillor Baker no update was available to provide in respect of the Corporate Parenting Steering Group. Members requested that in future, for meetings that Councillor Baker was unable to attend, a brief update on the work of this group should be provided in writing for Members' consideration.

90. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members considered the content of the Advisory Panels update report and noted that the Planning Advisory Panel meeting that had been due to take place that evening had been cancelled. Page 55

Agenda Item 7

Executive

Committee

Tuesday, 16 January 2018

and closed at 9.07 pm



Budget Update
Jan 2018

Impact of Settlement

- Local Government Funding Reform consultation paper published
- Implementation 2020/21
- Business Rates Baseline reset 2020/21
- From 2020/21 all grants to be included in Business Rates Retention
- Business Rate retention at 75% not 50% but reset will reduce benefit of any growth
- Council Tax referendum now at 3% (previously 2%) 2018/19 & 2019/20
 Increase included in Budgets £40k
- Business Rate Pilots Worcestershire not approved as a pilot. Potential for further rounds of bidding
- Redditch to remain in GBS Pool for 2018/19
- No changes to NHB
- Consultation in Spring 2018 in relation to "negative " grant currently £330k in 2019/20

Impact of Settlement

- Local Government Funding Reform consultation paper published – implementation 2020/21
 - Measuring need
 - Common cost drivers
 - Service specific cost drivers
 - Weighting formula
 - Advises that further detail on transition and locally raised income to follow in future papers
 - Set new baseline for funding allocations
 - Simple/ transparent/ Contemporary/ Sustainable/ Stable

New Homes Bonus

- No Change to Scheme for 2018/19
- Deadweight remains at 0.4%
- 2018/19 band D 31,617
 - -0.4% = 126.5 units
 - Growth 84 units
 - Therefore Below Baseline
 - Grant advised of £22k for 2018/19
 - Short £196k (£22k not £218k). £218k based on average of previous 3 years

Current Position

- Current Gap £550k in 2018/19 £1m in 2020/21
- Assumes 2% pay award for all staff
- Assumes income from new Leisure trading company
- Assumes 2.99% increase in Council Tax

Next Steps

- Further work on detailed savings / additional income to be prepared for Feb meeting
- Detailed rationale to demonstrate pressures
- · Review of reserves statement
- Balances £1.8m minimum £750k
- Balance the financial projections to 2021/22
- Agree budget February 19th 2018



EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER'S

WORK PROGRAMME

1 March 2018 to 30 June 2018



(published as at 1st February 2018)

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

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: 3268 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 Joe Baker, Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services

Councillor Debbie Chance, Portfolio Holder for the Local Environment

Councillor Greg Chance, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport

Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management

Councillor Mark Shurmer, Portfolio Holder for Housing

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
Anti Social Behaviour Crime and Policing Act 2014 - Implementation of Provisions Key: No	Executive 6 Mar 2018 Council 19 Mar 2018		Report of the Head of Community Services	Bev Houghton, Community Safety Manager (Redditch and Bromsgrove) Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3656
Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review - Final Report Key: No	Executive 6 Mar 2018		Report of the Chair of the Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review	Jess Bayley, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Redditch) Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3268
Disposal of Buildings and Land at Hawthorn Road, Batchley Key: Yes	Executive 6 Mar 2018	This report may be partially considered in exempt session.	Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Matthew Bough, Housing Policy and Performance Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3120
Finance Monitoring and Efficiency Plan Update - Quarter 3 2017/18 Key: No	Executive 6 Mar 2018		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207
Leisure and Cultural Services Business Case Key: No	Executive 6 Mar 2018 Council 19 Mar 2018	This may partly be considered in exempt session	Report of the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services	John Godwin, Head of Leisur and Cultural Services Tel: 01527 881762

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
One Public Estate Exercise Key: Yes	Executive Not before 6th Mar 2018		Report of the Chief Executive	Dean Piper, Head of Economic Development and Regeneration Tel: 01562 732192
Performance Update Report Key: No	Executive 6 Mar 2018		Report of the Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development Tel: 01527 881256
Polling Places Review 2018 Key: No	Executive 6 Mar 2018 Council 19 Mar 2018		Report of the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	Darren Whitney, Electoral Services Manager Tel: 01527 882547
Redditch Business Centres Review Key: No	Executive Not before 6th Mar 2018 Council Not before 19th Mar 2018		Report of the North Worcestershire Head of Economic Development and Regeneration	Steve Singleton Tel: 01562 732168
Redditch Business Improvement District Key: No	Executive Not before 6th Mar 2018 Council Not before 6th Mar 2018		Report of the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	Lyndsey Berry, Town Centre Co-Ordinator/Planning Office Tel: 01527 587002

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
Review of the Place Partnership Key: No	Executive 6 Mar 2018 Council 19 Mar 2018		Report of the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207
Risk Management Strategy Key: No	Executive 6 Mar 2018 Council 19 Mar 2018		Report of the Executive Director of finance and Corporate Resources	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18 Key: No	Council 19 Mar 2018		Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Jess Bayley, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Redditch) Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3268
Matchborough and Winyates District Centre Redevelopment Consultation Key: Yes	Executive Not before 10th Jul 2018		Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Mike Dunphy, Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager Tel: (01527) 881325
Service Delivery Options - HRA Gas Maintenance Key: Yes	Executive Not before 10th Jul 2018	Likely to be considered in exempt session.	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive	Sue Hanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director (Leisure, Environmental & Community Services) Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3601

Overview & Scrutiny

Committee ______13th February 2018

WORK PROGRAMME

(Report of the Chief Executive)

Date of Meeting	Subject Matter	Officer(s) Responsible for report
ALL MEETINGS	REGULAR ITEMS	(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)
	Minutes of previous meeting	Chief Executive
	Consideration of the Executive Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive
	Call-ins (if any)	Chief Executive
	Pre-scrutiny (if any)	Chief Executive
	Task Groups / Short, Sharp Review Groups – feedback	Chair of Task Group / Short, Sharp Review
	Working Groups - feedback	Chair of Working Group
	Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive
	REGULAR ITEMS	
	Update on the work of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel.	Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel
	Tracker Report	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
	Updates on the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Redditch Borough Council representative on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
	Annual Monitoring Report – Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service

Overview & Scrutiny

Committee ______13th February 2018

OTHER ITEMS - DATE FIXED		
13 th February 2018	Council Referral – Scrutiny Review of Transitional Support for Care Leavers	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
13 th February 2018	HRA Initial Budget 2018/19 – 2020/21	Relevant Lead Director
13 th February 2018	Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 – 2021/22 – Scrutiny of budget proposals	Relevant Lead Director
1st March 2018	Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review – Final Report	Councillor Prosser
1st March 2018	Leisure and Cultural Services Business Case – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Director
1st March 2018	One Public Estate Exercise – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Director
1st March 2018	Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2017/18	Councillor Potter
1st March 2018	Safeguarding and Early Help presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
July 2018	Redditch Partnership – Monitoring Update Report	Relevant Lead Director

Overview & Scrutiny

Committee ______13th February 2018

OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED		
	Housing Benefits Presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
	Matchborough and Winyates District Centre Redevelopment Consultation – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
	Service Delivery Options – HRA Gas Maintenance – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
	Tackling Obesity Task Group - Feedback	Councillor Potter

