



Executive Committee

Tue 31 Oct
2017
7.00 pm

Committee Room Two
Town Hall
Redditch

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
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Executive Committee

Tuesday, 31st October, 2017

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Bill Hartnett (Chair)	Brandon Clayton
	Greg Chance (Vice-Chair)	John Fisher
	Joe Baker	Mark Shurmer
	Juliet Brunner	Pat Witherspoon
	Debbie Chance	

1. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest

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.
3. Leader's Announcements
4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)
5. Homelessness Short Sharp Review - Final Report (Pages 13 - 52)
6. Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group - Final Report (Pages 53 - 72)
7. Performance Scrutiny Working Group - Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation (Pages 73 - 76)
8. Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy Addendum (Pages 77 - 110)
9. Community Panel Survey (Pages 111 - 126)
10. Commercialisation and Financial Strategy (Pages 127 - 142)
11. Local Council Tax Support Scheme (Pages 143 - 146)
12. Local Discretionary Relief Scheme (Pages 147 - 158)
13. Children and Young People's Plan 2017 - 2021 (Pages 159 - 232)
14. Medium Term Financial Plan 2018/19 to 2021/22 - Budget Assumptions (Pages 233 - 238)

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 31st October, 2017

15. Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7th September 2017 (Pages 239 - 248)

There are recommendations to consider which relate to items 5 and 7 on the agenda.

(The Committee's recommendations in respect of the Garden Waste collection service were considered at the last meeting of the Executive Committee).

16. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc.

17. Corporate Parenting Steering Group - Update Report (Councillor Joe Baker)

18. Advisory Panels - update report (Pages 249 - 250)

19. 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 3 – financial or business affairs;
- Para 4 – labour relations matters;

20. Leisure and Cultural Services Options Review (to follow)



Executive

Committee

Tuesday, 12 September 2017

MINUTES

Present:

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

Also Present:

Councillor Michael Chalk (observing)

Officers:

Mike Dunphy, Clare Flanagan, John Godwin, Sue Hanley, Julie Heyes, Andy Morris, Jayne Pickering, Deb Poole, Guy Revans, Samantha Skilbeck, Becky Talbot, Anna Wardell-Hill and Judith Willis

Democratic Services Officer:

Debbie Parker-Jones

35. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

All of the Councillor membership of the Executive Committee declared an Other Disclosable Interest in Agenda Item 6 – Leisure and Cultural Services Concessions Policy – as detailed at Minute No. 40 below.

37. 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:

- Commercialisation and Financial Strategy;
- One Public Estate Exercise; and
- Whistleblowing Policy.

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Chair

The Applying Article 4 Directions to Non-designated Heritage Assets report, which had previously appeared on the Work Programme for consideration by the Executive in December 2017, had been removed from the Work Programme at the request of Officers.

Overview and Scrutiny matters

It was noted that the Garden Waste Service report at Agenda Item 7 had been pre-scrutinised by the Overview and Scrutiny ('O&S') Committee on 7th September. As the O&S Committee had unanimously endorsed all of the report recommendations there was no O&S minute extract for consideration by the Executive Committee.

It was also noted that there were no outstanding recommendations for the Executive Committee to consider from the 4th July 2017 O&S Minutes at Agenda Item 13, as the recommendation at Minute No. 25 – Council Housing Allocations Policy – had been dealt with at the 11th July 2017 Executive.

38. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE HELD ON 11TH JULY 2017

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th July 2017 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

39. REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL RESPONSE TO CONSULTATIONS ON WYRE FOREST LOCAL PLAN REVIEW PREFERRED OPTION AND DRAFT WORCESTERSHIRE RAIL INVESTMENT STRATEGY

Members considered the informal Officer responses submitted to Wyre Forest District Council ('WFDC') on the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review Preferred Option consultation, and to Worcestershire County Council ('WCC') on the Worcestershire Draft Rail Investment Strategy.

Due to the scheduling of the Executive Committee meetings it had not been possible for the responses to be considered by Members in advance of the deadlines for comments. It was noted that both consultations were non-statutory and that should further responses need to be submitted it should be possible to do this through the ongoing engagement the Council had with both WFDC and WCC.

Officers explained the background to the informal responses and the issues with these in relation to the town. In both cases, whilst Officers were not directly objecting to the documents it was felt that wider strategies needed to be developed as some elements had not been included in these. Redditch Borough Council needed to work with WFDC and WCC to develop the strategies in order for all parties to have a full understanding of all of the issues. The omission in the Draft Rail Strategy of any reference to an 'express' train from Redditch to Birmingham was noted, which it was stated had previously been discussed at various forums.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the draft Officer response to the Wyre Forest Local Plan Review Preferred Option, as attached at Appendix A to the report, and as submitted to Wyre Forest District Council as the formal consultation response, be approved; and**
- 2) **the draft Officer response to the Worcestershire Draft Rail Investment Strategy, as attached at Appendix B to the report, and as submitted to Worcestershire County Council as the formal consultation response, be approved; and**

RESOLVED that

- 3) **the report be noted.**

40. LEISURE AND CULTURAL SERVICES CONCESSIONS POLICY

The Committee considered a detailed report on the introduction of a new concessionary policy for Leisure and Cultural Services. An updated list of recommendations and Section 6.2 of the report were tabled at the meeting.

Officers explained the background to the review, which had initially begun as a review of the current Reddicard scheme as part of the latest budget round. Officers highlighted the main elements of the report, including the key considerations and proposals detailed therein, and responded to Members' questions.

It was noted that the Council would still be the most generous authority in the area in terms of leisure concessions. The changes were not aimed at raising money as the majority of the headline prices would reduce under the proposals. The focus was on affordability and the greatest areas of need, with charges applying to those people who had the ability to pay for services; an approach which was supported by the majority of 1,650 survey respondents. This was important to ensure that the health and wellbeing benefits

that could be achieved by being physically active could continue to be offered to all residents, and to ensure that price was not a barrier to participation at Council-run services.

Officers advised that the somewhat complex Reddicard pricing structure had made the Council slightly uncompetitive, with the result being that pricing in some areas was above market rate. Services had to be sustainable in the long term and the Council needed to remain competitive in what was an extremely competitive and ever changing leisure market.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the new Leisure and Cultural Services Concessions Policy be approved and Officers make the required changes to increase the disability related concessions from 25% and 50% for In Work and Out of Work benefits to 50% and 100% respectively, as shown in the updated table at Section 6.2 of the report – as tabled at the Executive Committee and appended to these minutes. This change will also be made at Section 6.3 of the report where golf fees for disabled users will be based upon a 50% and 100% concession approach where applicable;**
- 2) Option 2, which maintains free of charge swimming for under 16's and introduces charges for over 60's swimming, be implemented as part of the review. This option will also include an affordability test to support those who need financial assistance to access services;**
- 3) the revised Fees and Charges supporting the new Concessions Policy, which will run from 1st January 2018 to 31st December 2018, be approved based on Appendix 2 to the report and in conjunction with list of variable prices shown as Option 2 in Section 6.1 of the report;**
- 4) the Head of Service variance be adjusted to 30% and responsibility for Officer authorisation of variances be delegated to service managers in agreement with the Leisure and Cultural Services Head of Service; and**
- 5) authority be delegated to the Leisure and Cultural Services Head of Service to vary the Concessions Policy in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder within the first 12 months of operation, to address any unforeseen issues that emerge.**

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 12 September 2017

(Prior to consideration of this item, all of the Councillor membership of the Executive Committee declared Other Disclosable Interests in this matter by virtue of their memberships of / links to the organisations detailed below, which currently held meetings at the Town Hall and who were not charged for room hire. All of the Councillors remained in the room and participated in the consideration of, and voting on, this matter.

Councillor	Organisation
Joe Baker	Labour Party Friends of Gruchet-le-Valasse Friends of Auxerre
Juliet Brunner	Conservative Party
Debbie Chance	Labour Party Friends of Gruchet-le-Valasse
Greg Chance	Labour Party Friends of Gruchet-le-Valasse
Brandon Clayton	Conservative Party
John Fisher	Labour Party Redditch One World Link
Bill Hartnett	Labour Party Board of Redditch Co-operative Homes Friends of Gruchet-le-Valasse Friends of Auxerre
Mark Shurmer	Labour Party
Pat Witherspoon	Labour Party Redditch Older People's Forum Board of Redditch Co-operative Homes Friends of Gruchet-le-Valasse Friends of Auxerre

41. REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL GARDEN WASTE SERVICE

Members considered a report on the proposed introduction of a seasonal (March to November inclusive) garden waste service for the town. Officers presented the report and gave a presentation to Members on the key elements of the service, in particular on the financial elements of this, and responded to Members' questions in this regard. As detailed under Leader's Announcements it was noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had pre-scrutinised this report on 7th September 2017 and had unanimously endorsed all of the report recommendations.

It was noted that the results of two surveys undertaken by Officers showed that there was demand for the service, with 72% of 1000 social media and postal respondents being in favour of this. In relation to the Map of consultation responses included in the agenda papers, Officers clarified that whilst Feckenham was covered by the proposed service, and had been included in the

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 12 September 2017

consultation process, no responses had been received from any Feckenham residents.

In view of the survey responses, together with the fact that there was no longer any financial risk to the Council, and given that the environmental impact was now reported to be significantly different (reduced) to when a garden waste service had previously been considered by the Council in 2010, Members felt that the time was now right for the service to be introduced. Members also noted that notwithstanding the introduction of a garden waste service, both they and Officers fully advocated the composting of garden waste at home where possible, and would endeavour to encourage residents to do this.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) from March 2018 Redditch Borough Council introduce, and Bromsgrove District Council run as part of the shared services agreement for Environmental services, a seasonal (March to November inclusive) garden waste service on behalf of Redditch Borough Council;**
- 2) the charge for the service be £45 for the initial season, to be increased in line with fees and charges as appropriate;**
- 3) a set-up fee of £20 per customer be charged in the first year of service and for new customers in each following year;**
- 4) an introductory offer of a £10 set-up fee be used to encourage early sign-up before the 31st January 2018;**
- 5) the Head of Environmental Services, in consultation with the designated Portfolio Holder, be granted authority to temporarily reduce or remove the set-up fee as a promotional tool to increase and encourage subscriptions;**
- 6) should the Recommended Option be pursued, a capital commitment for the next 4 years of £31k in year 1 and £15k in years 2 to 4 be included in the Capital Programme;**
- 7) once the maximum number of customers has been approached a customer waiting list be employed and Officers bring a further report and business case with options for extending the service should it be required;**
- 8) the chargeable Orange Sack Service be formally retired as part of the new service changes; and**

- 9) a communication plan be devised and implemented to advise residents of the changes to Redditch Borough Council's waste collection service and the requirement to use brown bins only for garden waste.

42. VOLUNTARY & COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANTS PROGRAMME 2018/19

The Committee considered a report on the funding split and themes for the Voluntary and Community Sector grants process for 2018/19. The report also sought a change to the Help Me to Live My Life Independently £35k pot for discounted childcare, to widen out the scope of this theme to enable organisations to bid for funding for general projects focussed on children and young people.

All Members noted the importance of the grants process and of the work carried out by recipient organisations who delivered vital services to residents. Whilst the Council had limited resources it always aimed to allocate grants in the best way possible, based on the Council's Strategic Purposes. Members reiterated the need to ensure that details of the grants programme reached as many organisations as possible, both large and small, to ensure that all were aware of this. The use of social media was also encouraged in spreading details of the grants programme. Members highlighted the importance of organisations not relying solely on Council funding, and encouraged all organisations to seek additional funding in order to avoid financial difficulties should a grant not be awarded to them.

Some Members raised concerns on the back of complaints received from Redditch residents regarding a reported lack of obvious presence of the Redditch arm of Citizens Advice Bromsgrove and Redditch, being advised to visit the Bromsgrove office and facing difficulties getting through on the telephone lines. Officers agreed to take Members' comments back to Citizens Advice.

RECOMMENDED that

the themes and percentages funding be allocated for the 2018/19 voluntary and community sector grants process as set out in Appendix 1 to the report.

43. DIGNITY AT WORK POLICY

Members were asked to consider an updated version of the Dignity at Work Policy ('the Policy').

Officers advised that the Council and the Trade Unions were committed to working towards creating a working environment in which all employees were treated fairly, with dignity and respect, and where a zero tolerance approach to harassment, discrimination, bullying or victimisation was taken. The Policy had been seen and commented upon by the Corporate Management Team, Trade Unions and Staff Survey Programme Board, all of whom were supportive of this.

Members supported the Policy and felt that staff welfare was of paramount importance to the Council, with staff being deemed to be the Council's most valuable asset.

RECOMMENDED that

the Dignity at Work Policy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and adopted.

44. HUMAN RESOURCES AND ORGANISATIONAL DEVELOPMENT STRATEGY

Members were asked to consider a new Human Resources and Organisational Development Strategy ('the Strategy').

The Strategy, which was closely linked and should be read in conjunction with the Council Plan, detailed the approach the Council planned to take to ensure it had employees with the right skills, in the right place, at the right time, to enable the organisation to deliver its Strategic Purposes in the most effective way.

Members supported the Strategy and noted that this had been seen and commented upon by the Trade Unions, who were supportive of its contents.

A Member requested that, in future, any proposed new or revised policy/strategy reports clearly highlight any changes which were being proposed to existing policies/strategies, in order to avoid Members having to compare these with previous documents, which Officers undertook to do.

RECOMMENDED that

the Human Resources and Organisation Development Strategy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and adopted.

45. JOB EVALUATION POLICY

Members were asked to consider a new Job Evaluation ('JE') Policy ('the Policy'), which set out the formal process for re-evaluating posts within the Council.

It was noted that the Policy had been agreed by the Job Evaluation Steering Group, which included Trade Union representatives from UNISON, GMB and Unite.

Officers explained the JE process and responded to Members' questions, with it being noted that it was the post, and not the person, who was subject to evaluation.

RECOMMENDED that

the Job Evaluation Policy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved and adopted.

46. FINANCE MONITORING QUARTER 1 2017/18

Members received a report which detailed the Council's final financial position for the General Fund Revenue, Capital and Housing Revenue Account ('HRA') for the period April to June 2017 (Quarter 1 2017/18).

Officers explained that on the back of discussions with the Executive and the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, a summary position only, with general supporting financial commentary, was being given on the Revenue Budget, with Officers due to discuss the more detailed elements with their respective Portfolio Holders. It was noted that there was an £87k underspend at the end of the first quarter, which Officers detailed the key aspects of.

Officers went on to highlight the main elements of the Capital Budget Summary, notably the 'Help me find somewhere to live in my locality' underspend, together with the HRA underspends for Repairs and Maintenance and Supervision and Management. Officers were working on producing better profiles of spend based on realistic spend throughout the year, and stated that they would also provide a breakdown of spend against the £19m Financial Reserves in the Quarter 2 report.

In relation to the Efficiency Plan, Officers advised that a number of savings had been delivered, further details of which would be included in the Quarter 2 report. Members queried why only £85k of the proposed £1.572m savings set out in the Efficiency Plan for 2017/18 had been identified. Officers advised that it had not been possible to analyse all of the information in Quarter 1 and that full

details would therefore be set out in the Quarter 2 report. The issue of vacancies was raised and Officers undertook to include a schedule of vacant posts which had been deleted in the Quarter 2 report.

Issues highlighted by Grant Thornton, the Council's external auditors, as part of their Audit Findings Report for 2016/17, were raised. Officers stated that they accepted that there were issues in relation to the identification and monitoring of savings, and advised that they would be meeting with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council in October to look at their processes. Equally, it was noted from the Statement of Accounts briefing which had taken place the previous evening that progress had been made by the Council in both this and other areas, and that the Council was moving in the right direction.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the 2017/18 Capital Programme be increased by £209k to include the Section 106 projects detailed in Appendix 3 to the report; and**

RESOLVED that

- 2) **the current financial position for the quarter April to June 2017, as detailed in the report, be noted.**

47. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH JULY 2017

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4th July 2017.

It was noted that there were no recommendations to consider, with the recommendation at Minute No. 25 – Council Housing Allocations Policy – having been dealt with at the 11th July Executive.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4th July 2017 be received and noted.

48. MINUTES / REFERRALS - TO RECEIVE AND CONSIDER AND OUTSTANDING MINUTES OR REFERRALS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC.

There were no outstanding referrals to consider.

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 12 September 2017

49. CORPORATE PARENTING BOARD - VERBAL UPDATE FROM PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY AND REGULATORY SERVICES (IF APPLICABLE)

The Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services confirmed that there was no update to be given in relation to the Corporate Parenting Board.

50. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members received the regular update report on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels and similar bodies which reported via the Executive Committee.

Members referred to the Planning Advisory Panel ('PAP') meeting which had taken place earlier that evening, and advised that a further PAP meeting was due to take place shortly to discuss the broad outline plans for the District Centres. It was also reported that a meeting of the Redditch Partnership Economic Theme Group was due to take place shortly.

RESOLVED that

the report and updates provided be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.15 pm

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Chair

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

31st October 2017

HOMELESSNESS SHORT SHARP REVIEW – COVERING REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mark Shurmer, Portfolio holder for Housing
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Councillor Shurmer was interviewed as part of the review, though was not consulted on the group's final recommendations.
Relevant Director	Sue Hanley, Deputy Chief Executive
Ward(s) Affected	No specific ward relevance.
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides an overview of the findings of the Homelessness 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 RESOLVE that

- 1) **Redditch Borough Council should take part in any opportunity to deliver Housing First in properties in the Borough. This should include applying to participate in any Housing First pilot schemes operated by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA);**
(Recommendation 2 in the group's final report)
- 2) **the Leader of the Council should write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Rt. Hon. David Gauke MP, urging him to end the freeze on Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates; and**
(Recommendation 4 in the group's final report)
- 3) **The Council's Communications and Arts and Events teams should notify the CAB of any forthcoming events in Redditch which they could attend to promote their services and heighten awareness of their services in the Borough.**
(Recommendation 5 in the group's final report)

The Committee is asked to NOTE the following recommendation from the group to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that

- 4) **Swanswell should be invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to deliver a presentation outlining the services they provide to residents in Redditch.**
(Recommendation 3 in the group's final report)

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017

The Committee is asked to **NOTE** the following recommendation that was previously agreed by the Executive committee at a meeting on 12th July 2017 that

- 5) **The draft Redditch Borough Council Housing Allocations Policy be adopted by the Council.**
(Recommendation 1 in the group's final report)

3. KEY ISSUES**Background**

- 3.1 In March 2017 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a proposal from Councillor Joe Baker to undertake a review of homelessness in the Borough. The Committee agreed to launch this review after the elections in May and June 2017.
- 3.2 Following the appointment of Councillor Baker to the Executive Committee Councillor Wood-Ford was appointed to Chair the Task Group. Councillors Natalie Brookes, Anita Clayton, Pattie Hill and Antonia Pulsford were also appointed to this group.
- 3.3 Over the course of two-and-a-half months the group gathered evidence from a variety of sources including Council officers, representatives of Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations that provide support to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless and written documentation. The recommendations detailed in the group's final report are based on the evidence that was gathered.
- 3.4 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the group's report at a meeting on 7th September 2017 and endorsed all of the proposals.
- 3.5 The group's first recommendation, in respect of the Housing Allocations Policy, was proposed following pre-scrutiny of the draft policy in July 2017. As the Executive Committee has already approved this recommendation, and the policy was adopted by Council on 24th July 2017, Members are only asked to note this recommendation at this stage.
- 3.6 The group's third recommendation proposed that Swanswell, which provides support and advice to people struggling with substance abuse, should be invited to attend a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to deliver a presentation on the subject of the services they provide. As Overview and Scrutiny is a Member-led process and the Committee can determine the content of their work programme the Executive Committee is not required to make any decision in respect of this proposal. Instead Members are asked to note that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has endorsed this proposal and will be sending an invitation through to Swanswell in due course.

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017

- 3.7 When considering the group's report the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was very supportive of the group's fourth recommendation. To help encourage the government to remove the freeze on the LHA Members agreed to request that both the Leader of the Council and the MP for Redditch, Rachael Maclean, be asked to write to the Government about this matter.

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

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

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.10 This review has been a very intense exercise. A total of 14 meetings were held by the group in a period of two-and-a-half months. This occurred during one of the busiest holiday periods which made it difficult to arrange meetings that both Members and officers/external witnesses could attend. In this context the Overview and Scrutiny Committee has been asked to consider whether a Short Sharp Review is an appropriate exercise to launch during this period of the year in the future.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.8 The group has proposed numerous actions which are designed to enhance services for vulnerable people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

No specific risks have been identified.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Homelessness Short Sharp Review group's final report and appendices.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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CONTENTS

	Page Number
Chair's Foreword	2
Summary of Recommendations	3
Introduction/Background Information	5
Chapter 1: Housing Policy and Legislation	10
Chapter 2: Housing and Support Within the Community	14
Chapter 3: Welfare Changes and Financial Support	19
Chapter 4: Items to Note	26
Conclusion	28
Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference	29
Appendix 2 - Witnesses	31
Appendix 3 - Timeline of Activities	32
Appendix 4 - Affordable Housing Definitions	34

Membership of the Task Group

Councillors Nina Wood-Ford (Chair), Natalie Brookes, Anita Clayton, Pattie Hill and Antonia Pulsford.

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Completed

September 2017

Contact

Further copies of this report are available on request from:

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Email: scrutiny@redditchbc.gov.uk

FOREWORD

This review was a Short Sharp Review for Homeless people in Redditch. This had also come to light as rough sleeping in Redditch had become more visible locally.

There are many forms of homelessness; rough sleepers, sofa surfers, living in temporary accommodation, and people who, through no fault of their own, fall on hard times such as due to divorce, losing a job and problems within families and stepfamilies. Other causes can be alcohol and substance abuse and mental health problems.

While doing this review we were pleased to see how well Redditch Borough Council worked with the homeless and people who could potentially become homeless as well as with the outside organisations. We believe the young people of Redditch are well supported, though there is always more that can be done. However, there seems to be a gap for single people with no dependents aged over 35 years old who we really need to find better support for. I hope we have done this in our recommendations.

We have completed this review over July and August and have spoken to Council Departments, the Housing Portfolio Holder and independent organisations that help the homeless; St Basil's, Redditch Night Stop, the YMCA and the CAB. We also went to the Foodbank at St Stephen's Church in Redditch and the café held once a month in the Ecumenical Centre in Redditch run by Radiate Redditch.

I would like to thank those who gave up their time to speak to us for their feedback, knowledge and the information we received. I would also like to thank my co-workers on this review, Councillors Natalie Brooks, Anita Clayton, Pattie Hill, and Antonia Pulsford and of course Jess Bayley for her enthusiasm, hard work and writing; it never ceases to amaze us how quickly she can write, capture everything that is being said and produce all that paperwork and the final document.

We do not have all the answers or the funding to solve the housing problems in Redditch but we hope our recommendations are followed and that this will go some way in helping with those problems.



Councillor Nina Wood-Ford
Chair of the Homelessness Short Sharp Review

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**Recommendation 1**

The draft Redditch Borough Council Housing Allocations Policy be adopted by the Council.

Financial Implications: There are no financial implications for the Council as this recommendation was made and approved in July 2017.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications.

Recommendation 2

Redditch Borough Council should take part in any opportunity to deliver Housing First in properties in the Borough. This should include applying to participate in any Housing First pilot schemes operated by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).

Financial Implications: The group is proposing that the Council should only participate in Housing First schemes where funding is available from an external source, including grant funding.

Legal implications: No legal implications have been identified.

Recommendation 3

Swanswell should be invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to deliver a presentation outlining the services they provide to residents in Redditch.

Financial Implications: The costs of Officer time involved in arranging for a representative of Swanswell to attend a meeting of the Committee.

Legal implications: No legal implications have been identified.

Recommendation 4

The Leader of the Council should write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Rt. Hon. David Gauke MP, urging him to end the freeze on Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.

Financial Implications: The cost of time producing a letter.

Legal implications: No legal implications have been identified.

Recommendation 5

The Council's Communications and Arts and Events teams should notify the CAB of any forthcoming events in Redditch which they could attend to promote their services and heighten awareness of their services in the Borough.

Financial Implications: There would be the cost of Officer time notifying the CAB of events.

Legal implications: No legal implications have been identified.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND INFORMATIONIntroduction

In March 2017 the Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a proposal to undertake a scrutiny review of homelessness in the Borough. The review was suggested in a context in which the Council had launched a high profile campaign in the local community in respect of homelessness and this had received mixed coverage within the local press. Due to the vulnerable position of people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and the interest generated by the campaign in the local community the Overview and Scrutiny Committee concluded that the proposed review should be launched. The subject of homelessness was also considered to be appropriate for further investigation as it related to three of the Council's strategic purposes:

- Help me to find somewhere to live in my locality.
- Help me to live my life independently (including health and activity).
- Help me to be financially independent.

There was general consensus amongst members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee that as homelessness had previously been the subject of a detailed scrutiny exercise the investigation should be undertaken as a short sharp review and would not be launched until after the local Council elections in May 2017. Following the announcement of the general election for June 2017 the launch date was further postponed until the end of that month.

The short sharp review group was tasked with addressing the following during the course of the review:

- To review relevant Council policies and practices in respect of people experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless.
- To establish the current levels of homelessness in Redditch.
- To clarify the potential causes of homelessness.
- To analyse the potential impact of homelessness on a person's physical and mental health.
- To assess the existing support available to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- To scrutinise the potential impact of the new Homelessness Reduction Bill on homelessness levels.
- To review the findings of any scrutiny Task Groups that have investigated homelessness in other parts of the country and to identify any actions arising from these reports which could be replicated in Redditch.
- To investigate any opportunities for organisations to work in partnership to support to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless.
- To identify any additional action that the Council could take to address homelessness in the Borough.

During the review the group gathered evidence from a range of sources. Interviews were held with Council Officers in the Housing Options team, Private Sector Housing and Customer Access and Financial Support teams. The Council's Portfolio Holder for Housing, Councillor Mark Shurmer, attended a meeting of the group in July and provided useful evidence that helped to inform the group's findings. Representatives of external organisations also kindly provided evidence for the group's consideration during interviews. This included representatives from St Basils, Redditch Night Stop, the

YMCA, the CAB – Bromsgrove and Redditch, Radiate Redditch and the St Stephen's Church Food Bank.

Written documentation was similarly considered during the review. This included written evidence from the Council's planning department in relation to local planning policies and affordable housing. The group assessed the content of relevant publications produced by the Local Government Association (LGA) and Shelter. In particular, the group valued the contents of Shelter's briefing paper *Homelessness Reduction Bill: Second Reading (House of Commons) (2017)* and the LGA's *Housing our Homeless Households: A Summary Document (June 2017)*. Consideration was also given to the Centre for Social Justice's (CSJ's) findings in its *Housing First: Housing-led Solutions to Rough Sleeping and Homelessness* report (March 2017). In addition, Members reflected back on the findings of the Council's previous Homelessness Prevention Review, which was conducted by the former Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2006, as well as more recent findings detailed in the Preventing Homelessness in Bromsgrove Task Group's final report, completed by Bromsgrove District Councillors in 2016.

National Context

The review occurred at a time when nationally homelessness has become an increasingly topical issue. The CSJ has reported that rough sleeping has increased by over 130 per cent since 2010 with 4,000 people sleeping rough in England on any given night. Meanwhile the LGA estimated in *Housing our Homeless Households* that by 2017 there were 77,240 households in temporary accommodation in the country, including 120,540 children. The LGA also estimated that local and national government now spend £2 million a day on temporary accommodation, with net Council expenditure on temporary accommodation almost tripling from £50 million in 2009/10 to £146 million in 2015/16.

People can experience homelessness in different ways:

- Rough sleepers are the most visible form of homeless people.
- People can report to a Council when they have been given notice by their landlord that they will shortly be asked to leave a property. These people are at risk of becoming homeless.
- Some people will seek the support of a Council once their access to housing has reached crisis point. They may be housed in temporary accommodation, such as a hostel or bed and breakfast, whilst a long-term solution is sought to address their housing needs.
- The hidden homeless, are people living in overcrowded or unstable conditions, including 'sofa surfers', who access temporary accommodation provided by friends and family.

Local Picture:

The Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee's review of homelessness prevention in 2006 had a significant impact on the way in which housing services are provided to residents in the Borough. Members found that the 2006 review had its greatest impact in terms of bringing forward proposals which encouraged the Council to focus on preventing homelessness. During an interview with Officers from the Housing Options team Members were advised that the "...focus on preventing homelessness remains at the heart of delivering homeless services within the Borough. Since 2008 the structure within the Housing Options Team has developed to ensure officers have the skills,

knowledge and tools to enable them to prevent homelessness for all households regardless of whether they have a defined priority need within the provisions of homelessness legislation.”

Members were advised at a meeting on 4th July 2017 that since January 2008 a total of 2,170 homeless preventions had been recorded in Redditch, of which 711 were not priority need and 1,459 were in priority need. By comparison there had been 746 homelessness acceptances in Redditch in the same period. Members were provided with a breakdown of the homelessness acceptances in Redditch between 2011 and 2016 compared to those figures reported for other parts of Worcestershire:

	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016
Bromsgrove	70	77	75	58	85	
Malvern Hills	55	43	50	53	42	
Redditch	37	68	95	84	142	105
Worcester	203	202	201	176	144	
Wychavon	168	186	145	169	114	
Wyre Forest	126	162	152	114	165	

(The figures for the other local authority areas in 2016 were not available at the time of writing).

There are a number of schemes, both in the Borough and across the county, that are designed to enhance homelessness prevention. Some of these are delivered by Redditch Borough Council; other projects involve partnership working and / or service provision by external organisations. This includes the following initiatives:

- The Mortgage Rescue Scheme.
- The Money Advice Framework.
- Redditch Night Stop providing outreach support, mediation services and hosting families.
- The crash pad at St Basils, providing emergency accommodation to young people.
- The Worcestershire Strategic Housing Partnership Officer.
- The Young Persons Pathway Worker.
- The Move On Scheme.

Redditch Borough Council is the only local authority in Worcestershire to retain its Council housing stock. The Council currently has approximately 6,000 tenancies in a range of properties. Approximately 70 properties per annum are sold under right to buy rules to tenants in the Borough which impacts on the overall number of properties available in the Council's housing stock. To help address this the Executive Committee approved the Housing Growth Programme in January 2017 which is designed to increase new house building and to enable other measures that can be taken to replenish the housing stock, including buying back former Council houses, purchasing properties from developers using Section 106 funding and purchasing stock from other housing providers.

Members have been advised that within the current Council housing stock there are 20 properties available to use for temporary accommodation for those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This includes a mix of bedsits, one and two bedroom properties. On average residents stay in temporary accommodation for 31 days before

permanent housing can be obtained. There is also one dispersal unit which can accommodate two single people who have their own rooms but share communal facilities. The Council is shortly due to start working with Spring Housing to provide a three bedroom house under a licence agreement that will deliver supported housing to up to three single people.

Redditch Borough Council's planning policies require that developments consisting of 11 dwellings or more are expected to provide 30 per cent of their units for affordable housing on the site. Where the development will consist of less than 11 dwellings, and the combined total floor space exceeds 1000 sqm, a commuted sum can be sought which can be used to purchase additional affordable housing stock. Since the start of the period covered by the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No 4, from 1st April 2011, 383 affordable units have been provided in the Borough, equating to 37.6 per cent of all completions. The definitions for different types of affordable housing that apply in the Council's planning policies can be viewed at Appendix 4 to this report.

Bromsgrove review

During the course of the review Members scrutinised the findings detailed in a report produced by Bromsgrove District Council's Preventing Homelessness in Bromsgrove Task Group (September 2016). The choice had been made to consider the content of this document due to the recent completion of the exercise and to the fact that the local authority shares many services with Redditch Borough Council and there might be opportunities available to work together to address homelessness. Members were impressed by the content of the Bromsgrove scrutiny group's report, particularly in relation to recent welfare changes.

A key proposal in the Bromsgrove report called for Bromsgrove District Council to investigate the potential to introduce a local authority lettings scheme. Local authority lettings agencies have been established by Councils in other parts of the country, such as Worcester City Council's City Life Lettings and Birmingham City Council's Let to Birmingham scheme. The model used for these schemes varies but they can provide assurances to landlords that rent will be paid on a monthly basis for the duration of the tenancy and that tenancy will be managed for a competitive fee by the Council. The group briefly considered the possibility of a similar scheme being introduced in Redditch. However, Members concluded that such a scheme would not be suitable for Redditch because the housing market in the Borough is different to that in Bromsgrove and the demographics of the two districts differ, with residents having different needs. Members also had concerns that a local authority lettings scheme might struggle to attract private sector landlords to participate in the scheme due to the competitive nature of the local private rented sector market in the Borough.

Homelessness campaign

During the course of the review Members scrutinised the approach that had been adopted by the Council to a campaign in respect of homelessness, which took place in March 2017. The campaign had been launched in a context in which a number of people had been sleeping rough in Redditch town centre. The aim of the campaign had been to highlight the work that the local authority was already undertaking to support homeless people and constructive action that could be taken by concerned residents to help those who are homeless. Unfortunately initial press coverage of this campaign had been quite critical of the local authority. Work was undertaken by Officers to provide

context and to clarify the purposes of the campaign and more positive feedback was received by the Council on social media by the end of the month.

A major misconception that arose in the initial reaction to the campaign was the perception that the Council was not helping those who were sleeping rough and was encouraging residents to also avoid providing help. Members have learned during the course of the review that in fact all of those sleeping rough had either been offered emergency accommodation by the Council which they had not chosen to take up or in some cases already had access to accommodation which they were not choosing to use. The group agrees that this should be highlighted in this report.

Members have been advised that Officers are aiming to relaunch the campaign later in the year in order to help raise awareness of constructive ways in which people can help those who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The group are in agreement that this campaign should be undertaken and they are fully supportive of the efforts that are being made by Officers to address this.

CHAPTER 1: HOUSING POLICY AND LEGISLATION

Recommendation 1	The draft Redditch Borough Council Housing Allocations Policy be adopted by the Council.
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications for the Council as this recommendation was made and approved in July 2017.
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications.

Housing Allocations Policy

At a meeting of the group on 4th July 2017 Members pre-scrutinised a draft copy of the Council's new Housing Allocations Policy. Prior to this date the policy had last been updated in 2012 and as there had been a number of legislative changes in the following five year period Officers had concluded that the policy needed to be reviewed. The review took into account both the legislative changes and the lessons that had been learned by officers when applying systems thinking principles to various trials in Housing Services during that period.

A number of changes were made to the policy which Members concurred would enhance its effectiveness including the following:

- The policy had been updated to reflect the Council's current approach to delivering services in line with the local authority's strategic purposes.
- The updated policy provided greater clarity in respect of different housing bands within the Council's Choice Based Lettings system. Members agreed that this would help residents to better understand the process.
- Further clarification was also provided in the policy in relation to the points system which informs Choice Based lettings, which again Members agreed would help residents to understand the system.
- The changes to the policy mean that applicants in the Gold Band will only receive one offer of accommodation from the Council. In the past applicants could receive up to two offers which could elongate the process and make it more difficult to plan housing placements for other residents on the Council's housing list.
- The updates included the incorporation of Direct Matching into Council policy. This involves Officers discussing the resident's needs with them and then directly matching that person to a suitable property in an appropriate neighborhood. Members were advised that this approach, during a trial undertaken by the Council, had resulted in an 80 per cent reduction in the number of residents refusing the properties that they had been offered by the local authority.

The group was impressed by the proposed changes and therefore recommended that the updated policy should be adopted by the Council. The group's recommendation was endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at a meeting on 4th July and subsequently received the support of the Executive Committee on 11th July. The Council subsequently formally adopted this updated version of the Housing Allocations Policy on 24th July 2017. As such this recommendation has already been approved and no further decision is required on the recommendation at this stage, though information

has been included in this report about the proposal to ensure that a complete record of the group's activities is provided.

Current Legal Context

As the local housing authority Redditch Borough Council has a duty, under the Housing (Homeless Persons) Act 1977 to secure permanent accommodation for people who are unintentionally homeless and considered to be in priority need. Some of these duties were subsequently amended in the Housing Act 1996. In the latter piece of legislation a person is considered to be homeless if they have no access to accommodation which it would be reasonable for them to continue to occupy, if they cannot gain access to their property or if it is a moveable structure and they have nowhere to place it. Currently a person is considered to be threatened with homelessness if they are likely to become homeless within the next 28 days.

There are a number of categories of priority need for housing, as detailed in Section 189 of the Housing Act 1996 and the Homelessness (Priority Need for Accommodation) (England) Order 2002:

- A pregnant woman or a person who resides with a pregnant woman or might reasonably be expected to reside with a pregnant woman.
- A person with whom dependent children reside or might reasonably be expected to reside.
- A person aged 16 or 17 who is not a relevant child for the purposes of Section 23 (a) of the Children Act 1979.
- A person, other than a relevant student, who is aged under 21 but over 16 and whilst still under 18 was, but is no longer, looked after, accommodated or fostered.
- A person who is vulnerable as a result of old age, mental illness, physical disability or other special reason.
- A person who has reached the age of 21 who is vulnerable as a result of being looked after, accommodated or fostered. (Not including a relevant student.)
- A person who is vulnerable as a result of having been a member of Her Majesty's regular naval or military air forces.
- A person who is vulnerable as a result of serving a custodial sentence, having being convicted for contempt of court or having been remanded in custody.
- A person who is homeless or threatened with homelessness as a result of an emergency such as a flood or a fire.
- A person who is vulnerable for any other special reason or anyone who lives with them.

(This list has been reproduced from the Preventing Homelessness in Bromsgrove Task Group's final report, September 2017).

Sections 191(1) and 196(1) of The Housing Act 1996 provide legal definitions of those who are considered to be homeless intentionally or threatened with homelessness intentionally. These are that:

- the person deliberately does or fails to do anything in consequence of which the person ceases to occupy accommodation (or the likely result of which is that the person will be forced to leave accommodation);
- the accommodation is available for the person's occupation; and
- it would have been reasonable for the person to continue to occupy the accommodation.

Local authorities cannot assume that a person is intentionally homeless. Instead the local housing authority must be satisfied of the intentionality in accordance with the legislation.

Homelessness Reduction Act 2017

During the course of the review Members investigated the Homelessness Reduction Bill, in line with one of the key objectives for the exercise. Members learned that this bill received royal assent in April 2017, becoming the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017. At the time of writing no date had been set for the legislation to come into force, though Members have been advised that this is likely to occur in 2018.

Formal guidance for local authorities in relation to the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 had not been published at the time of writing. However, various organisations, including Shelter, have reviewed the legislation and highlighted a number of new duties and requirements in this legislation which have implications for local housing authorities, including Redditch Borough Council. This includes the following:

- Extending the period in which an applicant is considered to be threatened with homelessness. The Council will be required to accept an applicant as being threatened with homelessness if this might occur in the next 56 days, rather than the 28 days that apply at present.
- There will be a new duty for Councils to assess the applicant's claim if they are homeless or threatened with homelessness and to agree with the applicant a personalised plan.
- A new prevention duty will be placed on local authorities to ensure that suitable accommodation does not cease to be available to eligible applicants threatened with homelessness. This duty applies regardless of whether the individual is considered to be in priority housing need.
- A new relief duty will be placed on local authorities to help applicants secure accommodation, in cases where the Council believes the individual is homeless and eligible for assistance. This duty applies regardless of whether the individual is considered to be in priority need or may be intentionally homeless.
- According to Shelter Councils can provide notice to applicants considered to have "*...deliberately and unreasonably refused to cooperate with the above duties or to take any step set out in the personalised plan (clause 7).*"
- For applicants in priority need Councils will now have a duty to find a suitable tenancy lasting six months rather than the 12 month minimum tenancy that is currently required.
- Other agencies will have a duty to notify Councils in cases where they become aware of people who are at risk of becoming homeless. This duty will apply both to public sector organisations and to organisations in the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS).

The key emphasis in the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 is on local authorities and other partners taking more action to prevent homelessness from occurring in the first place. The group has concluded that, based on the action that has already been taken by the local authority to focus on homelessness prevention, Redditch Borough Council should be well placed to respond to these new legislative requirements. However, Members have been advised that the new legislative requirements could be quite bureaucratic and may have significant resource implications for local authorities. This concern appears to be shared by Shelter which has commented on the potential

resource implications for local authorities, particularly for those Councils facing significant demand for support addressing homelessness:

“...we consider it inevitable that, to be able to help people under the new duties, councils with significant levels of existing homelessness will require additional resources and, more importantly, an adequate supply of accessible, affordable and suitable homes in the social or private rented sectors.” (Shelter, 2017).

The group would suggest that the impact of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017 on the work of the Council's housing teams should be monitored so that any challenges in relation to resources will be identified at an early stage and can be addressed if necessary.

CHAPTER 2: HOUSING AND SUPPORT WITHIN THE COMMUNITY

Recommendation 2	Redditch Borough Council should take part in any opportunity to deliver Housing First in properties in the Borough. This should include applying to participate in any Housing First pilot schemes operated by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA).
Financial Implications	The group is proposing that the Council should only participate in Housing First schemes where funding is available from an external source, including grant funding.
Legal Implications	No legal implications have been identified.

Private Sector Housing

Rents in the Council's housing stock are the lowest in the Borough and Council tenancies offer the greatest security in terms of tenancy. However, the Council house supply cannot meet the total demand in the Borough for rented properties. People considered to be in a priority band for housing are therefore currently the most likely to secure a Council property, in line with the Council's Housing Allocations Policy. Whilst there are other registered social housing providers in the Borough it is estimated that they can only provide 1,600 tenancies. Inevitably this means that there is significant demand for private sector housing in the Borough amongst residents who cannot afford to purchase their own properties.

The group has been advised that there are approximately 4,000 private rented properties occupied in Redditch. Nationally renting has flourished in recent years as house buying has become more difficult for many households. Members have been advised that in Redditch occupancy in the private rented sector increased from 4.3 per cent in 2001 to 11.7 per cent in 2011 whilst home ownership declined by 5 per cent in the same period.

The majority of private sector landlords in Redditch own one or two properties. Members have been advised that the rents charged for local properties in the private rented sector have been increasing in recent years, with the level of rent affected by demand and supply, location and the quality of the property. Landlords do have significant responsibilities, particularly if they own Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs). In many cases landlords will also have mortgages and other expenses associated with their properties which they need to cover to ensure that their participation in the private rented sector remains a financially viable option. Often the Council will become involved in helping tenants living in the private rented sector where problems are reported by tenants in relation to the condition of a property, such as damp problems, which can lead to property inspections by Council staff. However, many other properties are maintained in good condition by both the landlords and tenants.

The group was advised during the course of the review that the duration of tenancies within the private rented sector in Redditch can vary. Members were interested to learn that of 58 cases between January and December 2014 where a tenancy in the private

rented sector had come to an end 22 were issued with a notice to leave within two years of moving into the property whilst 33 cases were issued with a notice to leave after they had been living in a private rented property for over two years. A significant number of such notices, 25 out of 58, were received by tenants living in former Council house properties. Residents who have been asked to leave in these circumstances often then turn to the Council for help securing suitable accommodation.

During the course of the review Members were advised by a number of expert witnesses in the VCS that increasingly private sector landlords are reluctant to accept tenants in receipt of housing benefits. The introduction of Universal Credit has led to changes in the way that housing benefits are provided to recipients; this benefit is now paid directly to the applicant, unless they can demonstrate that they are vulnerable in some way, whereas previously it was paid directly to the landlord. It should be noted that a similar problem was reported by Bromsgrove Members in their review of homelessness in 2016 indicating that this is not a problem that is confined to Redditch. In addition, the CSJ has reported, in their review of Housing First, that “...recent research found that 82 per cent of private landlords were unwilling to let to someone who was homeless.” (CSJ, 2017, p 24). As such people who are already homeless, though not necessarily considered to be in priority need for housing, may struggle to secure suitable accommodation in the private rented sector.

Demographics and Accommodation

During the course of the review Members interviewed representatives of a number of organisations that provide support and accommodation to young people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. Members were really impressed by the services that are provided by St Basils, the YMCA and Redditch Night Stop. Young people might require housing support where there has been an irreversible family breakdown, where the young person has complex needs or in cases where the young person is leaving care. Members were advised that often young people did not have the life skills needed to manage a tenancy and their personal finances. St Basils and the YMCA both provide support to young people to enable them to develop these life skills. Increasingly all of these organisations have been providing support to young people with highly complex needs in a context in which the funding available to VCS organisations is squeezed. The group would like to thank these organisations for the excellent support services that they provide to young people who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

One of the gaps in local service provision that was consistently raised with Members was the availability of appropriate accommodation to older adults with complex needs. Many of the VCS groups reported that adults not eligible to receive accommodation with St Basils, Redditch Night Stop or the YMCA could struggle to secure suitable accommodation if they were not considered to be in priority need for housing under existing housing legislation.

The CSJ reported in 2017 that for some people their complex needs can contribute to their homelessness, whilst for others their difficulties will emerge as a result of becoming homeless. Complex needs can include substance abuse issues, mental ill health, physical health problems, a history of offending and difficulties encountered whilst in care. In the most challenging cases people may have a range of problems. According to a review of homelessness by Homeless Link, reported by the CSJ, “...33 per cent of people using homeless accommodation projects have multiple or complex needs, 31 per cent have a drug problem, 23 per cent have a problem with alcohol, 6 per cent have a learning difficulty and 32 per cent have a mental health problem.” (CSJ, 2017, p 26).

People with these complex needs can struggle to access appropriate accommodation. Members were advised during the review that housing associations and landlords may be reluctant to provide accommodation to people with these needs. This appears to be a challenge nationally as the CSJ has noted that “... 46 per cent of homelessness accommodation projects reported refusing a client access to services because their needs were too complex and 73 per cent said they had turned people away because their needs were too high.” (CSJ, 2017, p 32). Like other local authorities Redditch Borough Council can struggle to find accommodation for people in this position.

The Council does make referrals to hostels in both Birmingham and Worcester. These hostels can provide the more specialist support that may be needed by individuals struggling with drug and alcohol problems. Consideration had been given by the group to the potential for a hostel to be introduced in the Borough to house homeless people and those at risk of becoming homeless who have the most complex needs. Members had been advised by representatives of the VCS that some local residents with complex needs are reluctant to leave the Borough, which is often where their entire social and support networks are located, and therefore would prefer to sleep rough. However, a number of expert witnesses consulted by the group also expressed concerns that hostel accommodation is not always suitable for people with complex needs, particularly for those who may have experienced abuse at an earlier age who might not feel comfortable residing in shared accommodation. The group was also mindful of the fact that it could be difficult to identify a suitable property to convert for use as a hostel, which could require significant expenditure. Based on all of this evidence on balance the group concluded that it would not be appropriate to propose that a hostel be introduced in the Borough.

Housing First

Housing First was originally developed in New York in the 1990s to help those with chronic homelessness problems and mental ill health to access suitable accommodation. There are a number of key features underpinning Housing First:

- The most vulnerable people with complex needs, who are either homeless or at risk of becoming homeless, participate in Housing First.
- Flexible support is provided to the tenant for as long as they need it, which helps to reassure landlords participating in the scheme.
- Tenants are not required to have tackled any substance abuse problems before they enter their tenancies; this can be addressed over time whilst they are living in their accommodation by staff involved in the Housing First scheme.

Housing First has been piloted in other parts of Britain. To date these projects have reported positive outcomes. According to the CSJ’s report the Fulfilling Lives Islington and Camden Housing First project had enabled 100 per cent of tenants with complex needs to sustain their tenancies whilst the Threshold Housing First project in Greater Manchester had achieved up to 80 per cent of sustained tenancies. (CSJ, 2017, pp 42 – 43).

Members learned during the review that the subject of Housing First was previously considered by the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group in 2016/17. Towards the end of their review this earlier scrutiny group considered a report published by the West Midlands Combined Authority’s (WMCA’s) Mental Health Commission, entitled *Thrive West Midlands: An Action Plan to Drive Better Mental Health and Wellbeing in the West Midlands* (January 2017). This outlined suggested actions that

could be taken by local authorities, like Redditch Borough Council, that had signed up to the WMCA's Mental Health Concordat. Housing First was one of the suggested actions detailed in this plan. The Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group had concluded that Housing First could provide significant support to people experiencing mental ill health but further investigation of the potential implications for the Council was required. This proposal was approved by the Executive Committee in April 2017.

In line with standing practice the Overview and Scrutiny Committee subsequently received a monitoring update in respect of this proposal at a meeting of the Committee on 1st June 2017. As the meeting was taking place relatively soon after the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group had concluded their investigations it would not have been realistic to expect significant progress by that stage. However, Officers did report that "...*With regard to Housing First the WMCA have commissioned external support to design their approach and they are considering Redditch as a prospective site for the proof of concept pilot.*" The Homelessness Short Sharp Review group would urge the Executive Committee to participate in this pilot should the opportunity to arise in order to assist those residents in Redditch with the most complex needs.

Redditch would be a good location in which to launch such a pilot scheme. The geographical boundaries of the Borough are relatively small which would help staff to arrange to meet regularly with clients without having to spend significant time travelling between appointments. Redditch is also unusual inasmuch as the Council retains its own housing stock, unlike the majority of local authorities in the country. A small number of these properties could be used as part of the pilot to help test the viability of Housing First in different contexts.

However, it should be noted that the group is suggesting that the Council should only participate in this pilot scheme if additional finances are made available to the Council to enable participation. There are costs associated with delivering Housing First schemes. The greatest costs are associated with funding the case workers who provide support to tenants housed through the scheme. According to a review of Housing First undertaken by the University of York "...*the lowest cost Housing First services were £26 an hour, the mid-range service £34 an hour and the most expensive service £40 an hour*" (CSJ, 2017, p 49). This review also found that on average case workers provided clients with three hours of support per week, equating to £5,304 per client per year (based on mid-range costs). The group recognises that in the current challenging economic circumstances for local government the Council does not have the financial resources to pay for this service. Financial support would therefore need to be provided by the WMCA, or another funding provider, to enable the Council to participate in this pilot.

Recommendation 3	Swanswell should be invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to deliver a presentation outlining the services they provide to residents in Redditch.
Financial Implications	The costs of Officer time involved in arranging for a representative of Swanswell to attend a meeting of the Committee.
Legal Implications	No legal implications have been identified.

The group recognises that, due to potential financial barriers, it may not prove possible to deliver a Housing First scheme in Redditch and even if Housing First is introduced it is likely that only a small number of the most complex cases will receive support initially. As such the support services provided to people struggling to address alcohol or drug addiction remains crucial.

Members had been keen to investigate existing substance abuse programmes during the review. The group was therefore disappointed that they did not have an opportunity to arrange to interview representatives of Swanswell within the short time available for their investigations. Members have been advised that the Council's Housing Options and Locality teams do refer residents, including Council tenants, to Swanswell for support to address their addictions. Given the vulnerability of their clients, and the need for Members to be able to sign post residents to appropriate support services, the group believes that it would be helpful for Members to access further information about the services Swanswell delivers. Members are therefore proposing that representatives of Swanswell should be invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in due course to deliver a presentation on the subject of the services the organisation provides. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee can make a decision in respect of this proposal as the Committee determines the content of the scrutiny work programme.

CHAPTER 3: WELFARE CHANGES AND FINANCIAL SUPPORT

Recommendation 4	The Leader of the Council should write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Rt. Hon. David Gauke MP, urging him to end the freeze on Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rates.
Financial Implications	The cost of time producing a letter.
Legal Implications	No legal implications have been identified.

Recent Welfare Changes

During the course of the review Members were keen to clarify the impact that recent welfare changes may have had on Redditch residents and their risks of becoming homeless. Officers were interviewed about recent welfare changes and were invited to provide information about the number of residents living in Redditch who had been affected by these changes. Members were impressed by the use of a table structure in Preventing Homelessness in Bromsgrove Task Group's final report and chose to emulate this style to present similar data for Redditch. (The details provided were accurate as of July 2017).

Type of Change	Implementation Stage	Impact Locally
Benefit Cap – the cap applies to the total amount that people in a household can receive from a number of benefits combined. The level of the cap is: £500 per week for couples with or without children. £500 per week for single parents who have children living with them. £350 per week for single adults who do not have children living with them.	Already implemented. The cap reduced from £26,000 to £20,000 per annum outside London as of April 2016.	At the end of June 2017 there were 75 cases being capped. The Authority was informed to expect up to 199 families could be affected within the Redditch area.
Spare Room Subsidy –this is the calculation of housing benefit payments based on the number of people in the household and the size of the accommodation. The spare room subsidy applies to all working age tenants renting from a local authority, housing association or other registered social landlord. It brings housing benefits payable to tenants of social housing in line with private tenants. (Those with one spare bedroom lose 14% of their eligible rent and those with two or more spare bedrooms lose 25% of their eligible rent.)	Implemented from April 2013.	At the end of June 2017 there were 324 cases in Redditch affected by the Spare Room Subsidy. 263 cases affected by the 14% rate and 61 by the 25% rate.

<p>Introduction of Local Council Tax Support Scheme – Council Tax benefits ended in March 2013 and local authorities were required to introduce a Council Tax Support Scheme.</p>	<p>Redditch Borough Council has a Council Tax Support scheme which allows for eligible residents to apply for up to 80 per cent support.</p>	<p>There have been 4,133 Working Age Council Tax Support Scheme cases. It is not now possible to know how many have been impacted by the changes.</p>
<p>Universal Credit – this currently applies to single job seekers with no child dependents making a new claim in Redditch.</p>	<p>This has already been implemented for single job seekers and is due to be rolled out to further categories of claimants in Redditch in due course.</p>	<p>As Universal Credit is provided by the Department for Work and Pensions (DWP) the Council does not have access to this data. However, it can be confirmed that 135 customers in receipt of Housing Benefits from the Council are also in receipt of universal credit.</p>
<p>Temporary absences from Great Britain Rules for Housing Benefits – Residents who spend four or more weeks out of the country are unable to claim housing benefits.</p>	<p>This requirement was implemented in July 2016.</p>	<p>No measure of the impact is available, though Members have been advised that the authority is reliant on people reporting cases to the Council.</p>
<p>Removing entitlement for Housing Benefit payments to Young People aged 18-21 - Certain categories of young people will be exempt, including vulnerable young people, those who cannot return home to live with their parents, young people who are parents who have children who live with them and young people who have been in work for six months or more prior to making a claim.</p>	<p>The entitlement to the housing benefit element of Universal Credit is due to be withdrawn for this age group with effect from October 2017.</p>	<p>As Redditch was not due to become Fully Digital until October 2017 it was not possible to obtain figures in response to this at the time of writing.</p>
<p>Reduction in social rents – under the welfare reform and work bill 2015, all social rents were due to reduce by 1% for the 4 financial years in the period 2016/17 to 2019/20.</p>	<p>This was due to be implemented from April 2016 onwards.</p>	<p>Members have been advised that this has impacted on the Council's revenue from rents and has implications for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA).</p>
<p>Restrictions on housing benefits for the under 35s – Housing benefit claimants aged under 35 with no dependents living in the private rented sector are only eligible to claim housing benefits that cover the costs of a room in shared accommodation.</p>	<p>This rule has already been introduced for claimants in private rented accommodation. The restrictions have not yet come into force in respect of social housing tenants.</p>	<p>No figures could be provided for the number of residents affected by this restriction. However, Members have been advised that there are currently 72 licensable Houses in Multiple Occupation (HMOs) and 145 non-licensable HMOs in Redditch.</p>
<p>Cap of Housing Benefit in the social rented sector - new tenancies arranged as of 1st April 2016 will only receive rent capped at the Local Housing Allowance (LHA) rate.</p>	<p>This is due to take effect from 2018 but will apply to those whose tenancies took effect from April 2016 (or from 1st April 2017 if they are in supported housing).</p>	<p>No measure of the impact is available as yet.</p>

Financial Support

In Redditch some financial support is available to residents who are struggling to manage their finances and / or to cover housing costs. In the first place there is a Discretionary Housing Payment (DHP) budget which is provided to local authorities by the Government in an annual grant to help provide financial assistance to claimants in receipt of housing benefits who are struggling with their housing costs. In 2016/17 221 Redditch residents received financial support using funds from the DHP budget, with 2.3 per cent of residents making repeat requests for this support. In 2017/18 the Council's DHP budget is £153,589.

The local authority has a Council Tax Support Scheme. This scheme works on the premise that every resident will be capable of paying at least 20 per cent of their Council Tax. However, the Council also has a Hardship Fund Policy which is designed to protect vulnerable people who may be struggling to make Council Tax payments. The budget for this fund is relatively small, at £25,000 per annum. Awards made from the Hardship Fund are discretionary and customers do not have a statutory right to an award. The Council would expect people seeking help with Council Tax payments to work constructively with the authority to discuss their financial issues. Where residents do engage with the Council in this manner payments can be suspended until the individual's financial issues have been discussed and plans developed.

Officers have been working in a trial capacity in a Financial Inclusion Team (FIT) in recent months. This team can provide personal budgeting advice to individuals who are struggling with their finances. The workload and type of cases that the FIT team works on varies in complexity and number. The group concluded that the work of the FIT Officers was really important and they would be keen to see this approach to supporting residents continuing when the trial ends.

Residents experiencing financial difficulties can also apply for financial support from the Council's Essential Living Fund (ELF). The fund is relatively small, with a total annual budget of £30,000 per annum, and there is no statutory right for residents to receive assistance from the fund. The Council's Discretionary Essential Living Support Scheme requires that assistance provided to residents from this fund is distributed in the form of goods or vouchers and not as cash. Applications for assistance under this scheme have to be made in person and are contingent on the individual(s) meeting with Council Officers to discuss their financial difficulties further.

Local Housing Allowance (LHA)

Tenants living in properties in the private rented sector can receive financial assistance to help cover their rents. The LHA can be provided to those in receipt of benefits or on low incomes who are struggling to pay their rent. This financial assistance is provided in the form of the LHA, which is set by the Valuation Office and is based upon the 30th percentile of local rented accommodation, meaning that 70 per cent of local rents will always cost more than the LHA.

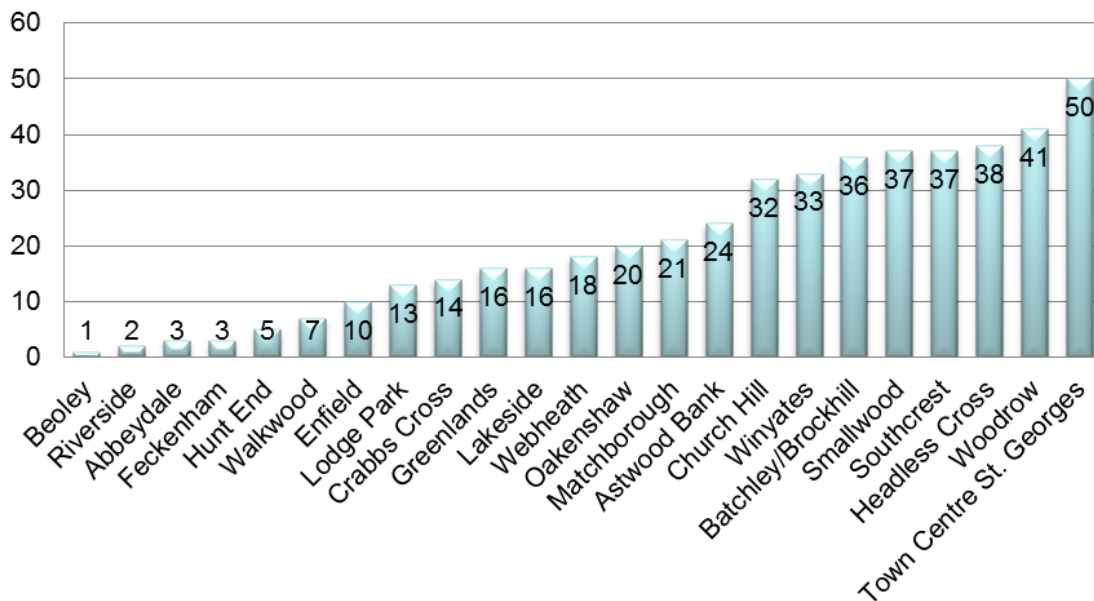
There is a maximum limit on the amount that can be claimed in the LHA for properties of different sizes. The table below sets out the levels that the LHA is currently set at:

Type of accommodation	Local Housing Allowance
Shared accommodation	£61.45
1 bed	£92.05
2 bed	£117.70
3 bed	£133.32
4 bed	£176.56

Members have been advised that in 2014 in Redditch there were 1,070 applicants from the private rented sector in receipt of the LHA, representing approximately 25 per cent of the sector. (Members were advised that 2014 was the latest period in which complete data covering this issue could be provided, though Officers interviewed by the group suggested that the numbers had probably risen since this date). In total 477 applicants received the full LHA though also had to top up their rent every month by other means. A total of 145 cases had to top up their rent by between 0 and £10, 143 cases had to top up their rent by between £10 and £20, 92 cases had to top up their rent by between £20 and £30, and 95 cases had to top up their rent by more than £30.

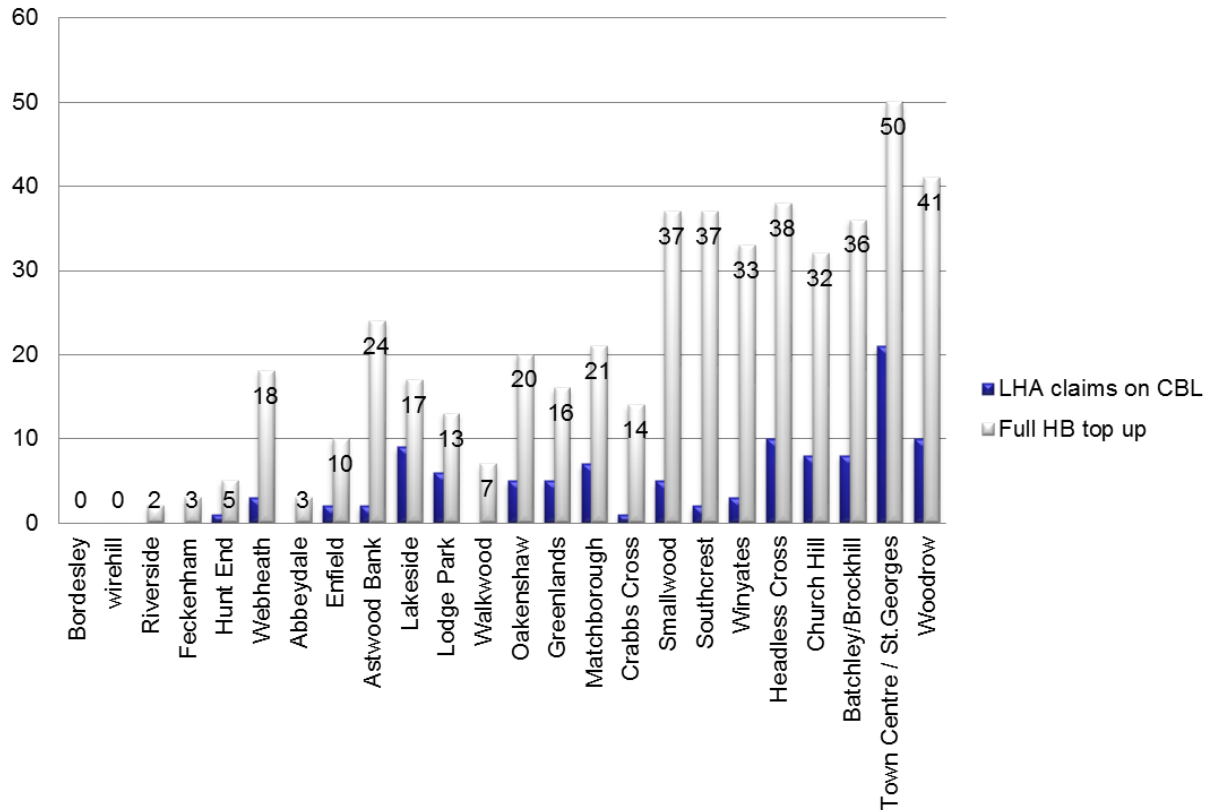
The group was advised that many of the households that were having to top up their rent were concentrated in particular areas of the Borough. A geographical breakdown can be observed in the table below (again the figures provided relate to circumstances as of 2014).

Full LHA cases top up area



The group had some concerns about the vulnerability of tenants in this position and about the potential for these people to be placed at risk of becoming homeless if they were to fall into rental arrears. Members were also concerned to learn that in many cases those in receipt of the LHA and who were having to top up their rent were not necessarily registered with the Council's Choice Based Lettings system, so might struggle to access suitable alternative accommodation in a timely manner should they find the need to leave their existing accommodation for financial reasons. The following

table highlights the numbers of applicants in receipt of LHA who top up their rent who are also registered with the Choice Based Lettings system.



Based on this data Members concluded that the LHA, as it currently operates, is not sufficient to support many vulnerable families and individuals at risk of becoming homeless who live in Redditch.

Concerns about the affordability of properties for people on low incomes or in receipt of benefits have been raised in publications produced by both the LGA and Shelter. In a recent publication, *Homelessness Projections: Core Homelessness in Great Britain*, Shelter reported that poverty is the greatest driver of homelessness in the country. Following on from this in *Housing our Homeless Households: A Summary Document*, the LGA highlighted the need for action to be taken to address the affordability of properties:

“Ultimately the long-term affordability of accommodation for low income households is a fundamental challenge that must be addressed at a national level in order to reduce homelessness and a widening gap between areas where households on low incomes can and cannot afford to live. Whilst activity by Councils may make a real difference it can only help up to a point if the fundamental position continues to worsen. The problems faced in accommodating homeless households have reached a point where a concerted effort by both national and local government is needed if a serious impact is to be made.” (LGA, page 4).

To help address this both Shelter and the LGA have called for the current freeze on the LHA, which restricts the amount that can be paid to applicants, to end. Shelter has

highlighted that taking this action will be crucial to address homelessness levels in the country moving forward:

“If the current freeze on Local Housing Allowance rates continues, by 2020 families in four-fifths of the country could face a gap between the support they need to pay their rent and the maximum support they are entitled to. Some 330,000 working families are likely to be affected. In order to help the many private tenants who could be at risk of homelessness because of the freeze, the Government must review Local Housing Allowance rates and ensure that housing benefits reflect actual housing costs”. (Shelter, Homelessness Reduction Bill: Second Reading (House of Commons), 2017).

Based on local data shared with the group, as detailed in this report, Members agree with the conclusions reached by both the LGA and Shelter. Furthermore, from 2018 the LHA is due to apply to residents living in the social rented sector who have been in their tenancy since April 2016 (or since April 2017 if they are living in supported accommodation). The group concluded that this provides added urgency for the level of the LHA to be addressed as this development could lead to a greater proportion of residents struggling to pay their rent and potentially falling into rent arrears. To address this the group is calling on the Leader of the Council to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Rt. Hon. David Gauke MP, to urge him to end the freeze on LHA rates.

Recommendation 5	The Council’s Communications and Arts and Events teams should notify the CAB of any forthcoming events in Redditch which they could attend to promote their services and heighten awareness of their services in the Borough.
Financial Implications	There would be the cost of Officer time notifying the CAB of events.
Legal Implications	No legal implications have been identified.

CAB – Bromsgrove and Redditch

The CAB – Bromsgrove and Redditch provides essential advice services to local residents in relation to a number of key areas. The CAB currently has a contract with Redditch Borough Council to provide money and debt advice to local residents. The Council has also provided office accommodation to the CAB at Redditch Town Hall. This ensures that Redditch residents can access financial management and debt advice from the CAB at a central location in the town centre.

During the course of the review Members interviewed representatives of the CAB – Bromsgrove and Redditch and learned about the hard work that the organisation undertakes to support local residents. This includes providing face-to-face support and advice over the phone, using the CAB’s Adviceline system. Members have been advised that in 2016/17 a total of 7,989 Redditch residents were provided with face-to-face support by the CAB and 1,169 with support via Adviceline. The CAB can also provide residents with assistance in relation to court proceedings for matters such as

rent arrears and appealing against decisions in respect of Personal Independent Payments (PIPs) (for people with long-term medical conditions and disabilities). The group was impressed to learn that where the CAB has provided assistance in contesting PIP judgements 70 per cent of decisions had been overturned in favour of the client at tribunal.

However, despite the excellent work of the CAB Members had concerns that there was limited awareness amongst some residents and organisations in the local community of the service provided in Redditch. During the course of ward work undertaken by some Members of the group anecdotal reports were received suggesting that some residents and organisations were not aware that the CAB could be accessed at the Town Hall. Whilst this cannot be demonstrated using data obtained by the group Members agreed that this needed to be highlighted in their report and action should be taken to raise the profile of the CAB's services in the Borough.

During the group's interview with representatives of the CAB – Bromsgrove and Redditch it was acknowledged that further action could be taken to promote the availability of the organisation's services in Redditch. In particular Members feel that the participation of the CAB in local events and festivities would help to raise the profile of the organisation in the Borough. For example, the CAB could have a stand alongside other community groups at the annual Morton Stanley Festival. To ensure that the CAB is aware of all such opportunities the group is recommending that the Council's Communications and Art and Events Teams should notify CAB staff of any forthcoming events and activities so that staff in the organisation can take advantage of these opportunities to promote their services.

CHAPTER 4: ITEMS TO NOTE

There were a number of issues which Members wished to highlight in the report, though they did not form the basis of any recommendations.

a) Housing Options

During the course of the review Members received consistently positive feedback about the work of the Council's Housing Options team from VCS organisations. This positive feedback, which was provided verbally and without prompting, praised the work of Housing Options Officers to help people who were homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. A number of VCS organisations also compared Redditch Borough Council's Housing Options team favourably to other Housing Options team in the country, with Members being advised that Redditch Officers took a more compassionate approach to assisting customers and assessing their needs. The group was keen to highlight this positive feedback in their report to ensure that this existing good practice and the Officers involved receive the recognition they deserve.

b) Food Banks and Radiate Redditch Community Cafe

Members did visit a food bank, located at St Stephen's Church, during the course of the review. The group was impressed by the hard work undertaken by the organisers of the food bank to provide support to clients. In particular, Members recognised the value of the partnership working that enabled the food bank, and other organisations referring people to the food banks, to limit referrals to a maximum of three wherever possible. This approach should deter reliance on food banks to feed individuals and families whilst providing an opportunity for agencies to work with clients to identify and address their needs. The group would urge the Council to continue to provide support to local food banks by providing a location for food and other essential goods to be donated.

The group also visited the Radiate Redditch Community Café, which is held on the second Monday of the month at the Ecumenical Centre. The organisers of the café provide clients with an opportunity to eat a nutritious meal. Equally as important is the opportunity that the café provides for people to socialise, helping to build community cohesion and a sense of belonging. In recent years Radiate Redditch has successfully provided a Christmas meal to people who are homeless over the festive period. The group would like to commend Radiate Redditch and would urge other elected Members to learn more about their initiative.

c) Personal, Social, Health and Economic (PSHE) Lessons

During the course of the review Members were advised that many people became homeless, or were at risk of becoming homeless, once they started to struggle with their finances. In some cases financial difficulties would arise because there would be a delay between applying for and receiving benefits under Universal Credit and residents would fall into debts during the waiting period. The group was also advised that a significant number of people first started to struggle with their finances when they entered into a contract for a mobile phone or for cable television which they could not afford in the long-term, though the contracts often covered a significant period of time.

To address this, the group concluded that effective education in respect of financial management skills would be helpful to enable people to learn how to manage their personal budgets from an early age. Members are contending that this subject should be addressed in PSHE lessons at school. As the subject of PSHE lessons has recently formed the basis of recommendations made by the Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group, which is currently consulting with schools about PSHE lessons in the Borough, Members did not feel it would be appropriate for this to form the basis of a recommendation at this stage.

d) Voluntary and Community Sector Networking Opportunities

A number of the VCS groups consulted by Members expressed an interest in having opportunities to network with representatives of other local VCS organisations. To an extent Members believe that this could be addressed through increased participation in the Redditch Community Forum. The group did promote the forum to the representatives of the VCS organisations they interviewed. The Council may also want to consider taking additional action to promote the forum to VCS organisations.

In addition, many of the VCS organisations consulted by the group suggested that it would be helpful to have access to further information about the services available from other VCS groups in the local area. Members are aware that Officers are currently working to develop the Knowledge Bank, which will be accessible from the Council's website and provide further information about the services available from different groups operating in the Borough. When this service is launched in October 2017 Members are suggesting that this should be actively promoted, using various communications tools, to VCS organisations.

e) Landlords' Forum / Steering Group

There is a Landlords' Forum for Bromsgrove and Redditch which meets once a year. Underpinning this forum is the Private Sector Landlords' Steering Group. Unfortunately it was not possible in the short time available for Members to attend a meeting of either body to discuss the needs of landlords. Therefore, subject to the response received from the Overview and Scrutiny and Executive Committees, Members believe that arrangements should be made to present their report at a meeting, either of the forum or the steering group, so that their findings and the needs of landlords can be considered.

f) Short Sharp Reviews

This investigation of homelessness was undertaken as a short sharp review. Short sharp reviews can provide a useful opportunity for Members to consider a subject in detail and bring forward constructive proposals within a short space of time. However, lessons have been learned during the course of this review about some of the limitations of short sharp reviews. Due to the timing of the review, which coincided with one of the busiest holiday periods in the year, it could be difficult to arrange meetings that both Members and expert witnesses could attend. This meant that a significant number of meetings, 14 in total, had to be held in a period of two and a half months. As a consequence the review was very resource intensive which was challenging on occasion for both Members and Officers. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to make a note of these circumstances to ensure that lessons can be learned and applied to any future scrutiny activities.

CONCLUSION

The Homelessness Short Sharp Review has been a very intense exercise. The investigation was timely, given forthcoming legislative changes which could have a significant impact on homelessness in the country and on the work of local authorities. The review has also taken place at a time when homelessness is increasingly visible and unfortunately the number of homeless people in the country is growing.

There are a number of excellent services locally supporting people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. The proposals brought forward by the group are intended to build on these services and to address any gaps in support that have been identified to the benefit of some of the most vulnerable people in society.

Members therefore commend their report to the Executive Committee and call for their recommendations to be approved.

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 Joe Baker	Date of referral	28/03/17
Proposed topic title	Homelessness Short, Sharp Review		
Link to local priorities including the strategic purposes	<p>The subject of this proposed review links to the following strategic purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Help me to find somewhere to live in my locality. • Help me to live my life independently (including health and activity). • Help me to be financially independent. 		
Background to the issue	<p>In recent months there has been increasing public awareness of homelessness in Redditch. In particular, rough sleeping in areas located close to the Redditch ringway has received significant media attention. Residents I have spoken to are understandably concerned about homelessness and are keen to find out what action the Council can take to address this.</p> <p>I am aware that the causes of homelessness are varied and often multi-faceted. In some cases people can make themselves intentionally homeless. There can also be hidden homelessness, with people relying on friends for a bed for the night. I feel that given the current level of public interest in this situation it would be helpful if a scrutiny exercise could provide some clarity about the situation and identify any additional action that could be taken, either by the Council or partner organisations, to address homelessness levels.</p> <p>Earlier in my career I worked with homeless people in Scotland. I therefore feel I have useful background knowledge and would appreciate the opportunity to Chair this review if it is endorsed by Members.</p>		

<p>Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To review relevant Council policies and practices in respect of people experiencing or at risk of becoming homeless. 2) To establish the current levels of homelessness in Redditch, taking into account any official statistics. 3) To clarify the potential causes of homelessness. (This could take into account issues such as recent Benefits changes and drug and alcohol addictions). 4) To analyse the potential impact of homelessness on a person's physical and mental health. 5) To assess the existing support available to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This should take into account support provided by public, private and Voluntary and Community Sector organisations. 6) To scrutinise the potential impact of the new Homelessness Reduction Bill on homelessness levels. 7) To review the findings of any scrutiny Task Groups that have investigated homelessness in other parts of the country and to identify any actions arising from these reports which could be usefully replicated in Redditch. 8) To investigate any opportunities for organisations to work in partnership to enhance support to people who are homeless or at risk of becoming homeless. This could include working in partnership to provide hostel accommodation. 9) To identify any additional action that the Council could take to address homelessness in the Borough.
<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>The Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed on 28th March that this should be a Short, Sharp Review lasting three months. At the end of these three months the group should produce an interim report and discuss with the Committee whether further work should be undertaken.</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 / a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2
Acknowledgements

The group would like to thank the following people for providing evidence during the course of their review:

Derek Allen, Housing Strategy Manager
Sarah Barcham, Redditch Food Banks
Matthew Bough, Housing Strategy and Enabling Team Leader
Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive
Rachael Dobson, Assistant Financial Support Manager
Sam Dyde, YMCA
Ali Grimmett, Planning Officer
Sonia Hambidge, CAB – Bromsgrove and Redditch
Lynn Hancock, CAB – Bromsgrove and Redditch
Anne Marie Harley, Communications Manager
Brenda Holden, Housing Options Manager
Sarah Leeson, Radiate Redditch
Alan Moorhouse, YMCA
Ben Rafiqi, Radiate Redditch
Susan Sadler, Redditch Night Stop
Amanda Scarce, Democratic Services Officer
Steve Shammon, Private Sector Housing Team Leader
Councillor Mark Shurmer, Portfolio Holder for Housing
Amanda Singleton, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support
Liz Tompkin, Head of Housing
Hayley Turner, St Basils

APPENDIX 3
Timeline of Activities

Date	Task Group Activity
14/06/17	Considering the group's terms of reference and identifying sources of evidence.
20/06/17	Reviewing the outcomes of the 2006 Homelessness Prevention review and the findings of the Preventing Homelessness in Bromsgrove Task Group.
30/06/17	Interview with the Strategic Housing Manager to discuss Housing in the Private Rented Sector.
04/07/17	Interview with the Head of Housing and Housing Options Manager and pre-scrutiny of the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.
12/07/17	Interview with the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support about recent welfare changes and financial support for residents.
17/07/17	Interview with the Private Sector Housing Team Leader regarding HMOs.
31/07/17	Interview with the Portfolio Holder for Housing and consideration of the Housing our Homeless Households summary report, (published by the LGA) and The Gold Standard: Fighting Homelessness article in the CCA Voice publication.
02/08/17	Interview with the Manager of the Redditch branch of St Basils and interview with the Communications Manager about the Council's homelessness campaign.
09/08/17 Part 1	Interview with the Manager of Redditch Night Stop and considering Shelter's report in respect of the Homelessness Reduction Act 2017.
09/08/17 Part 2	Interview with Officers representing the YMCA.
14/08/17	Interview with representatives of Radiate Redditch during a visit to their community café at the Ecumenical Centre.
16/08/17 Part 1	Visit to the food bank at St Stephen's Church and interview with the Project Manager for the food bank.

16/08/17 Part 2	Interview with representatives of the CAB – Bromsgrove and Redditch.
23/08/17	Considering further information about Housing First and agreeing the group's final recommendations.

APPENDIX 4
Affordable Housing Definitions

The group has been advised that the Council has adopted the Department of Communities and Local Government's (DCLG's) definitions of affordable housing, as stated within Annexe 2 of the National Planning Policy Framework (March 2012). The following definitions are included within this:

Affordable housing is social rented, affordable rented and intermediate housing, provided to eligible households whose needs are not met by the market. Eligibility is determined with regard to local incomes and local house prices. Affordable housing should include provisions to remain at an affordable price for future eligible households or for the subsidy to be recycled for alternative affordable housing provision.

Social rented housing is: owned by local authorities and private registered providers (as defined in section 80 of the Housing and Regeneration Act 2008), for which guideline target rents are determined through the national rent regime. It may also be owned by other persons and provided under equivalent rental arrangements to the above, as agreed with the local authority or with the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA).

Affordable rented housing is: let by local authorities or private registered providers of social housing to households who are eligible for social rented housing. Affordable Rent is subject to rent controls that require a rent of no more than 80% of the local market rent (including service charges, where applicable).

Intermediate housing is: homes for sale and rent provided at a cost above social rent, but below market levels subject to the criteria in the Affordable Housing definition above. These can include shared equity (shared ownership and equity loans), other low cost homes for sale and intermediate rent, but not affordable rented housing.

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

31st October 2017

STAFF SURVEY JOINT SCRUTINY TASK GROUP

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service for Overview and Scrutiny	Claire Felton – Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To consider the findings and recommendations from the Scrutiny investigation undertaken by the Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- 1) the Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff and the relevant Portfolio Holder from each Council assist in the formulation of all future staff surveys and attend staff briefings (*Recommendation b in the report*);**
- 2) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's decisions in respect of the Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group taken at a meeting on 26th October 2017, be noted.**

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 For the first time, Redditch Borough and Bromsgrove District Councils have worked together to carry out a joint scrutiny task group. The Staff Survey was an area which Bromsgrove Members had considered on a number of occasions in previous years, having first considered the subject back in 2013. Following receipt of the results of the second survey at a meeting on 19th September 2016 Members agreed, that as little progress appeared to have been made on a number of areas of concern, it was something which needed further investigation. The Board agreed this would be suitable for joint scrutiny as the majority of staff are part of a shared service.

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE****31st October 2017**

- 3.2 A topic proposal and a brief joint scrutiny protocol were considered by the Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board at a meeting on 31st October 2016. Following the agreement of the Board the Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board, Councillors Luke Mallett and Shirley Webb, together with the nominated Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor Steve Colella, attended the Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 25th October 2016 to present a proposal to undertake joint scrutiny. The Redditch Committee supported the proposal and the joint Scrutiny Task Group was formed.
- 3.3 As it was the first time joint working had been carried out both Overview and Scrutiny functions agreed that the membership would be taken from the main Committees on this occasion, with three Members being appointed from each Council. Meetings were held at alternate locations to ensure balance in the conduct of the review,
- 3.4 The Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board considered the Task Group's recommendations at a meeting on 22nd August 2017. During this meeting the Board endorsed all of the Task Group's proposals.
- 3.5 Bromsgrove District Council's Cabinet subsequently considered the group's recommendations at a meeting on 6th September 2017. The Cabinet, like the Executive Committee in Redditch, was asked to make a decision on one recommendation (recommendation b in the main report). The Cabinet endorsed this recommendation though in an amended form which did not make reference to the Portfolio Holder. This was because the relevant Portfolio Holder, the Leader of the Council, suggested that this role was more appropriate for a scrutiny Member to undertake.

Financial Implications

- 3.6 There are no direct financial implications other than officer time and general resources.

Legal Implications

- 3.7 There are no direct legal applications arising from this report.

Service/Operation Implications

- 3.8 As the review was proposed by Bromsgrove's Overview and Scrutiny Board the decision was taken for Bromsgrove to take a lead on facilitating the review. A Bromsgrove Member was also appointed Chair of the Task Group, with a Redditch Member, Councillor Jane Potter, being appointed Vice Chair.

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE****31st October 2017**

- 3.9 As this was the first joint Task Group to only involve Members from Redditch Borough and Bromsgrove District Councils Members may feel that there are lessons that can be learned from this exercise which could be applied to future reviews.
- 3.10 Overview and scrutiny is a key part of the Council's democratic decision making process and enables non-executive Members of the Council to put forward recommendations for policy development, policy review and service improvement.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 No customer or equalities and diversity implications have been identified.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

No risks have been identified.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group Report

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

See attached report for details.

AUTHORS OF REPORT

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STAFF SURVEY JOINT SCRUTINY TASK GROUP REPORT**JUNE/JULY 2017**

Membership: **Bromsgrove District Council –**
Councillor Steve Colella (Chairman)
Councillor Caroline Spencer
Councillor Shirley Webb

Redditch Borough Council –
Councillor Jane Potter (Vice Chairman)
Councillor Tom Baker-Price
Councillor Jenny Wheeler

1. Executive Summary

The purpose of this report is to confirm the findings of the Staff Survey Task Group to date and to redefine the scope in view of the suggested recommendations.

The Group must now change its focus and needs to move on from its assessment of the 2016 Staff Survey and the Performance Board's work programme. The Task Group has made every effort to drill down to get to the bottom of why there was a perceived low response to completing the survey but feels that this has now become outdated and overtaken by new Performance Board work streams.

The Task Group needs to now concentrate its work on ensuring that the next survey is fit for purpose, well defined, focused and that the outputs are robust in order that clear corporate and performance indicators can be developed. This in turn will ensure that the two authorities are performing efficiently and effectively to the highest levels of service. To support this outcome it must support initiatives that will ensure staff are supported, motivated and focused and that their wellbeing is a major contribution to making both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils amongst the best performing authorities in the country.

The recommendations made by this Task Group are focused on ensuring that the preparation for the next survey (scheduled for autumn 2017) is designed and delivered based on the areas of improvement established from the work of this group.

It is proposed that a Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff be appointed to attend staff briefings with the Chief Executive Officer to show that Members are there to support staff and want to hear their views as well as ensuring that 'lessons learnt' from previous surveys are not ignored.

Through this recommendation it will reinforce the point that staff had a key role to play in supporting the Council to become more efficient, especially in the light of the challenging targets set in the Council's Financial Efficiency Plans.

The outcomes from the next and subsequent surveys must help support the most effective use of resources as well as being the platform from which staff morale and wellbeing become an integral part of improved performance across the authority.

The role of the Chief Executive and Performance Board will be a primary focus for change, building on the emerging corporate work streams. The enhanced and Member supported staff surveys will add value and focus to corporate actions.

During the life of this Task Group a number of important issues were identified that will also form additional recommendations from this interim report. These include the identified need to establish a well-founded and regular two-way performance management system that incorporates targets and objectives; a review of the quality of management information and the quality and purpose of the Dashboard system.

I would like to thank the Democratic Services' officers for their hard work and dedication to this task group and to officers and Executive Team for their support and help over the last year. I would like also to thank fellow Bromsgrove Councillors as well as Redditch Borough Councillors in what has been the first joint Overview and Scrutiny Task and Finish Group across both authorities.

Cllr Steve Colella
Chairman

2. Recommendations

The group recommends:

- a) That a member of the Overview and Scrutiny function be appointed to the role of Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff.
- b) The Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff and the relevant Portfolio Holder from each Council assist in the formulation of all future staff surveys and attend staff briefings.
- c) A quarterly update on the Programme Board's Action Plan be received by the Overview and Scrutiny Board/Committee.
- d) The Performance Scrutiny (RBC) and Measures Dashboard (BDC) Working Groups' terms of reference are updated to include an area covering performance management processes, performance target and objective setting across both authorities. (It is envisaged that this would be achieved through joint meetings being held on a regular basis.)

3. Introduction, and Background Information

For the first time, Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils have worked together to carry out a joint scrutiny task group. The Staff Survey was an area which Bromsgrove Members had considered on a number of occasions in previous years, with it first considering it back in 2013. Following receipt of the results of the second survey at its meeting in 19th September 2016 Members agreed, that as little progress appeared to have been made on a number of areas of concern, it was something which needed further investigation and would be suitable for joint scrutiny as the majority of staff were part of a shared service.

A topic proposal and a brief joint scrutiny protocol were considered by the Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board at its 31st October 2016 meeting. Following the agreement of the Board the Chairman, Vice Chairman and Cllr Colella attended the Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting putting forward its proposals. The Redditch Committee supported the proposal and the joint Scrutiny Task Group was formed. As it was the first time joint working had been carried out both Overview and Scrutiny functions agreed that the membership would be taken from the main committees on this occasion. The first meeting of the Staff Survey Joint Scrutiny Task Group took place on 22nd November 2016.

4. Observations

A number of observations have been made by the Group which they would like to note. The Group acknowledge the importance of carrying out joint scrutiny, but are concerned that in this case due to the nature of the subject being scrutinised and the timescale for setting up the Group itself (from when the subject was considered by the Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board to the first meeting of the Group over 8 weeks had elapsed), together with the work that was being put in place to address the issues raised in the staff survey have not made it an easy subject to consider.

As is highlighted in the detail within various points in section 4 below, the work of the Programme Board, which was set up to address those issues, has progressed at such a pace that the Task Group Members were unable to have significant influence or input into that work, although it should be noted its concerns over a number of the actions being taken were raised with the Chief Executive and supporting officers. It has also made it clear to those officers for the need to increase the number of respondents to any future staff surveys. After much deliberation the Task Group feel that little can be gained from continuing to look at the previous results, but can make recommendations which will ensure Members involvement in any future surveys at the earliest stage, that being at the creation of the survey through to the completion and analysis stages of it.

5. Terms of Reference

For ease of reference, this report will comment on different areas within the Terms of Reference (attached at Appendix 1) in order to show that the Group has considered and addressed, where possible, those areas which were initially highlighted by Members as in need of a more detailed investigation.

Scrutiny of the Survey Results

The Task Group found it difficult to come to many firm conclusions from the outputs of the survey. The Group were informed that these outputs had been grouped to form 3 main work streams (Organisational Culture, People Management and Meeting our Customers' Needs) led by the Performance Board (which had been set up following the Staff Survey to address the outcomes of it) made up of Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley, Deb Poole and Amanda Singleton. The Group looked at the results of the survey and also the Performance Board's work stream and discussed with officers the actions that were being taken.

The Group felt that it can make a positive contribution to future surveys taking a 'lessons learnt approach' and through the creation of a Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff role. This would be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny function, who would be seen to support staff by supporting the Chief Executive at staff briefings and being available to talk to staff who may wish to share their views. By providing a more "hands on" approach this would enable Members to see and hear at first hand the views of staff and also take part in discussions around issues which may be identified within future surveys.

Scrutiny of the survey process and quality of the survey and the low response rate and implications

The Task Group felt that the process was widely promoted giving staff time to complete the survey, sending regular reminders and offering support where necessary. However, it was agreed that the quality and quantity of the questions was too broad and lacked the necessary range and type of responses that would allow robust analysis and give a true picture of staff views.

Whilst the Group felt that the 25% response rate was low, based on own work life experiences, Officers felt that it was a reasonable return. The Group remained unhappy with the low response rate and the implications that certain groups will have been over represented and others under represented, thus, resulting in biased results. Equally the Group thought Performance Board Work streams were therefore being put in place in response to issues raised by a minority of staff rather than the majority.

The Group therefore agreed that it was imperative that the Overview and Scrutiny function be involved in the creation of any future surveys, which would allow for a different perspective to be given. This also shows that the Group's views have been heard and officers understand that Members are keen to ensure that the staff are both listened to and understood. Officers are aware of the concerns raised around the response rate and will work with Members to increase the participation rate in future surveys.

Whilst the Group were unhappy with the low response rate and the implications from this (Members were concerned that actions were being put in place in response to issues raised by a minority of staff rather than the majority) after lengthy discussions it was agreed that their efforts would be better spent in ensuring that future surveys received a much higher return rate.

Investigation into model surveys and consider the criteria of the previous survey and lessons learnt

It was found to be difficult to do comparisons with other Councils in respect of the survey content. Members acknowledged that it was important to have some comparative data and therefore understood the need for the most recent survey to be along the same lines as those issued in 2013.

However, with such a variety of services being provided it was difficult to ask the same questions of everyone, as these were not always relevant to some areas and therefore it was suggested that future surveys may be better placed if they were tailored to particular areas e.g. separating frontline and customer facing services from enabling services.

The questions for each of these services would be more effective if they were specific to each of those areas. There should also be an opportunity to either add a note or to say “sometimes” rather than having to give a clear “yes” or “no”.

Consider how to increase the response rates in future

The Task Group found that because the Programme Board had already started to introduce work streams from the survey it was difficult for the Group to also pinpoint actions from it.

It was therefore agreed that it was essential for the Group to concentrate its efforts in supporting officers to ensure that the response rate to future surveys was increased, the range and quality of questions were conducive to extracting a balanced view across the service and ensuring that the questions were been tailored to meet the roles and responsibilities of each service provision.

The Programme Board Action Plan had already considered how to move this forward and individual Heads of Service had put forward suggestions on how to encourage and support staff in completing the next survey. The role of the Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff and the involvement of the Overview and Scrutiny functions will also play an important role in reassuring staff that they are listened to and actions are taken and ensure that there is an increase in both the number of surveys completed and the quality of the responses.

Consider the merits of the questions both in terms of desired outputs and the number of questions

The resulting work streams were discussed and the Group agreed that both the Cultural Referendum and the Meeting Customer Need survey appeared to be a knee jerk reaction to some of the results in the original survey. Members were not clear as to how the two surveys linked back to the findings of the original survey and were again concerned that this reaction was to responses from a minority of staff and may not represent the general view of the staff.

As detailed in the relevant section of the topic proposal headings, Officers need to ensure that any future survey content is formulated to get the maximum information that can be used in a constructive way and that does not necessitate further surveys being sent out. The Group agreed that both the Cultural Referendum and the Meeting Customer Need survey appeared to be a knee jerk reaction to some of the results in the original survey.

Bench mark survey with other similar organisations and marque organisation

As detailed and discussed, in several earlier sections, it is equally difficult to bench mark the survey against that of any other authority due to the individual needs of residents in different parts of the country and the different ways in which services are being provided these days. Whilst other authorities will discuss such a survey in general terms there is a reluctance to share any detail around staff responses.

Establish reasons for the low response rates

Without speaking to members of staff as to why they had not completed the survey the Group had made the assumption that this was due to a number of issues; there was apathy amongst staff based on no visible actions being taken from previous surveys, the delay in receiving published survey results, a feeling that the survey “does not apply to them” or staff did not have time to complete the surveys.

Anecdotally the Group established that the low response rates were also caused by the length of the survey, the structure of the response options as well as having few staff low literacy and IT skills.

Members were advised that all these issues would be addressed through each Head of Service creating an Action Plan on how they would deal with the low response rates for their individual teams in the future. Again, the Group agreed that it was the responsibility of the Overview and Scrutiny functions to ensure that these are addressed for any future surveys, through support and monitoring.

6. Lead Member for Staff

Following its final meeting when the recommendations and content of this report were discussed the Task Group agreed that it may be useful to include a little more detail around how they envisaged the Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff role working as it was not a type of role which had been considered before. Officers reminded Members that within the Audit, Governance and Standards function there were a number of roles to which Members were appointed as “champions” risk management been one in particular. Members envisaged that the main role of the Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff would be to attend staff briefings and assist officers with the formulation of future staff surveys. They could potentially act as a feedback mechanism in respect of the monitoring of the Performance Board Action Plan by the Overview and Scrutiny Board/Committee. The aim would be to show staff that Members whose role it was to act as a critical friend were ensuring that staff surveys were being responded to in an appropriate manner.

7. Conclusions and Future Plans

As the Programme Board and the three supporting work streams appear to have addressed the main issues raised in the most recent staff survey, the Group believe it is now the role of the Overview and Scrutiny functions to ensure that these actions are monitored through their meetings and those responsible are held to account, in order to ensure that staff morale is improved and support is put in place where needed and that the actions do not slip.

Through the Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff role Members will support the Chief Executive in reassuring staff that management want to hear their view and are there to support them. Staff had a key role to play in supporting the Council to become efficient. Moving forward the Councils face a number of challenges and need staff to be on board in order to tackle these. There are a number of areas which the Group feel need further discussion, work or clarification to ensure that the Councils move forward.

Staff

- Targets/Measures – clarity over what format these will take. It is acknowledged that the aim remains the same; to achieve the goals of the Councils.
- Ensure that 1-2-1s and Team meetings are taking place and that the communication and aim of a team is clear at all levels. There must be interaction within each team to ensure that the Councils' key messages are clear to everyone.
- Performance –v- Attendance. If people have a clear aim of what they need to achieve they will be more focused and positive in their outlook.

Council

- Corporate Dashboard – Both Dashboard Working Groups and the External Auditors (at BDC's most recent Audit, Standards and Governance Committee meeting) have raised this as not being up to date or accessible, particularly to Members. This needs to be addressed and fit for purpose.
- Strategic Purposes – Members questioned whether these were still fit for purpose. It was noted that each Council had very different demographics and Members felt that this needed to be recognised within those strategic purposes. Do these need to be realigned with each Council?
- Both the Strategic Purposes and the Council Plans for each Council need to have targets and deliverables clearly set out within them, with a strategic vision being underpinned by portfolio targets.

8. Supporting Documentation

Appendix 1 – Topic Proposals

Appendix 2 – Summary of Meetings

APPENDIX 1



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL

This form can be used for either a Task Group or a Short Sharp Review topic proposal.

Completed forms should be returned to scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk – Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council.

Name of Proposer: Cllr Steve Colella	
Tel No: 07758 739901	Email: s.colella@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Date: 21 st September 2016	

<p>Title of Proposed Topic</p> <p>(including specific subject areas to be investigate)</p>	<p>Scrutiny into the Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council 2016 staff survey.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scrutiny of the survey results (Qualitative and Quantitative) and the underlying issues identified. • Scrutiny of the survey process and quality of survey • Investigations into the low response rate and implications • Investigation in to model surveys • Consider the criteria of the previous survey and lesson learned for future surveys. • The work of the Programme Board which is to be chaired by the Chief Executive. • The work to be carried out in respect of the three corporate work streams which have been established and headed up by key officers.
<p>Background to the Proposal</p> <p>(Including reasons why this topic should be investigated)</p>	<p>Following a presentation of the 2016 Staff survey to the Overview and Scrutiny Board (19th September 2016) concerns were raised in respect of the low response rate, the implications and possible reasons for such a disappointing outcome.</p>

and evidence to support the need for the investigation.)	As this was a shared survey and the majority of services are shared with Redditch Borough Council it was suggested that it would be an ideal opportunity to carry out a piece of joint working with the RBC Overview & Scrutiny Committee, as the findings of the review could have implications for both Councils.			
<p>Links to national, regional and local priorities</p> <p>(including the Council's strategic purposes)</p>	<p>The importance of conducting robust and regular staff surveys is to demonstrate that the organisation values the voice of its employees, at every level and is responsive to any changes that the results may highlight.</p> <p>Therefore the links are directly related to efficiency of the organisation, staff moral and effective service delivery.</p> <p>In order to achieve the Councils' strategic purposes we need to ensure that staff are motivated and operating in the appropriate culture to meet these objectives.</p>			
<p>Possible Key Objectives</p> <p>(these should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider how to increase the response rates in future. • Consider the merits of the questions both in terms of desired outputs and number of questions. • Establish reason for the low response rates • Bench mark survey with other similar organisations and marque organisations • To make Recommendations to the Bromsgrove Overview and Scrutiny Board and Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee. 			
Anticipated Timescale for completion of the work.	November 2016 – February 2017			
Would it be appropriate to hold a Short Sharp Inquiry or a Task Group? (please tick relevant box)	<u>Task Group</u>	yes	Short Sharp Inquiry	

OFFICE USE ONLY - TO BE COMPLETED WHEN THE TOPIC PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED

Evidence	
Key documents, data, reports	
Possible Site Visits	
Is a general press release required asking for general comments/suggestions from the public?	
Is a period of public consultation required?	
Witnesses	
Officers	
Councillors (including Portfolio Holder)	
Any External Witnesses	

Potential Joint Working Arrangements

Membership: To be chaired by a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny function from the Council that proposed the topic.

Appoint a Vice Chairman (from the other Council).

6 Members made up of three from each Council. Each Member should be a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board/ Committee on this occasion.

A Quorum of three be in place with at least one Member from each Council present.

Venue: alternate between each Council.

1. Verbal updates be given to the respective Overview and Scrutiny functions by the lead member with the final report being considered by both prior to it being considered at Cabinet / Executive.
2. Consultation with Portfolio Holders – both relevant Portfolio Holders should be invited to attend if considered appropriate.
3. The meetings will be private informal meetings as standard practice at both venues.

APPENDIX 2

Summary of Meetings**Meeting 1 (22/11/16)**

This initial meeting was used as an introduction into how the Group would work together as it was the first time that Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils had carried out joint scrutiny. The group looked at the terms of reference and discussed how best to approach its investigation.

Meeting 2 (07/12/16)

The Group interviewed the Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development together with the Human Resources and Development Manager, looking in more detail at the results of the Staff Survey and the Cultural Referendum which was due to take place on 16th December, together with details around how the survey had been promoted, who decided the questions which were asked, whether the responses had provided the information that officers expected and actions which had arisen from the results. Members were keen to ensure that the Action Plan provided was monitored and the actions carried through to completion in a timely manner.

Members had also asked for additional information in respect of shared services as a number of Members had highlighted at the previous meeting that they were not clear on the arrangements and which areas were and were not shared.

Meeting 3 (06/02/17)

Members had been informed that a Programme Board had been established to ensure that the results of the Staff Survey were appropriately considered. Following analysis and discussion of the survey results the Programme Board agreed that the data would be considered at both Corporate and Service level. Three corporate work streams were established and headed up by key officers -, organisational culture, people management and meeting our customers' needs. (It was noted that Representatives from Human Resources, Organisational Development and the Trade Unions (Unison, GMB and UCATT) were also members of the Programme Board.)

At this meeting the Group interviewed the key officers involved in all of this work, the Chief Executive, Deputy Chief Executive, Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development and the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support.

It was noted that at a service level Heads of Service had been provided with data for their own areas and had analysed this data and developed action plans with clear timescales to specifically address the three areas of greatest improvement/decline compared to the previous survey, whilst also focusing on any areas that they felt needed to be addressed within their services.

Detailed information was provided in respect of the thinking behind the Cultural Referendum (and the work of the Organisational Culture Work Stream) which had taken place, together with an update on the results and how and when these would be shared with staff and Members.

Members were also provided with the action plans which had been set up to ensure a number of areas picked up within the results of the Staff Survey were addressed in an appropriate and timely manner. Members were keen to ensure that this was monitored and feedback given regularly to both Members and staff to demonstrate that their concerns had been taken seriously and were being addressed.

Meeting 4 (22/02/17)

Members had asked, at the previous meeting, for information in respect of staff sickness absence and whilst this had been provided. There were a number of discrepancies which it was agreed would be addressed at the next meeting when the relevant officers would be invited.

The group took the opportunity to look at the Meeting Customer Needs survey, which was shortly to be issued to staff. Whilst Members understood the need to resolve some of the concerns raised by staff within the original survey, they were keen to ensure that staff were not inundated with different consultations which could lead to survey fatigue and an inclination not to continue to participate. Again, Members were also concerned that yet another survey would lead to further actions needing to be taken in addition to those which had been highlighted within the original survey.

Members discussed the detailed information which had been provided in respect of the Organisational Culture Work Stream which had been tabled at the previous meeting. The Group believed the papers provided were very academic and found it difficult to see how this could relate to the culture within the Council, being mindful of such a variety of areas within it. Members also questioned how the Council could make this work and measure it successfully. Members discussed whether the culture could be regarded as a result of current “management” practices and processes, for example target setting, task orientated objectives, rewards and recognition, budget costs and public perceptions. It was noted that culture within the work place was a matter which had been subject to extensive academic research and Members made reference to Kurt Lewin’s Change Model in particular. This model uses a principle of identifying the current culture, “unfreezing” it and “refreezing” it in order to make the changes necessary.

Meeting 5 (22/03/17)

The Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development and the Human Resources and Development Manager attended this meeting to go through the staff sickness data. The Group were keen to explore whether there was any correlation between this and the results of the staff survey. It was agreed that it was difficult to make any link between the two and Members discussed in detail with officers the system of recording sickness and annual leave. The group was informed that this would be done in future through the introduction of a new HR21 system, which would also be able to draw down specific data on a “real time” basis. Although

it was acknowledged this would only be accurate if the system was used correctly and the data inputted regularly.

Members were also provided with details of actions being taken to increase the responses to future staff surveys. This was broken down into individual teams and showed Members that officers had considered a number of ways of address this and tailoring these to the needs of individuals where necessary.

Chairman's Meeting with Chief Executive (06/04/17)

The Task Group were keen not to duplicate any work which was already been undertaken by the Programme Board (or the supporting Work Streams) or to make recommendations or suggestions which related to work which was already underway. It was therefore agreed that it would be useful for the Chairman to meet with the Chief Executive (as lead officer of the Programme Board) to discuss the progress of the Task Group and to receive an update in respect of the Programme Board and the Work Streams, as it was clear from the information the Group had received most recently that a significant amount of work was already being carried out.

During those discussions it was established that a further staff survey needed to be done later in 2017 and would not follow the same format as the previous ones. It was further acknowledged that different areas had different needs and as such a standard, across the board approach would not be appropriate for all staff, as some areas would clearly have different objectives to work towards; one area of the Council was wholly customer focused and customer facing whilst the other was classed as enabling services, which supported those front facing services. For these reasons future surveys would need to recognise the objectives and aims of each service.

It was clear from speaking to the Chief Executive that the Performance Board had a lot of on-going work to do but had made a start. It was clear from the information provided that much of the Task Group's investigations were becoming out of date and superseded by further actions. For example, time has been spent by the Performance Board in looking at reasons why staff had not completed the survey.

From the information provided it was clear that the role of the Task Group was changing and that it could help support increasing the number of surveys completed, and move its focus from trying to find out why 75% didn't fill it in to ensuring that the numbers that completed the next one were increased. The Group could also take a role in monitoring the work of the Performance Board and the Work Streams to ensure that the work that has been discussed had actually been carried through.

The role of Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff was discussed which would include involvement in the preparation of the next survey and attend staff briefings with the Chief Executive to show that Members are there to support staff and want to hear their views.

Meeting 6 (26/06/17)

Members held one final meeting at which they discussed the report and recommendations and made a number of tweaks to the recommendations and report content. The Lead Councillor for Supporting Staff role was also discussed at some length as some Members' raised concerns around whether this was in fact something which should be picked up by the relevant Portfolio Holder rather than a member of the Overview and Scrutiny function.

It was agreed that the report would firstly be presented at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting at Bromsgrove due to be held on 22th August followed by the Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee at its September meeting.

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**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

31st October 2017

HOUSING OPTIONS ACCOMMODATING AN AFTER CARE SOCIAL WORKER

Lead Scrutiny Member	Councillor Matthew Dormer, Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No.
Relevant Director	Deputy Chief Executive
Ward(s) Affected	All wards.

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides background information in relation to a proposal from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the Council to offer space in the Housing Options team's offices in Redditch Town Hall as a work base for an After Care Social Worker.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

an After Care Social Worker should be provided with a base to work in the Housing Options team's office at Redditch Town Hall in order to work with care leavers in Redditch.

3. KEY ISSUES**Background**

- 3.1 During a meeting of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group on 17th July 2017 Members interviewed relevant Officers about the Council's arrangements for housing care leavers in the Borough.
- 3.2 From the date when a young person in care turns 16 plans start to be made by Social Services in respect of that individual's transition from care to independent living. Care leavers should be allocated a Personal Advisor, or After Care Social Worker, whose job is to support the care leavers and to ensure that they can claim everything they are entitled to.
- 3.3 In Worcestershire the Personal Advisor provide support in relation to the following areas:
- practical life and independence skills
 - education, training or employment
 - accommodation

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017

- health and development
 - money and finances
 - support needed
 - advice with negotiating solutions or signposting on to other agencies
- 3.4 The Personal Advisor should stay in contact with the care leaver and provide ongoing support until the young person turns 21, or until their 25th birthday if they are in full-time education.
- 3.5 In Worcestershire the County Council's Social Services department refers young people to the Borough Council's Housing Options team for accommodation.
- 3.6 The Performance Scrutiny Working Group has been advised that at the moment all After Care Social Workers are based in Worcester. To ensure that young people leaving care in Redditch have easy access to their Personal Advisor the group has discussed the possibility of at least one After Care Social Worker operating from a base at Redditch Town Hall.
- 3.6 Members have been advised that there would be sufficient space available within the Housing Options Team's offices in Redditch Town Hall to accommodate an After Care Social Worker. This would provide that Officer with immediate access to staff who could provide assistance in respect of housing young care leavers.
- 3.7 The Overview and Scrutiny committee endorsed this proposal during a meeting on 7th September 2017.

Financial Implications

- 3.8 There are no direct financial implications for the Council.

Legal Implications

- 3.9 Young people aged 18 to 21 who have spent at least one night in care when they were 16 or 17 are automatically classified as being in priority need for housing when they turn 18. This is reflected in the Council's Housing Allocations Policy.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.10 Worcestershire County Council staff have in the past worked from the Town Hall for other services, such as Public Health. Given the vulnerability of young care leavers and their need for support during a transition period after leaving care the group is proposing that it would be appropriate to arrange for at least one After Care Social Worker to also be based at the Town Hall.

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 Young people leaving care are often particularly vulnerable. The potential for young people to access an After Care Support Worker in Redditch, rather than at a distance in Worcester, is therefore considered by the group to represent good practice from an .

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

No specific risks have been identified for the Council.

5. BACKGROUND

Housing Allocations Policy (approved by Council 24th July 2017)

'Care Leavers and Pathway Plans', information provided on Worcestershire County Council's website at <https://ylyc.worcestershire.gov.uk/care-and-support/care-leavers/care-leavers-and-pathway-plans/>

'Help and Housing for Care Leavers', information provided on Shelter's website at https://england.shelter.org.uk/housing_advice/housing_for_young_people/help_and_housing_for_care_leavers

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

31st October 2017**JOINT MUNICIPAL WASTE MANAGEMENT STRATEGY - ADDENDUM**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Debbie Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	
Relevant Head of Service	Guy Revans
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire & Worcestershire was first published in 2004 and covers the period 2004 to 2034 (the Headline Strategy is included at Appendix 2). It is a joint strategy and was adopted by the six Worcestershire district councils, Worcestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council (reflecting the partnership across Worcestershire and Herefordshire in relation to a shared waste disposal service).
- 1.2 The existing Strategy needs to be amended to reflect the changes in national policy, local provision and projections for future demand that have occurred since the current Strategy was adopted.
- 1.3 Further to a comprehensive review of the JMWMS in 2011, an Addendum has been produced (Appendix 1) to update the Strategy on achievements and to ensure that it remains relevant and fit for purpose.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND to Council that

the Addendum to the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004 - 2034 be adopted.

3. KEY ISSUES**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 None directly rising from this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 None directly rising from this report.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

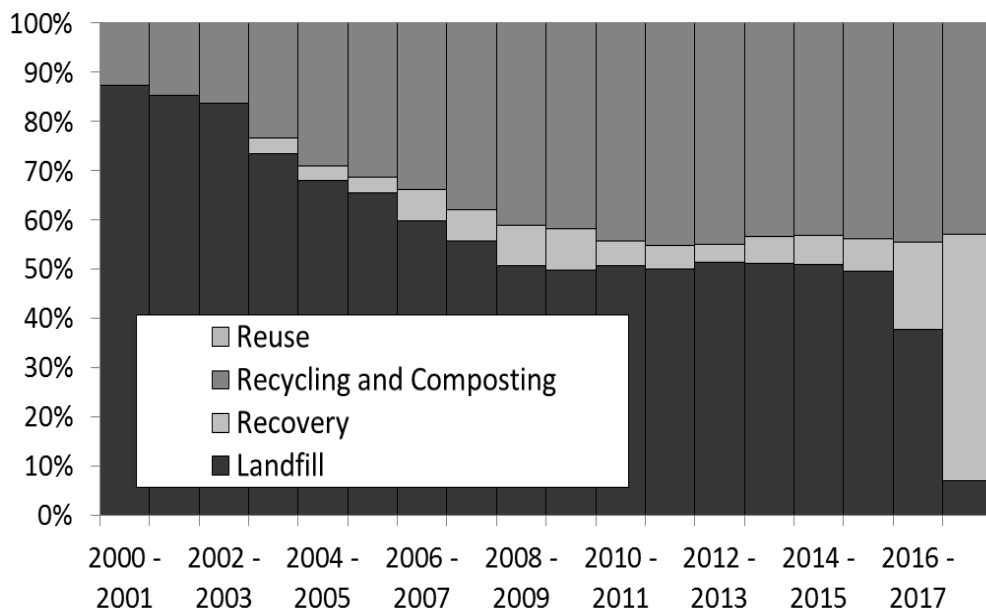
31st October 2017Service / Operational Implications

- 3.3 The JMWMS underwent a complete review in 2009 to reflect significant developments in national waste policy and required changes to our waste management service. The JMWMS was adopted by all partner authorities in 2009 and in 2011 when it was refreshed to include an updated residual waste options appraisal which took into account the site location for the proposed Energy from Waste (EfW) facility
- 3.4 Key objectives of the adopted JMWMS were as follows:
- a. For all authorities to collect the same materials for recycling through a commingled collection system whilst restricting frequency or container capacity to prevent waste and increase recycling.
 - b. To develop alternative waste treatment solutions to promote sustainable waste management, balancing environmental, social and economic impacts.
- 3.5 Redditch Borough Council were introduced an alternate weekly household waste collection service using 240 litre wheeled bins for commingled recycling and residual waste in 2007 and two years later in response to these objectives, Redditch along with the other waste collection authorities was able to benefit by sending recycling to EnviroSort.
- 3.6 In 2014 Herefordshire Council and Worcestershire County Council agreed a variation to the waste disposal service with their contractor, Mercia Waste Management, to design, build and operate a 200,000 tonne per annum EfW facility. This facility became fully operational in March 2017 and produces enough electricity to power 32,000 homes.
- 3.7 An Addendum to the JMWMS strategy has been produced that reflects these achievements, including the following updates and information:
- i) Information on changes to national waste management policy being the introduction of the Waste (England and Wales) Regulations 2011, which transposed much of the EU Waste Framework Directive into UK law.
 - ii) Required waste producers to apply the Waste Management Hierarchy where waste prevention is highest priority and disposal to landfill is lowest. The JMWMS for Herefordshire and Worcestershire uses the Waste Hierarchy as one of its fundamental Principles (Principle 2).
 - iii) Required councils who did not provide a separate collection of glass, paper, plastics and metal to undertake an assessment to demonstrate whether providing a separate collection is necessary to ensure high quality materials for recycling and whether this would be Technically, Environmentally or Economically Practicable (TEEP). The partner councils jointly carried out an assessment which found that changing to separate collection of individual materials would not be Technically,

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive Committee**31st October 2017

Environmentally or Economically Practicable and this is available as a supporting document (found on Worcestershire County Council's website: http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20232/recycling_and_waste/1015/waste_strategy)

- iv) An update of waste management data including waste growth predictions which are expected to continue to grow proportionate to growth in household numbers.
- v) An update on recycling, recovery and disposal performance which in respect of recycling has seen little change in performance since the 2011 refresh due to constraints on resources. However significant improvement in recovery and disposal performance is predicted following the recent opening of the new EfW facility and performance since 2000 is illustrated in the figure below:

Municipal Waste Disposal Routes 2000-2017

- 3.8 Due to there being no new objectives or policy at a national level, a light touch approach has been taken in reviewing the JMWMS focusing on refreshing the waste growth and performance data. Advice from an experienced and qualified waste management consultant commissioned by Worcestershire County Council on behalf of the partnership, supported this approach and informed the refresh.
- 3.9 The Addendum (see Appendix 1) does not attempt to set new objectives or policy, and should be read in conjunction with the existing JMWMS (found on Worcestershire County Council's website (see 2.9).
- 3.10 A summary of progress to date in achieving the targets set out in the strategy is included below:

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

31st October 2017

2011 Target		Actual	Updated target
1	In order to ensure that this target is robust, we are currently developing a meaningful target that will enable us to monitor our carbon footprint and set targets for reduction.	No target set	Carbon emissions are measured by respective councils in line with their carbon management plans. There are no plans to separately measure and report emissions from waste management services.
2	To achieve the national reductions in household residual waste (waste not re-used, recycled or composted) of 35% by 2015 and 45% by 2020, based on 2000 levels.	Worcestershire achieved a 42.3% reduction and Herefordshire a 49% reduction	The target remains 45% reduction by 2020.
3	To work towards achieving national recycling/composting levels of household waste of 45% by 31st March 2015 and 50% by 31st March 2020.	The partnership achieved 40% in 2014/15, with Redditch Borough achieving 31% in 2016/17.	The aspiration of meeting the 2020 target remains but the Partnership is only committed to maintaining current levels of recycling and composting, making improvements where financially viable.
4	To meet the requirements of the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 to collect at least 2 recyclable materials from each household by end 2010	All councils collect glass, paper, plastic, metals and cardboard.	Target achieved and no further target set as we are meeting our statutory requirements
5	By 2015 or earlier if practicable, we will recover value from a minimum of 78% of municipal waste.	The partnership recovered 49.2% of its waste in 2014/15.	The target remains 78% recovery of municipal waste, the partnership expects to achieve this in the current year 2017/18
6	To reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste landfilled in order to meet the yearly allowances set by Government under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme.	Scheme abolished in 2013 and no longer applicable	Scheme abolished in 2013 and no longer applicable

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive Committee**31st October 2017

- 3.11 The Strategic Waste Management Board (SWMB), consisting of lead Members from all partners, senior officers (Heads of Service level and above). A workshop was carried out on 22 January 2016, where Members and officers provided the following feedback which has been reflected in the Addendum to the JMWMS:
- i. None of the councils have any plans to change their waste collection regime.
 - ii. Any measure of the impact of council waste management on climate change should be simple and relate only to waste disposal services.
 - iii. Recognition that the 50% recycling target will be difficult to achieve without separate food waste collections or free garden waste collections.
 - iv. Consensus that the existing 50% recycling target should be retained but the difficulties in achieving the target should be explained in the review.
 - v. Agreement that a 90% diversion from landfill target was feasible for 2030.
- 3.12 The next review of the JMWMS will be in 2022 or earlier if a significant change is required, for example due to change in national policy.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.13 None directly rising from this report

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The key risk identified in the strategy is that our performance currently falls short of the 2020 50% national recycling target. The addendum provides an update on our current performance and although we are committed to maintain our current level of performance explains how increasing performance is not possible with current staffing and budget constraints.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Waste Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire: A Review.
Appendix 2 - JMWMS for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004 – 2034,
Headline Strategy.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

- 6.1 JMWMS for Herefordshire & Worcestershire 2004-2034
6.2 TEEP Assessment (December 2014)

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Waste Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire: A Review

Introduction

Herefordshire & Worcestershire's Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy: *Managing Waste for a Brighter Future* (herein the Strategy) was first published in 2004. It was prepared and adopted by the eight local authorities across Herefordshire & Worcestershire (the Partnership).

A detailed review and republication of the Strategy was completed in 2011. This set a suite of principles, policies and targets for the management of municipal waste across both counties. As part of this, and in line with Government guidance, the Partnership committed to review the Strategy at least every 5 years.

This Addendum provides a summary of the 2016 review of the Strategy. In particular it includes:

- information on significant changes/ developments in Government waste management policy since 2011, including potential future changes to European policy;
- updates on waste management data including waste growth predictions; and
- commentary on performance against key principles, policies and targets within the Strategy.

The Addendum does not attempt to set new objectives or policy, and should be read in conjunction with the existing Strategy.

The review process and the production of this Addendum have been undertaken by the Strategic Waste Management Board (SWMB), which represents the eight authorities across Herefordshire & Worcestershire.

Key Changes Since 2011

Policy

There have been limited changes to national waste management policy since 2011. The *Waste Management Plan for England* was published in 2013. This did not introduce new policies but instead provided an update on the current waste management situation in England and brought existing waste policies under the umbrella of one national plan.

The *Waste Regulations 2011 (as amended 2012)*, implemented in January 2015, require everyone involved in waste management, including waste producers, to take all reasonable measures to apply the waste hierarchy. Commitment to the waste hierarchy is already, and continues to be, a key principle of the Strategy.

These regulations also aim to improve the quality and quantity of material being collected for recycling by placing a duty on waste collectors to ensure recyclable material (particularly glass, paper, plastics and metal) is collected separately where it is necessary to ensure the

recovery of high quality recyclables and where this is technically, environmentally or economically practicable (TEEP). The authorities within Herefordshire & Worcestershire have undertaken an assessment of their waste collections services to ensure compliance with the Regulations. This assessment has been issued to the Environment Agency and a full copy is available (found on Worcestershire County Council's website:

http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/info/20232/recycling_and_waste/1015/waste_strategy

The European Commission's Circular Economy Package '*Closing the Loop – an EU action plan for the Circular Economy*' was formally published in December 2015. A circular economy is an alternative to a traditional linear economy (make, use, dispose) in which we keep resources in use for as long as possible, extract the maximum value from them whilst in use, then recover and regenerate products and materials at the end of each service life. The Package aims to extract the maximum value and use from all raw materials, products and waste, fostering energy savings and reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

The Package puts forward revised legislative proposals on waste which include: 65% recycling for municipal waste and 90% diversion from landfill, by 2030. The Partnership fully supports the principles behind the 'circular economy' and will closely monitor how the UK Government responds to the EU proposals, and how this may impact this Strategy going forward.

Infrastructure

Since publication of the Strategy, the Partnership has made significant progress in plans to divert residual waste from landfill. Worcestershire County Council and Herefordshire Council have a long term contract with Mercia Waste Management (MWM) for the delivery of their responsibilities as Waste Disposal Authorities. As part of the contract, MWM obtained planning permission, has managed the construction of and is now operating, an Energy from Waste (EfW) facility at Hartlebury. This facility will divert an additional 200,000 tonnes of municipal waste from landfill.



Envirecover Energy from Waste facility under construction.

The Partnership also continues to invest in their existing processing and collection capabilities. EnviroSort, the Partnership's Material Reclamation Facility has just been refurbished to include the provision of a glass breaker and improved fire protection system.

Funding

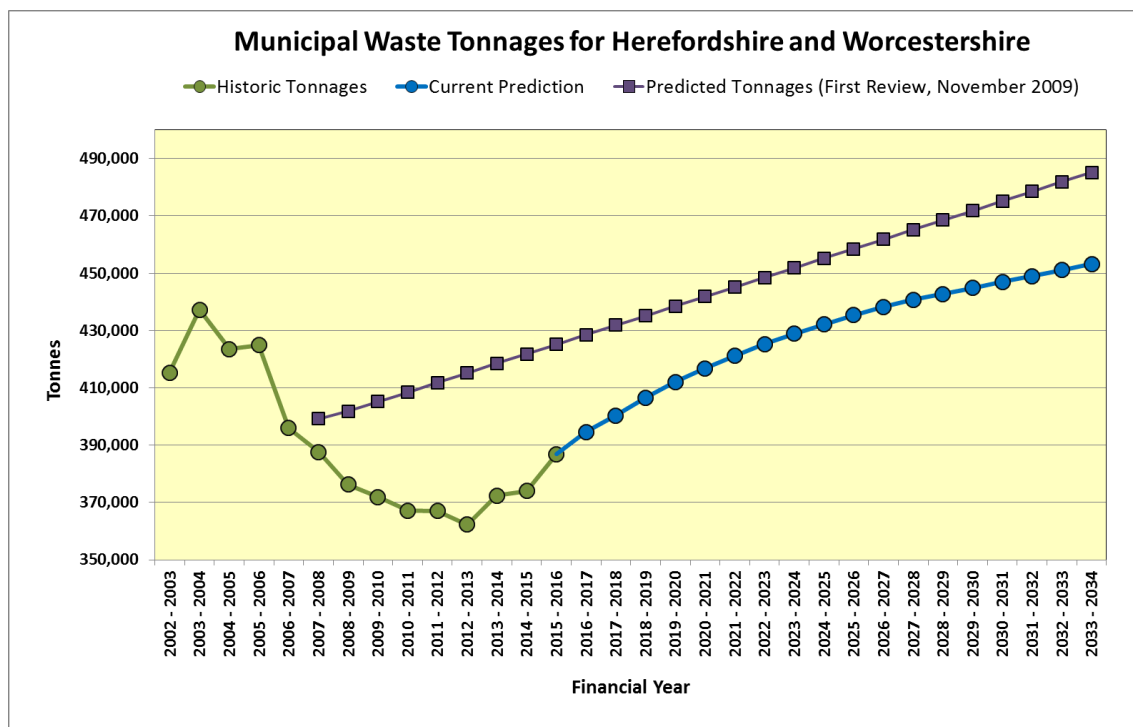
Since 2011, there have been significant cuts to local authority funding. Waste management services across Herefordshire & Worcestershire have had to make efficiency savings of more than £2,000,000. Therefore each authority has had to make very difficult decisions prioritising how funding is allocated. As a result, the aspirations and targets set within the Strategy are increasingly challenging, and in some cases, given the level of funding available, now unrealistic.

Waste Growth

The total municipal waste arising within Herefordshire & Worcestershire in 2015/ 16 was 387,000 tonnes. This has increased by 10,700 tonnes since 2009/10. However, this has been largely down to an increase in the number of households within the authorities. In reality, the amount of municipal waste generated per household has fallen from 1.23 tpa in 2009 to 1.13 tpa in 2015.

The number of households within both Herefordshire & Worcestershire is expected to increase significantly over the next twenty years. As such, although the amount of municipal waste generated per household is not expected to increase, the total amount of municipal waste will. The latest household projection figures have been obtained from the authorities and incorporated into the revised waste projections presented below.

The Partnership will continue to closely monitor waste arisings within the authorities and update predictions against changes to household projections as they become available.



Climate Change

The Partnership continues to understand the importance of viewing waste as a resource and seeks to provide waste management services that work towards minimising greenhouse gas emissions.

The waste collection authorities within Herefordshire & Worcestershire all request environmental policies incorporating carbon footprint information when tendering for services. Work has also been undertaken to optimise the efficiency of waste collection rounds to help reduce fuel consumption.

The recovery of residual waste through the EfW at Hartlebury and its subsequent diversion of waste from landfill, is significantly reducing the carbon footprint of waste management activities across the authorities. The EfW exports electricity directly into the national grid which will help reduce our reliance on fossil fuels. Opportunities for exporting heat from the facility are continually being explored and, if implemented, will provide additional carbon reductions.

Update on Target 1 – Monitoring our Carbon Footprint

Greenhouse gas emissions from waste management activities within Herefordshire & Worcestershire will be reduced by the changes outlined above. The authorities are in the process of collating waste collection and waste disposal data to estimate the carbon impact of their services. However, due to the considerable fund and staff constraints being placed on the authorities, additional, more detailed, monitoring of the greenhouse gas emissions from waste services is not considered to be necessary or appropriate at this time.

Waste Prevention

Waste prevention is a key principle of the Strategy. The Partnership continues to promote waste prevention through support and publicity of the national waste prevention initiatives *Love Food Hate Waste* and *Master Composters*. A Waste Prevention Officer and a Waste Education Officer are in post to help support waste prevention initiatives across the authorities.

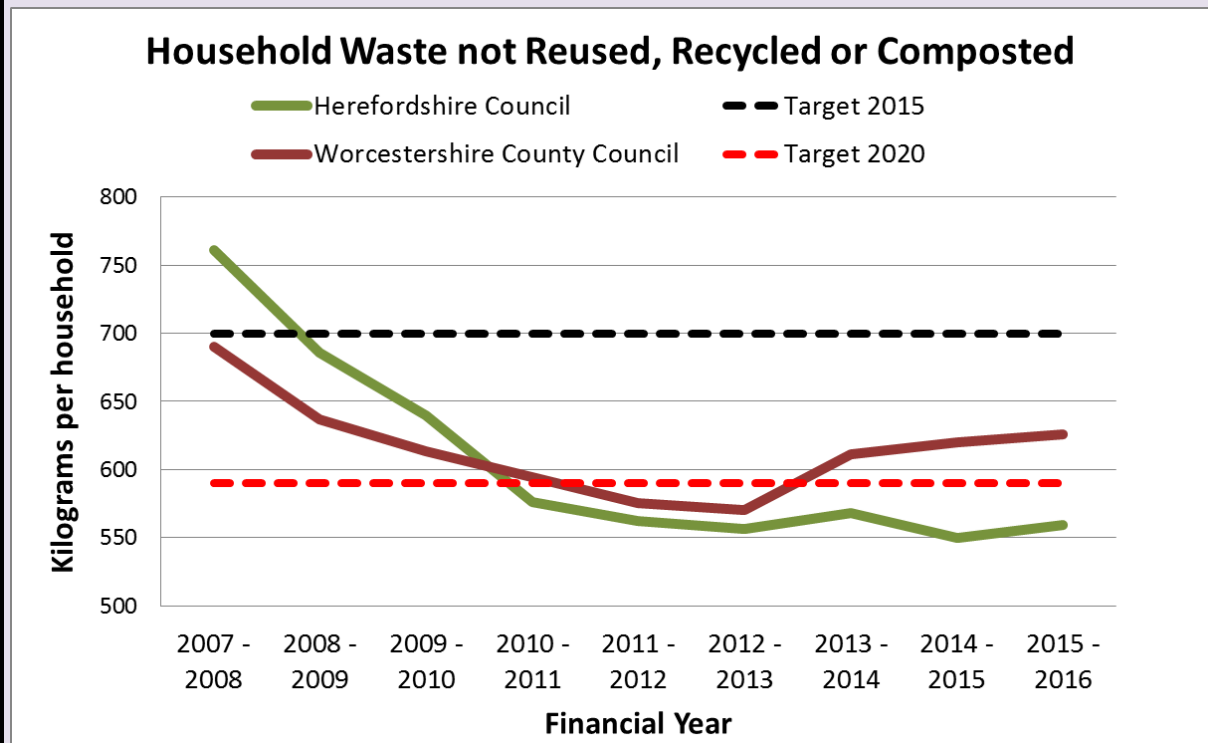
To help encourage reducing the amount of residual waste produced, waste collection authorities now place restrictions on residual waste collections through bin size/ sack number limits.

Reuse has been introduced to a number of the household recycling centres (HRCs) across Herefordshire & Worcestershire. This not only reduces waste to be managed but also supports a number of charities and 3rd sector organisations.

The Partnership understands the importance of coordinated education and awareness raising to promote effective waste prevention. Reduced funding means that the scope for implementing such campaigns is limited at this time. However, where practicable, the authorities will work together to ensure a coherent waste prevention message is publicised.

Update on Target 2 - Reduction in the amount of Household Waste not Reused, Recycled or Composted.

Herefordshire & Worcestershire currently produce 559 and 626 kilograms respectively of household waste per household (kg/hh) that is not reused recycled or composted¹. The Partnership has been successful in achieving the 2015 target of reducing residual household waste by 35% of year 2000 levels. The target for 2020 (a 45% reduction based on 2000 levels) is becoming increasingly challenging due to the significant reductions in funding. However, the Partnership will continue to do whatever is feasible and affordable, to reduce residual waste through waste prevention and increases to recycling/ composting.



¹ 2015-16, NI191 figures from Waste Data Flow

Recycling and Composting

The authorities across Herefordshire & Worcestershire have continued to expand their kerbside recycling collection service which is now available to 100% of properties across the Partnership area. To provide consistency to residents, a common core waste collection service is provided across all the authorities that offers a commingled collection service for materials including paper, card, cartons, cans, plastic and glass². A garden waste collection service is also available to the majority of residents for an additional charge.

Recycling and composting at HRCs continues to improve with the sites now recycling more than 70% of material brought into the site. Recycling of plasterboard is now available, and trial schemes are in operation for the recycling of carpets and mattresses at selected HRCs.

Street sweepings collected by the authorities street cleansing teams are now also recycled.

Bring sites across the Partnership area are being rationalised to reflect the increase in coverage of the kerbside collection service. However, the waste collection authorities are continuing to investigate options for brings sites to recycle material not collected at kerbside, for example textiles and waste electronic & electrical equipment.

A declining, and for some materials, volatile market for recyclable material has provided additional challenges to the Partnership's desire to increase recycling. For example, in 2012 the Partnership recycled more than 12,000 tonnes of timber. However, since 2013, the economics of recycling timber has changed significantly and, as a result, the majority of the timber collected is now used as a biomass fuel for energy production. Whilst this still diverts this material from landfill, it does reduce the amount of material recycled across the Partnership.

In 2014/15, the recycling and composting rate across Herefordshire & Worcestershire was 40%. If the recycling of timber had remained an option for the authorities then the Partnership's target of 43% recycling and composting by 2014 would have been achieved.

Update on Target 3 – Household Recycling & Composting Targets

The Partnership's current recycling and composting performance falls below the national recycling and composting targets of 45% by 2015 and 50% by 2020. The Partnership is still committed to supporting its contribution to the national target by maintaining the current level of performance and, where financially viable, introducing new initiatives to improve overall performance. However, current budget and staffing constraints mean that significant awareness raising to increase participation, or major changes to the services provided, to increase performance is not possible.

Update on Target 4 – Household Waste Recycling Act

The Household Waste Recycling Act 2003 required local authorities in England to collect at least 2 recyclable materials from all households by 2010. Within the Strategy the Partnership committed to continue to meet this requirement. In fact, the Partnership has exceeded these expectations by collecting glass, plastic, metals and paper from more than 95% of households.

² Glass collection is not available to the small proportion of properties that are classified as 'hard to reach' and as such are offered a bag rather than bin collection for recyclables.

Recovery

The Partnership has made significant progress on plans to maximise recovery of residual waste and divert it from landfill. The EfW at Hartlebury is diverting an additional 200,000 tonnes of municipal waste from landfill. The facility exports electricity directly into the national grid. It has also been enabled to operate as a combined heat and power (CHP) plant which will allow the recovery of heat, when an appropriate user becomes available.

Update on Target 5 – Recovery Target

The Partnership aimed to recover value from a minimum of 78% of municipal waste by 2015. A delay in the procurement and build of the EfW has meant that this target has not yet been achieved. However, now that the facility is fully operational, the recovery rate for the Partnership is expected to exceed the target. If a viable market becomes available for the recycling of bottom ash produced as part of the EfW process, then recovery would be further increased.

Disposal

The Partnership, through the activities outlined above is committed to diverting waste away from landfill through prevention, recycling, composting and recovery.

Update on Target 6 – Reduction in Biodegradable Municipal Waste Landfilled.

The Strategy committed to reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste landfilled in line with allowances set by Government under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme. This Scheme was abolished as part of the Government's Waste Policy Review, and as a result, there is no mechanism for measuring or monitoring performance against this target. The specifics of this target are no longer appropriate and should no longer be considered part of the Strategy. However, the principle behind it, to divert biodegradable waste away from landfill, is still valued by the Partnership, and will be delivered through the Recovery Target (Target 5) described above.

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Waste Strategy

for Herefordshire and Worcestershire

**Managing waste
for a brighter future**



**The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy
for Herefordshire and Worcestershire 2004 - 2034
First review August 2011**

Contents

	Page
Foreword	3
1 Introduction	
1.1 Why do we need a Strategy	4
1.2 How has the Revised Strategy Been Developed?	4
1.3 Consultation	4
1.4 What This Strategy Does Not Cover	5
1.5 Period Covered by the Strategy	5
1.6 Other documents	5
2 Our Principles for Municipal Waste	6
3 Policies, Targets and the Way Forward	8
3.1 General policies	8
3.2 Climate Change	9
3.3 Waste Prevention	9
3.4 Re-use	12
3.5 Recycle/Compost	12
3.6 Recovery	15
3.7 Disposal	16
3.8 Awareness Raising	16
3.9 Partnerships	17
3.10 Planning and Economic Opportunities	18
3.11 Transport	19
3.12 Other Waste Streams	19

Foreword

Not so many years ago, waste was not the issue it is today. We did not create the volume of waste we do now, and all that went in the bin was mainly ash, kitchen waste and some packaging - which ended up on the local tip. Now we live in changing times. The advent of consumerism and a more affluent and throwaway society has led to changes in our lifestyle and the way goods and materials are packaged.

In 2009/10 the cost of dealing with municipal waste in the two counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire was £51 million and the costs are increasing. Landfill tax is currently set at £56 per tonne and with a year on year increase will reach £80 per tonne from April 2014. New treatment facilities are needed to treat our waste so that we can meet the changes in legislation. We must make tough decisions as to how to tackle the problem.

Driven by Government and European legislation and a higher social awareness, we all need to rethink how we deal with our waste.

This reviewed Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire sets out the problems, looks at our success to date, where we are now and how we can move forward.

As communities, we must reduce the amount of waste that is produced. This is a key element to our strategy. We must reduce, re-use, recycle and compost more. We must also think of waste as being a resource from which as much value as possible should be recovered.

This reviewed Strategy has been developed by the Joint Members Waste Resource Management Forum made up of elected representatives from all the local authorities in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.

The successful introduction of household recycling schemes across the two counties has shown we can all play our part. Together we can make a difference.

Councillor Anthony Blagg
Chairman of Joint Members Waste Resource Management Forum August 2011



1.0 Introduction

1.1 Why do we need a Strategy?

- 1.1.1 The next two decades will continue to see waste management in the United Kingdom transformed. The challenges presented by climate change, along with ever more stringent Government targets and new UK and European legislation will drive these changes. At the same time the service expectations of our customers continue to rise year on year. If the transformation is to be successful and actively engage our communities there needs to continue to be a well thought out local Strategy in place to guide all important decisions and commitments.
- 1.1.2 The need to achieve efficiencies in the delivery of public services has also made it increasingly important for all partners to work together through an integrated Strategy which encompasses collection and disposal functions. The purpose of this first revision is to clarify key issues, give clear direction on waste management in the two counties and set out and co-ordinate general principles, policies and targets across all authorities in Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- 1.1.3 The aim of this Strategy is to decrease waste production and increase the recovery of value from waste (to re-use it, recycle it, compost it, or recover value in other ways) by treating waste as a resource.
- 1.1.4 The Strategy will also encourage and ensure that partnerships continue to be developed between all the parties involved in the management of municipal waste in the two counties of Herefordshire and Worcestershire, decreasing reliance on landfill and ensuring that waste management is sustainable and provides value for money for local communities, tax payers and fee paying customers.



*"The council have made it easier by providing two wheelie bins, it is like they are organising you. I could have done it before but didn't."
Wychavon resident.*

1.2 How has the Revised Strategy Been Developed?

- 1.2.1 This first revision, replaces the original Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy for Herefordshire and Worcestershire published in 2004.
- 1.2.2 This Strategy has been prepared by the Joint Members Waste Resource Management Forum which represents the eight local authorities across Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- 1.2.3 In reviewing the Strategy we have looked at the wide range of options available to us, for example preventing and re-using waste, recycling and composting waste and dealing with any remaining waste that cannot be re-used or recycled.
- 1.2.4 The possible environmental effects of the Strategy have been considered by undertaking a systematic appraisal known as a 'Strategic Environmental Assessment'. The results of this process have ensured that the Strategy addresses all of the relevant environmental issues. The Strategic Environmental Assessment is included as Annex F.

1.3 Consultation

- 1.3.1 Successfully implementing the Strategy is not just a matter for Local Authorities. Everyone within our communities has an active role to play and we have sought the views and support of everyone who has a stake in this process including householders, local businesses, the Environment Agency, the waste management industry, the community, voluntary sector and the waste management contractors partnering the Councils. Annex H contains full details of the consultation process and outcomes.

- 1.3.2 The consultation process proved invaluable in developing a revised Strategy. Focus Groups enabled us to seek the views of residents that without this opportunity may not have provided us with their valuable input. We received an excellent response to the public postal survey with a response rate of over 20%. We were also pleased to receive responses from a variety of stakeholders and interested parties who provided us with detailed and challenging comments reflecting a range of views and issues. We would like to thank everyone who took the time to get involved and respond. This input has helped us to develop a more relevant and robust Strategy.
- 1.3.3 The Strategy is available via the internet and in order to minimise environmental impact, hard copies will only be provided on request.

1.4 What This Strategy Does Not Cover

- 1.4.1 Firstly, this Strategy does not consider the location of any waste management facilities. For Worcestershire this will be covered by a new Waste Core Strategy which is now being prepared by the County Council and in Herefordshire by the Local Development Framework (LDF). The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy focuses on what needs to be done in order to make decisions about what processes, technologies and facilities are needed in order to meet the challenges over the next two decades.
- 1.4.2 Other than the relatively small amounts of commercial waste collected and disposed of by the Waste Collection and Disposal Authorities in Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the revised Strategy does not cover other waste types such as industrial or construction wastes. The collection, treatment and disposal of these are not the responsibility of the Local Authorities that have prepared this document. The priority at this stage is to develop a Strategy for wastes for which we do have a statutory responsibility – i.e. municipal waste. The Waste Core Strategy and LDF will, however, deal with the planning issues relating to all controlled wastes.

1.5 Period Covered by the Strategy

- 1.5.1 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy covers a period of thirty years (2004 – 2034) and will continue to be reviewed at least every five years, taking into account any new guidance, targets or changes in legislation and new technology or other significant development.

1.6 Other documents

A series of annexes accompany this headline document:

Annex A	Waste Growth
Annex B	Waste Prevention Options Appraisal
Annex C	Recycling & Composting Options Appraisal
Annex D	Residual Waste Options Appraisal
Annex E	Scoping Report to inform Strategic Environmental Assessment
Annex F	Strategic Environmental Assessment
Annex G	Achievements so Far
Annex H	Consultation process and outcomes
Annex I	Action Plan
Annex J	Glossary



2.0 Our Principles for Municipal Waste

Over the next 20 – 25 years we aim to change the way that municipal waste is managed in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. Our principles are as follows:

Principle One

Meeting the challenge of Climate Change by viewing waste as a resource

What we do about waste is a significant part of how we treat our environment. Cutting down on the amount of waste produced, reducing our use of natural resources, recycling materials and recovering energy from those we can no longer use, is a vital part of moving us towards more sustainable living. The Partnership will view waste as a resource and seek to maximise the resource potential of waste. We will understand the environmental impacts of any decisions and aim to ensure policies, collection and treatment methods reduce the impact of resource depletion and Greenhouse Gas emissions.

Principle Two

Commitment to the Waste Hierarchy of which Waste Prevention is the top

The principle upon which the Strategy is built is that of waste prevention, the top of the Waste Hierarchy as in Waste Strategy for England 2007. Through making opportunities available, designing appropriate collection systems and raising awareness, the Partnership will endeavour to ensure that everyone in our communities can play an active role in ensuring that the amount of waste is reduced before it enters the waste stream.

The Partnership will continue to promote waste prevention through a variety of campaigns and initiatives that will be reviewed to ensure that the most effective campaigns, targeting key waste streams such as food waste, are implemented.

Principle Three

Influencing Government, Waste Producers and the Wider Community

The Partnership will lobby Government to do more to combat the production of excess waste material. Where possible we will work with waste producers to understand what can be achieved together in reducing the amount of waste that is produced. We will endeavour to influence commercial waste producers in an attempt to marry up the increasing recycling, composting and waste prevention performance in municipal waste management with that of commercial waste.

The Partnership will prioritise awareness raising and engagement as a means to increase the performance of waste prevention and recycling/composting initiatives. We see this as a vital tool to engage all stakeholders. Targeted and co-ordinated campaigns will ensure consistency across the authorities.

The Partnership will ensure its officers and Members are fully aware of the aims and objectives (through the principles, policies and targets) of the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy.

Principle Four

Continued Commitment to Re-use, Recycling and Composting

The Partnership will continue to improve the efficiency and operation of its core recycling service. We will adopt a pooled target for re-use, recycling and composting, however there will be a minimum performance level that each authority will need to meet. We will aspire to achieve the long term national recycling and composting targets, however, we will not compromise the environmental and economic performance of schemes just to meet notional, non statutory targets.

Principle Five

Minimising The Use Of Landfill

The Partnership has recognised that the landfilling of wastes is at the bottom of the Waste Hierarchy and for good reason. This waste of resources will be avoided where other options are environmentally and economically beneficial. If utilising waste treatment capacity beyond our own borders is more economically viable and environmentally sound than landfilling waste within our counties, then this will be looked at as an option.

Principle Six

Partnership

The Partnership will ensure knowledge, best practice and experience are shared and will work together to ensure that this Strategy is implemented. We will aim to adopt a common approach across the counties in areas of waste policy.

The Partnership cannot carry out the Strategy alone. We will actively develop partnerships with all sectors.

Principle Seven

Monitoring and Review

The Partnership will ensure that it keeps up to date in implementing the best possible management systems that are needed to deliver this Strategy using a flexible and integrated approach to the waste treatment methods used. We will ensure we understand the material we collect and the impacts of the services we provide.

The Strategy will be reviewed at least every five years to determine progress and update it in the light of new legislation, new technology or other significant developments. Regular communication with partners and the public will take place to ensure that all stakeholders are aware of progress and involved in changes made.

Principle Eight

Customer Focus

As part of the development and implementation of this Strategy, the Partnership will continue to engage with local people and other partners about the way in which waste is managed in Herefordshire and Worcestershire. We will design the services that we provide around the customers that we serve seeking to balance the longer term need to reduce the amount of waste generated and disposed of with the range and type of services necessary to meet our customers needs.

Principle Nine

Value for Money

The Partnership will work to deliver the Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy in the most effective, efficient and economic way. We will aim to view waste collection and disposal costs holistically to ensure they provide best value and a cost benefit to the Partnership and our customers.

Principle Ten

Consideration of Social, Environmental and Economic Impacts

The Partnership will consider the holistic business case in terms of social, environmental and economic impacts in its approach to waste management across the counties.

3.0 Policies, Targets and the Way Forward

3.1 General Policies

- 3.1.1 Through the consultation, an overwhelming majority of people felt that dealing with waste and recycling is everyone's responsibility and that it is important for the councils to spend money on waste and recycling services.
- 3.1.2 This chapter sets out the policies and targets that we have agreed to achieve our principles. We have developed a number of general policies which relate to the overarching principles of our Strategy as below:

Policy 1

Local Authorities in Herefordshire and Worcestershire will adopt the following Waste Hierarchy as a template for their approach to Waste Management, ensuring that waste is prevented wherever possible first before considering other options.



Policy 2

The Local Authorities will ensure that waste management in Herefordshire and Worcestershire provides good value for money to local communities, taxpayers and fee-paying customers.

Policy 3

The Local Authorities will design the services that they provide around the customers that they serve seeking to balance the longer term need to reduce the amount of waste generated and disposed of with the range and type of services necessary to meet our customers needs. This will include a range of core kerbside services for commingled recyclables and residual waste together with additional services for other waste streams that may be provided on a charged for basis.

Policy 4

The Local Authorities are committed to achieve existing and future waste targets set within the local area.

Policy 5

The Local Authorities will seek to adopt and implement sustainable procurement policies and practices for goods and services (including waste management services) that they buy that actively seek to minimise waste and support the use of re-used and recycled materials.



"The council should collect a wider range of plastics for recycling"
Bromsgrove resident.

Policy 6

The Local Authorities will continue to work towards a consistent and transparent approach in developing and monitoring performance.

3.2 Climate Change

- 3.2.1 Reducing the carbon footprint of waste management activities within the two counties will be achieved through our obligation under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme and target 1 below.
- 3.2.2 Through the consultation, the majority of people felt that there was a link between how waste is dealt with and climate change.

**Policy 7**

The Local Authorities will actively seek to provide waste management services in a manner that minimises greenhouse gas emissions and other impacts that contribute to Climate Change.

Target 1

In order to ensure that this target is robust, we are currently developing a meaningful target that will enable us to monitor our carbon footprint and set targets for reduction.

**3.3 Waste Prevention**

- 3.3.1 As a result of the waste prevention measures introduced as part of the Strategy in 2004, the growth in municipal waste arisings in the two counties has stopped and waste is now starting to decline (see 2.3 in Annex G for municipal waste growth from 2000/01 to 2007/08). In future years to 2034, it is estimated that municipal waste will only grow in line with the increase in the number of households across the counties identified in the Regional Spatial Strategy (see Annex A).
- 3.3.2 An important way of reducing residual waste will be through a combination of alternate weekly collections and/or decreasing container capacity over time. This is now referred to as the 'Core Collection Service'.

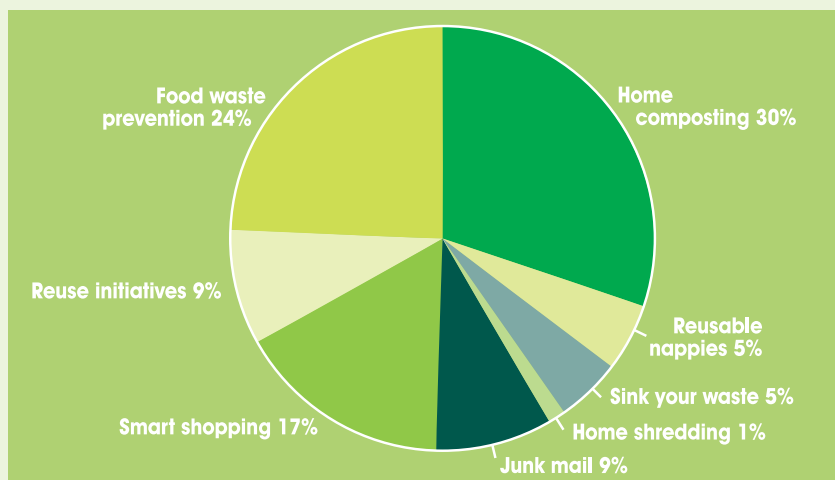
Policy 8

The Core Collection Service:

1. All authorities will collect the same materials for recycling through a commingled collection;
2. All authorities will prevent waste and increase the amount recycled through restricting:
 - a) Collection frequency and/or
 - b) Container capacity



- 3.3.3 An assessment of options for waste prevention has been carried out and is included as Annex B. The diagram below shows the potential relative contribution of Prevention and Re-use measures to total avoidable waste at 2020/21 levels:



- 3.3.4 The assessment of options indicates that home composting, food waste prevention, 'smart shopping', and both re-use and junk mail initiatives could have the biggest impact in terms of reducing both waste collection and disposal costs.

Policy 9

The Local Authorities will implement uniform waste prevention initiatives across the counties to reduce the kg/household of waste collected and disposed of but not recycled, composted or re-used as a minimum in line with the aims of National Waste Strategy for England 2007.

- 3.3.5 Home composting continues to provide the single most effective potential prevention measure. Our approach is to promote home composting to reduce the environmental impacts of disposing of compostable waste. We will continue to promote home composting through the sale of subsidised compost bins and provide advice to residents through the 'Master Composter' scheme. Home composting also reduces collection and disposal costs and ensures that value is recovered from the waste material.
- 3.3.6 The authorities are working with agencies on national campaigns to prevent waste such as Waste Resource Action Programme's food waste reduction and 'Shop Smart' campaigns. We are also working at a local level to develop initiatives such as recruiting and training volunteers to promote waste prevention and give advice.
- 3.3.7 Herefordshire and Worcestershire continue to be innovative in developing and promoting the 'Sink your Waste' campaign for food waste disposers and thus preventing food waste from entering the municipal waste stream.

Policy 10

The Local Authorities will continue to develop and implement the most sustainable ways of processing green and kitchen waste within the household.

- 3.3.8 We will seek to minimise the amount of unsolicited mail that we receive and deliver and we will continue to promote the 'Jilt the Junk Mail' campaign to raise awareness of the issue and encourage



people to register with the Mailing Preference Service and Royal Mail's door-to-door service in a bid to help them reduce the amount of unsolicited mail that they receive.

- 3.3.9 The European Union Packaging Directive encourages producers to reduce packaging and recycle and recover packaging waste and now most bottles, jars, cans and plastic containers are lighter than they were before 2000. However, there is still a problem of excess packaging around many products. The Government is also working with the retail sector, primarily through the Courtauld Commitment which aims to design out packaging waste growth, deliver reductions in packaging waste and identify ways to reduce food waste. The Authorities will seek to minimise packaging in the procurement of goods, continue to lobby for reduced packaging and support local initiatives to reduce the usage of disposable carrier bags through local organisations and initiatives.



Policy 11

The Joint Members Waste Resource Management Forum for Herefordshire and Worcestershire will lobby for measures to combat waste growth in areas such as product design, packaging and other producer responsibility issues, which are most effectively pursued at the national and international levels.

- 3.3.10 We need to continue to build upon the success of current waste prevention initiatives where practicable and financially viable, ensuring that they continue to deliver effective results. Our approach will be to encourage and achieve waste prevention. The Waste Prevention team employed by Herefordshire and Worcestershire Councils promotes these initiatives in partnership with all the authorities.
- 3.3.11 Our Waste Prevention Target is:

Target 2

To achieve the national reductions in household residual waste (waste not re-used, recycled or composted) of 35% by 2015 and 45% by 2020, based on 2000 levels.

Achieving the target:

The aim of the target is to achieve reductions in the amount of household waste that is not re-used, recycled or composted as set by the Government in Waste Strategy for England 2007. This will be done by concentrating on waste prevention, i.e. limiting the amount of non recyclable waste collected, promoting re-use and home composting and maximising on the amount recycled and composted through collection and disposal systems.

Authority	Kg per household 2000	2009/10 performance	Target March 2015	Target March 2020
Herefordshire	1,077	640	700	592
Worcestershire	1,075	614	699	591

Value foods have lots of packaging but there is no choice but to buy them because of the cost of alternatives” Herefordshire resident.

3.4 Re-use

- 3.4.1 We will continue to actively encourage, develop and promote re-use initiatives wherever practicable and financially viable. We acknowledge the strengths of the Third Sector in helping to deliver our objectives and that if the market can deal with "waste", costs to the authorities can be reduced. We will continue to support the work of the charitable and not-for-profit sector, in particular those Third Sector organisations which are involved in the Social Enterprises Waste and Recycling Forum (SEWAR) which has been set up by the Waste Prevention team.
- 3.4.2 We acknowledge the role of other sectors in supporting these operations and this continues to be supported through payment of re-use credits.
- 3.4.3 'Freecycle', and other internet-based waste exchange initiatives are an ideal way for local residents to exchange unwanted goods. We will continue to promote this volunteer led project by conducting training sessions on how to register and use this website and by raising the profile of Freecycle.
- 3.4.4 We will continue to promote alternative ways of disposing of unwanted furniture and appliances.
- 3.4.5 We are looking at the option of providing two recycling/re-use centres in Worcestershire. These could accept a full range of materials for recycling and re-use. Where practicable re-use facilities will be provided at all Household Waste Sites.
- 3.4.6 The authorities will investigate ways in which material collected through bulky waste collections can be diverted to re-use organisations and will continue to promote re-use organisations at the point of bookings for bulky items being made.
- 3.4.7 Textiles are collected by third sector agencies, charity shops, bring banks and at Household Waste Sites. The Authorities will not be collecting textiles as part of the Core collection service and therefore wherever possible we will work with the Third Sector to enable them to continue to provide bring banks and kerbside collections of textiles.



"Children should be educated about recycling so it becomes part of their lives"
Wychavon resident.

Policy 12

The Local Authorities will work with both the Third Sector and contractors to provide routes for goods and materials to be re-used.

3.5 Recycle/Compost

- 3.5.1 Recycling and composting are the gateways to changing attitudes as they enable communities to play their part. They ensure that valuable natural resources are recovered and reduce the demand for virgin materials. The ultimate aim of the Local Authorities is to have a fully integrated collection system that meets the needs of customers and is complementary to the waste treatment and recycling methods used.



- 3.5.2 Our approach is to provide a common core waste collection service with commingled recycling collected from the household and sorted at our EnviroSort Material Reclamation Facility in Worcestershire. Recycling collections will be adapted to suit local priorities and delivered according to need.
- 3.5.3 The commingled recyclate will include glass, paper, card, cartons, cans and plastics. This range of materials will be extended if and when possible in accordance with recycling market demand.
- 3.5.4 We will actively support the market to stimulate demand for additional types of recycled plastics and glass through our procurement of goods.
- 3.5.5 In addition to the core collection service some authorities have introduced chargeable garden waste collections according to identified local customer demand in order to increase the amount of waste recycled and composted. Authorities may choose to operate paid for collections of garden waste where both additional collection and disposal costs will be considered and agreed prior to service implementation. However, the Partnership's preferred approach is to promote home composting.
- 3.5.6 Outside of Wychavon there are no current plans to introduce separate collections of food waste.
- 3.5.7 Treatment processes may separate some of the material left in the residual waste stream so that it can be recycled.
- 3.5.8 We are actively exploring ways of recycling street sweepings.



Policy 13

The Local Authorities are committed to achieve targets set within this Strategy and have regard to the national targets set out in Waste Strategy for England 2007 for recycling, composting and recovery.

- 3.5.9 With the provision of the EnviroSort facility the authorities will seek to expand recycling services to the commercial sector. In line with Waste Strategy 2007, the Authorities are keen to explore options for encouraging businesses to recycle waste and to introduce chargeable recycling collection services to them wherever possible.
- 3.5.10 Bring recycling sites still have a significant part to play, even where there is substantial kerbside collection. There is certainly a need for these facilities where it is not possible to provide a kerbside collection – for example in remote rural or hard to reach urban areas. Bring recycling sites may also offer the best opportunity for collecting other materials not collected through kerbside schemes e.g. textiles.
- 3.5.11 We acknowledge the role of other sectors in supporting these operations and this continues to be supported through payment of recycling credits.
- 3.5.12 The authorities will work to have standardised products collected through bring recycling sites and will look at the option of contracts covering wider areas.



Policy 14

The Local Authorities will continue to provide and enhance bring recycling sites, where considered beneficial, and to supplement kerbside collection schemes and facilities provided at Household Waste Sites.

- 3.5.14 To emphasise the recycling aspect at all Household Waste Sites, they will all be re-branded as **Household Recycling Centres**.
- 3.5.15 Household recycling centres play a significant role in diverting waste away from landfill for recycling and composting and are a key interface with the public. They provide a local facility where the public can recycle a wide range of materials.
- 3.5.16 Household recycling centres will continue to provide facilities for residents to dispose of garden waste for composting and a place where they are also able to buy back the composted material as soil conditioner.



Policy 15

The Waste Disposal Authorities, in conjunction with their partners, will maximise the potential of Household Recycling Centres to make sure that they provide a quality service and enable maximum recycling/re-use wherever possible.

- 3.5.17 Our Re-use, Recycling and Composting Targets are:

Target 3

To work towards achieving national recycling/composting levels of household waste of 45% by 31st March 2015 and 50% by 31st March 2020.

Achieving the Target:

The aim of the target is to achieve the minimum recycling and composting levels that the Government has set in Waste Strategy for England 2007. The Authorities have committed and will continue to commit funding and set their fees and charges in order to reach the targets through a combination of approaches including promotion, communication, collection and treatment processes

The Partnership has set a target of 43% recycling/composting before 31st March 2014. As new collection and treatment methods are introduced, the Partnership will review its ability to exceed this target in line with the 2015 national target of 45%

Target 4

To continue to meet the requirements of the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003.

Achieving the Target:

The aim of the target is to meet the requirements of the Household Waste Recycling Act 2003, which requires all Local Authorities in England to provide a kerbside collection of at least 2 recyclable materials from all households by 31st December 2010 unless the cost of doing so would be unreasonably high or comparable alternative arrangements are available. This is an essential part of the overall Strategy to achieve Government targets and diversion from landfill.

*"There are no recycling facilities at the flats where I live"
Redditch resident.*

3.6 Recovery

- 3.6.1 We live in a changing world, with new technologies emerging that should deliver more sustainable waste management solutions. The Partnership needs to ensure that this Strategy is flexible so that we can take advantage of these new technologies, as well as established and proven technologies, thereby enabling us to meet the challenging targets for the future.
- 3.6.2 The residual options appraisal (Annex D) examines a range of options for the introduction of residual waste treatment capacity for Herefordshire and Worcestershire. These strategic options were appraised against a number of environmental, social and economic criteria in order to identify the option(s) that perform best overall. The Partnership has examined these options and the conclusions of the appraisal and agrees that they should inform the decision on any application for planning permission for a waste treatment solution for Herefordshire and Worcestershire. The appraisal will be reviewed in the light of any decisions on the waste treatment solution for Herefordshire and Worcestershire.
- 3.6.3 Recovering value from waste includes recycling, composting and treatment methods which produce a useful by-product, such as energy.
- 3.6.4 Through the consultation, an overwhelming majority of people felt that any left over waste which cannot be recycled, composted or re-used should be used as fuel to produce energy such as electricity. Minimising the impact on the environment was highlighted as the most important consideration in deciding what to do with left over waste.

"People need more information about the options for treatment that recovers value, such as energy, from waste"
Herefordshire resident.



Policy 16

Waste management methods will promote sustainable waste management by considering and balancing environmental, social and economic impacts. Both established and emerging technologies will be considered to enable a flexible approach to the waste treatment methods that will be adopted.

- 3.6.5 Our Recovery Target is:

Target 5

By 2015 or earlier if practicable, we will recover value from a minimum of 78% of municipal waste.

Achieving the Target:

The aim of this target is to achieve the Best Practicable Environmental Option (BPEO) for Herefordshire and Worcestershire that was identified in July 2003 through a portfolio of treatment options- i.e. a minimum of 33% of municipal waste to be recycled and/or composted, a maximum of 22% landfilled and the remainder for energy recovery. Whilst recognising that the BPEO is no longer part of planning guidance, it remains as an adopted policy within Herefordshire and Worcestershire.



3.7 Disposal

- 3.7.1 It has long been recognised within the two counties, that reliance on landfill is not a long term, sustainable option and our principle is to reduce use of landfill as much as we can. However landfill will continue to play a part in the way waste is managed within Herefordshire and Worcestershire as landfill is the only suitable disposal route for certain waste streams and process residues. Whatever other treatment methods are used, the Partnership will aim to recycle and recover the maximum amounts possible and reduce reliance upon landfill in line with the BPEO target.



Policy 17

The Local Authorities will increase recovery and diversion of biodegradable waste away from landfill in line with the EU Landfill Directive to ensure we achieve, as a minimum, the requirements of the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme.

- 3.7.2 Our Disposal Target is:

Target 6

To reduce the amount of biodegradable municipal waste landfilled in order to meet the yearly allowances set by Government under the Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme. In particular in target years as below:

102,684 tonnes during April 2012 to March 2013

71,851 tonnes during April 2019 to March 2020

The trading scheme will be used to buy and sell allowances where this is appropriate.

Achieving the Target:

The aim of the target is to ensure that the Authorities meet the requirements of the Landfill Directive, which requires that the amount of bio-degradable waste that is sent to landfill is reduced. The introduction of the Core collection service waste prevention and the new residual waste treatment processes will enable these targets to be met.



3.8 Awareness Raising

- 3.8.1 Building on past success the Partnership will continue to raise awareness of waste issues with Elected Members and our communities. We also need to continue to effect behavioural change through delivery of the Core collection service. Raising awareness of the efficiency of our services is also an important part of our promotional activities.
- 3.8.2 Whilst it is important that there is collaboration and joint working to share good practice and be more cost effective, it is also important that the Local Authorities continue to develop their own initiatives and publicity programmes to accommodate local needs.
- 3.8.3 The Partnership recognises the importance of continuing to build on good media relationships to ensure that opportunities for awareness raising and publicity are used to maximum effect wherever possible.



- 3.8.4 The development and promotion of web sites and consistent use of web based material and enquiry portals also offer an important way of raising awareness, providing information and dealing with customer enquiries.
- 3.8.5 The next generation will be living with the effects of Climate Change and it is important to influence their behaviour now. Schools through their work with young people and the wider community have a vital role working towards a more sustainable future, both in educating the young people themselves and through their parents and the wider family. The Partnership will continue to provide recyclable collections to schools and increase the amount of schools that have a recycling collection wherever practicable.

Policy 18

The Local Authorities will continue to work together on waste prevention, re-use and recycling schemes and raise awareness of the links between these and Climate Change.

Policy 19

The Local Authorities will continue to raise awareness of resource management issues and link with national campaigns and promotions where appropriate to achieve maximum impact and results.

3.9 Partnerships

- 3.9.1 Joint working between local authorities is becoming increasingly important as a means of delivering quality services to residents and meeting the UK's Landfill Directive obligations at affordable cost. This approach is particularly important in two-tier areas, where responsibilities for waste collection and waste disposal are split between different authorities. As new, more sustainable ways of managing waste are introduced, it is becoming increasingly important to integrate collection and disposal which also brings the potential to generate efficiencies.

"If people knew what happened to recyclables then they are likely to recycle more"
Malvern Hills resident.



- 3.9.2 In Herefordshire and Worcestershire, the local authorities have adopted a partnership approach to joint working through the Joint Member Waste Resource Management Forum and the Joint Officer Waste Resource Management Forum, which work very successfully and have developed this Strategy. The Member Forum will continue to consider future governance arrangements as new guidance is produced and any changes in legislation are announced. Delivery of the Strategy will require that the authorities continue to work together in order to meet objectives in the most effective, efficient and economic way.
- 3.9.3 The Third Sector, voluntary and community groups have a valuable role to play and can be innovative and bring a fresh perspective to waste management issues. The expertise and experience that some of these groups have in collecting and re-using materials and in education and awareness raising will have an important part to play in delivering the Strategy.



"A charge for collection of garden waste would encourage people to compost at home"
Herefordshire resident.

Policy 20

Re-use and recycling of waste materials by the commercial, voluntary and community sector will be actively encouraged and in appropriate circumstances supported and facilitated including through the use of partnership working.

3.10 Planning and Economic Opportunities

- 3.10.1 The economics of waste is changing. As the landfill tax increases, other waste treatment options become more cost effective for both local authorities and their partners, businesses, schools and any organisation that produces or handles waste. As new markets develop we will look to adopt alternative ways of dealing with waste which are more sustainable and cost effective.
- 3.10.2 Opportunities for more sustainable waste management, such as through the installation of food waste disposal units and provision of compost bins, will be explored through the local planning process for new housing developments wherever possible.

Policy 21

Opportunities for more sustainable waste management will be actively sought in all new developments as part of the planning process. Where necessary representations to Government will be made through the appropriate channels to seek amendments to planning legislation to support this and the other aims of this Strategy.

Policy 22

The Strategy will be aligned with key spatial and planning policies as they develop to ensure they are mutually supportive.

3.11 Transport

- 3.11.1 Efficient use of transport is a key factor in developing and implementing a sustainable waste management strategy. Currently, wherever practicable and cost effective, the transportation of waste and recycled materials is minimised through provision of local sites and by compacting materials. In the short to medium term, waste may need to be transported to national facilities in order to ensure that we meet the requirements of the Landfill Directive.
- 3.11.2 Adoption of a carbon footprint approach to transport where 'waste miles' are measured will support the decision making process for the provision of the core and local services.



Policy 23

The Local Authorities will design and operate collection, transfer, associated transport and treatment systems to minimise the overall carbon emissions (including "waste miles") arising from these elements of waste management activities and measured through target 1 of the Strategy.

3.12 Other Waste Streams

- 3.12.1 The authorities have a duty to collect certain other materials such as clinical waste and street sweepings. The Action Plan for these waste streams will be included in Annex I.

Policy 24

Individual policies will be prepared for specific waste streams where this is considered the best approach to preventing, re-using, recycling and recovering value from waste arising in these streams.



Managing waste for a brighter future



REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017**COMMUNITY PANEL SURVEY 2017**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor J Fisher
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation & Organisational Development
Ward(s) Affected	All
Key Decision	No

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To endorse the new Community Panel for delivery in November 2017.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive Committee is requested to resolve that

- 2.1 that the proposal to have a Community Panel be noted and endorsed.**

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Historically, Redditch Borough Council was part of the Worcestershire Viewpoint project, which consulted a Worcestershire-wide panel on issues relating to a wide range of public sector services and concerns. Until the May 2015 survey, this had received external funding.
- 3.2 On the cessation of the funding, Worcestershire County Council, as the coordinator of the survey, proposed that future arrangements would cost between £2300 and £3500 per year from each partner. This would include only limited set questions for the District Councils, which had to be the same across the County.
- 3.3 It was felt by the Policy Manager and the Head of Business Transformation that the proposed arrangement would not meet the needs of RBC and that pursuing our own corporate consultation would provide greater flexibility and reduced costs..
- 3.4 As the membership list for the Worcestershire Viewpoint belonged equally to RBC, this has been shared, following a consultation exercise with panel members to inform them of changes and ensure they were happy to be part of two panels. This membership has been supplemented by additional recruitment during 2017; the current membership stands at 579 individuals (442 online and 137 postal).
- 3.5 The first survey of the new Redditch Community Panel is proposed for November 2017; the Worcestershire Viewpoint Survey is active during May each year so another survey had to avoid this period to prevent consultation fatigue.
- 3.6 The draft survey (Appendix 1) has been designed to cover key issues and reflect the Council's strategic purposes and the content of the Council Plan. Managers have had an opportunity to suggest service related questions. It does not, however, cover every function of the Council.

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017

Financial Implications

- 3.7 There are limited financial implications arising directly from this report; the survey will be engaged with predominantly online, however, to ensure equality of access, some surveys will be sent through the post, which will incur printing and postage costs. The costs for printing and postage (and any potential return postage) of the paper surveys is approximately £600 (this may vary slightly subject to further potential increases in membership). Development, implementation and analysis of survey results would be covered by existing capacity within the Policy Team; this will all be covered by existing budgets.

Legal Implications

- 3.8 Certain functions of the Council, such as Community Safety have a statutory requirement to consult, which can be in part delivered through the Community Panel Survey.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.9 The results from the survey will help all parts of the Council, staff and Elected Members, in ensuring that we design and deliver appropriate services which meet the needs of our communities.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.10 The Community Panel Survey will enable interested residents to be involved, share their opinions and influence decision making. By listening to residents and recognising different needs, the Council will be better placed to design and deliver appropriate, coordinated and relevant services to the communities it serves. It will form part of a wider community engagement programme to be developed over the next few years, in line with the Redditch Community Engagement Strategy 2017-2020.
- 3.11 The survey aligns with the Council's approach to equality and diversity and will help the Council to understand the different opinions within the community.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Draft Community Panel Survey questions

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Tel.: 01527 881616



Redditch Borough Community Panel Survey 2017

This is our annual Community Panel Survey and the aim is to gather your views and opinions about the issues affecting residents of Redditch, Council Services and the local area; we will send you a similar survey once each year.

The survey should take approximately 15 minutes to complete.

The closing date for responses is **Friday 1 December 2017**. Thank you in advance for taking your time to complete this survey.

1. Please tell us where you live in.

Abbeydale	
Astwood Bank	
Batchley	
Brockhill	
Callow Hill	
Church Hill North	
Church Hill South	
Crabbs Cross	
Enfield	
Feckenham	
Greenlands	

Headless Cross	
Hunt End	
Ipsley	
Lakeside	
Lodge Park	
Matchborough East	
Matchborough West	
Oakenshaw	
Oakenshaw South	
Riverside	
Smallwood	

Southcrest	
St. Georges	
Town Centre	
Walkwood	
Webheath	
Winyates East	
Winyates Green	
Winyates West	
Wire Hill	
Woodrow North	
Woodrow South	

Involvement and Influence

2. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about involvement and influence?

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly
I like to be involved in decisions affecting Borough Council services					
I like to be involved in decisions affecting my local area					
I can influence decisions affecting Borough Council services					
I can influence decisions affecting my local area					
I know who my local councillor is and how to contact them					

Comments

Being Informed**3. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about being informed?**

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly
Information I need from the Borough Council is easy to find					
Information I need from the Borough Council is easy to understand					
I know how to raise a complaint to the Borough Council					
I know how to pass on a compliment to the Borough Council					

Comments

4. How would you like the Borough Council to keep you informed?

Letter		Local media		Social Media	
Council website		Face to face		Email	

Other (please specify)

Contacting the Borough Council**5. When was the last time you contacted Redditch Borough Council?**

In the last week		In the last 3 months		In the last 12 months		Never	
In the last month		In the last 6 months		12 months+ ago			

6. What method of contact did you use?

Telephone		Email		Website (online form)	
Face to face		Post		Not applicable	

Other (please specify)

7. Which service area did you contact?

Community Safety	
Community Service (e.g. Lifeline, Shopmobility)	
North Worcestershire Economic Development & Regeneration (NWEDR)	
Elections	
Environmental Service (e.g. waste, recycling, street scene)	
Finance (e.g. council tax, business rates)	
Human Resources	
Leisure & Cultural Services (e.g. Abbey Stadium, Palace Theatre)	
Planning & Building Control	
Housing (including Strategic Housing)	
Worcestershire Regulatory Services	
Not applicable	

Other (please specify)

8. How satisfied were you with the time taken for them to respond?

Very satisfied	
Satisfied	
Neither satisfied nor dissatisfied	

Dissatisfied	
Very dissatisfied	
Not applicable	

Comments

9. Did you feel the member of staff cared about the reason for your contact?

Yes	
-----	--

Somewhat	
----------	--

No	
----	--

Not applicable	
----------------	--

Comments

10. Did we meet your expectations?

Yes	
-----	--

Partially	
-----------	--

No	
----	--

Not applicable	
----------------	--

Comments

Waste, Recycling and the Environment**11. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about waste, recycling and the environment?**

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly
I understand what I can place in my green recycling bin					
I can recycle waste easily					
I understand what I can take to the household tip and recycling centre					
I am aware of the Borough Council's bulky waste collection service					
My local area is litter free					
My local area is free from dog mess					
My local area is free from fly tipping					
Public spaces are well maintained					
Public spaces have sufficient lighting					
I actively try to use less energy and water					
I am aware of the advice and support available to help me use less energy and water					

Waste, recycling
and environment
comments:

--

Getting Around

12. Do you have use of a car?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------

No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----	--------------------------

13. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about getting around?

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly	Not relevant to me
I am satisfied with the service provided by public buses						
I am satisfied with the train services in Redditch						
I am satisfied with the service provided by local taxis - daytime						
I am satisfied with the service provided by local taxis - night time						
Public paths and pavements are safe and easy to get around on						
Public roads are safe and easy to get around on						
Congestion is often a problem for me within the Borough						
There is sufficient, fairly priced public parking in the Borough						
I am aware of the Dial-A-Ride service						

Comments

--

Getting Online

14. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about getting online?

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly	**Not relevant to me
I have the skills and confidence to access information online						
I can access information and communicate online through a device in my home						
I can access information and communicate online through a device in my local area						

Comments

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15. ** If you say that getting online is not relevant to you, please explain why.

I don't own a device to get me online	
I have no access to the internet at home	
I have no interest in accessing information/communication online	

Other (please specify)

Leisure and Cultural Facilities/Services

16. How would you rate the provision of the following facilities/services in Redditch?

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	Don't know
Theatres						
Museums						
Libraries						
Village Halls/Community Centres						
Events e.g. Street Theatre						
Indoor sports						
Outdoor sports						
Parks & open spaces						
Allotments						

Comments

17. How would you rate the accessibility of the following facilities/services in Redditch?

	Very good	Good	Adequate	Poor	Very poor	Don't know
Theatres						
Museums						
Libraries						
Village Halls/Community Centres						
Events e.g. Street Theatre						
Indoor sports						
Outdoor sports						
Parks & open spaces						
Allotments						

Comments

18. How would you **improve** these facilities/services, if applicable?
Please be specific about area e.g. which park you are referring to.

Theatres	
Museums	
Libraries	
Village Halls/Community Centres	
Events e.g. Street Theatre	
Indoor sports	
Outdoor sports	
Parks & open spaces	
Allotments	

Issues Affecting Residents

19. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about issues which might be affecting residents of the Borough?

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly
There is sufficient support for families					
There is sufficient support for vulnerable individuals					
There is sufficient support for older people					
There is sufficient support for mental health & well-being					
Loneliness is a significant problem					
Fuel poverty (struggling to pay for heating/lighting) is a significant problem					
Household debt is a significant problem					

Comments

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Social Contact and Living Independently

20. To what extent do you agree/disagree with these statements about living independently and social contact?

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly	Not relevant to me
I am able to manage my household finances						
I can get the help and support I need from my family, friends or community						
I know how to access care/support for myself or those I care for						
I feel safe and respected when looked after by others						
I am aware of community activities/support in my local area						
I have good access to community activities and/or resources						
I have good social contact with people						
I am aware of the Shopmobility service (Redditch Town Centre)						
I am aware of the Lifeline service provided by the council						

Comments

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21. Are you a volunteer or family carer who looks after or supports someone else in their home who needs help with their day-to-day life due to disability, illness or old age?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------

No	<input type="checkbox"/>
----	--------------------------

22. Do you have any children under 18 living with you?

Yes	<input type="checkbox"/>
-----	--------------------------

No	<input type="checkbox"/>
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Regulatory Services

The enforcement of the Licensing, Environmental Health & Trading Standards functions is undertaken on behalf of Redditch Borough Council by 'Worcestershire Regulatory Services'. The primary aim of Worcestershire Regulatory Services is to ensure compliance with legislation so that consumers, businesses, employees, individuals and the environment are protected and transactions are fair and equitable.

23. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following statements?

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly	Not relevant to me
The environment in my area is relatively free from excessive noise						
I don't worry about the risk to my health when I go out/buy food from takeaways in my area						
I am confident when I buy goods or services in my area that businesses will treat me fairly						
I am confident when I buy products in my area that they will be safe						

Comments

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Community Safety

The local Community Safety Partnership (CSP) is a joint partnership between the Borough Council, the County Council, West Mercia Police, Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue Service, Probation Services and the local Clinical Commissioning Group. Together it works with housing associations, local businesses and voluntary/community organisations to reduce crime and anti-social behaviour and improve community safety in the Borough.

Each year the CSP carries out a strategic assessment of crime and anti-social behaviour to gather information that will be used to inform the Community Safety Plan. We would like you to help us with this process by answering the following questions.

24. Have you or a member of your household been the victim of a crime?

No	
Yes, in the last 12 months	
Yes, between 1 and 5 years ago	
Yes, 6 or more years ago	

25. Have you or a member of your household been the victim of anti-social behaviour?

No	
Yes, in the last 12 months	
Yes, between 1 and 5 years ago	
Yes, 6 or more years ago	

26. To what extent do you agree or disagree with these statements about feeling safe and respected?

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly
I feel safe outside in my local area after dark					
I feel safe outside in my local area during daylight					
I am treated with dignity and respect in my community					
I feel people from different backgrounds get on well in my area					
Having CCTV helps me feel safe when I'm out in public					
My local area (within a 15 min walk) is safer than other areas in Redditch Borough					
Redditch Borough is safer than other areas in Worcestershire					
Redditch Borough is a safe place to live compared to the rest of the country					

Comments

27. Using your knowledge of Redditch Borough as a whole, please tell us the issues that concern you most from the following list? (Tick up to 10 boxes only)

Burglary	<input type="checkbox"/>	Damage to property	<input type="checkbox"/>	Fly tipping	<input type="checkbox"/>
Robbery (mugging)	<input type="checkbox"/>	Pedal cycle theft	<input type="checkbox"/>	Graffiti	<input type="checkbox"/>
Vehicle crimes	<input type="checkbox"/>	Rowdy/inconsiderate behaviour	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dog fouling	<input type="checkbox"/>
Hate crime	<input type="checkbox"/>	Nuisance vehicle	<input type="checkbox"/>	Dangerous dogs	<input type="checkbox"/>
Domestic abuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Street drinking	<input type="checkbox"/>	Inconsiderate parking	<input type="checkbox"/>
Sexual assault and rape	<input type="checkbox"/>	Harassment	<input type="checkbox"/>	Neighbour disputes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Drug taking or dealing	<input type="checkbox"/>	Littering	<input type="checkbox"/>	Town Centre safety	<input type="checkbox"/>

Other (please specify)

28. What do you think are the 3 main issues that impact on Community Safety in Redditch Borough? (Tick up to 3 boxes only)

Drugs	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of community co-operation	<input type="checkbox"/>
Alcohol Misuse	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of parental control	<input type="checkbox"/>
Unemployment or low income	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor behaviour & attitudes	<input type="checkbox"/>
Young people with nothing to do	<input type="checkbox"/>	Lack of crime prevention measures	<input type="checkbox"/>
Lack of police presence	<input type="checkbox"/>	Poor infrastructure & environmental design	<input type="checkbox"/>
Not enough deterrent/enforcement	<input type="checkbox"/>		

Other (please specify)

29. We are keen to understand what our residents know about emerging community safety matters. Please indicate your level of awareness for each of the following:

	No knowledge	A little knowledge	Some knowledge	Good knowledge	In-depth knowledge
<u>Hate crime</u> – motivated by prejudice towards a person's race, religion, gender, sexual orientation or disability					
<u>Modern day slavery</u> – labour exploitation of vulnerable persons					
<u>Child sexual exploitation</u> – sexual abuse of young people that are tricked or groomed into an inappropriate relationship					
<u>Cybercrime</u> – internet enabled fraud and harassment via social media					
<u>Extremism/radicalisation</u> – the process by which people come to support terrorism and join terrorist and extremist groups					

Comments

Getting Involved and Volunteering

30. To what extent do you get involved in the following? Please **do not** include any which you undertake in paid employment.

	I already do this but can't do more	I already do this and could do more	I would like to do this but I can't now	I would like to do this but don't know how	Not applicable
Look out for neighbours or anyone who may be isolated or lonely					
Help family or neighbours who are ill or disabled					
Assist someone to get online					
Car share or offer someone in your local area a lift					
Volunteer or help run a charity/ community group					
Volunteer or help run a local service					
Participate in local decision-making and consultation					
Volunteer to keep my area clean and tidy					
Shop locally and support local businesses					
Help others to be more active					

Comments

Redditch Borough Council Priorities**31. To what extent do you agree or disagree that the following should be given priority by Redditch Borough Council?**

We are keen to understand where your priorities lie for the Borough. In answering the following question, please consider each point, saving your 'I agree strongly' responses for those which you feel are of the utmost importance to the Borough.

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly
Local economic development and employment					
Education and skills					
Community safety					
Healthy lifestyles and well-being including mental health					
Maintenance of the landscape and environment					
Redditch's cultural heritage					
Supporting the community and voluntary sector					
Waste and recycling					
Support people to live independently					
Providing welfare and financial support to help residents in maximising income/ reducing debt					
Support and empower families and communities					
Build sustainable communities and neighbourhoods					
Provide well maintained community parks and open spaces					
Support the development and delivery of appropriate housing in the Borough					
Reducing homelessness					
Ensuring housing in the Borough is of good quality and accessible					
Support events and arts activities					
Empower residents to get involved					

Comments

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Delivering Public Services

32. To what extent do you agree or disagree with the following about the way local services are managed and delivered?

	I agree strongly	I agree	I neither agree nor disagree	I disagree	I disagree strongly
Council tax should be increased to help maintain essential services					
Redditch Borough Council has managed budget decisions well					
Reductions to services have had a significant impact on me					
Further reductions to services would impact me significantly					
Public services would be better managed and delivered by sharing responsibility with another organisation					
Public services would be better managed and delivered by an outside organisation					
Public services should continue to be managed and delivered by Redditch Borough Council					
I would be willing to pay/pay more for certain services provided by Redditch Borough Council					

Comments

The following questions are about you and will help us to ensure we understand the needs of all our residents.

About You**33. Which of the following best describes your age?**

16-19yrs		40-49yrs		70-79yrs	
20-29yrs		50-59yrs		80+ yrs	
30-39yrs		60-69yrs		Prefer not to say	

34. What sex are you?

Male		Female		Prefer not to say	
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Other (please specify)

35. Which of the following best describes your ethnic group?

White - British, English, Northern Irish, Scottish or Welsh	
White - Irish	
White - Gypsy or Irish traveller	
Any other white background (*please specify below)	
Mixed or multiple ethnic - white and black Caribbean	
Mixed or multiple ethnic - white and black African	
Mixed or multiple ethnic - white and Asian	
Any other mixed or multiple ethnic background (*please specify below)	
Asian or Asian British - Indian	
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	
Asian or Asian British – Bangladeshi	
Asian or Asian British - Chinese	
Any other Asian (*please specify)	
Black, African, Caribbean or black British - Caribbean	
Black, African, Caribbean or black British - African	
Any other black British, African or Caribbean (*please specify below)	
Other ethnic group - Arab	
Any other ethnic group (*please specify in box below)	
Prefer not to say	

*Other (please specify)

36. What is your first language?

English	
---------	--

Other (please specify)

37. What is your religion or belief?

Atheist		Muslim	
Buddhist		Pagan	
Christian		No religion/belief	
Humanist		Prefer not to say	
Jewish			

Other (please specify)

38. How is your physical health, in general?

Very good		Poor	
Good		Very poor	
Fair		Prefer not to say	

39. How is your mental/emotional health, in general?

Very good		Poor	
Good		Very poor	
Fair		Prefer not to say	

40. Do you have a disability, long term illness or health condition?

Yes		No		Prefer not to say	
-----	--	----	--	-------------------	--

41. If yes, please indicate below (tick all that applies):

Mobility e.g. climbing stairs, walking short distances	
Physical disability	
Learning disability	
Mental health	
Visual impairment	
Hearing impairment	
Prefer not to say	

Other (please specify)

42. How would you describe your sexual orientation?

Bisexual	
Lesbian or Gay	
Heterosexual	
Prefer not to say	

Other (please specify)

Thank you for taking the time to complete this survey.

Please return it in the pre-paid envelope we have provided by **Friday 1 December 2017**.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive Committee**

31st October 2017

COMMERCIALISATION & FINANCIAL STRATEGY 2017 - 2020

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering – Director of Finance and Resources Deb Poole, Head of Transformation & Organisational Development Guy Revans – Head of Environment
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	n/a
Key Decision	No

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To agree for recommendation to Council the new Commercialisation and Financial Strategy 2017 - 2020.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is asked to RECOMMEND to the Council

- 2.1 that the Commercialisation and Financial Strategy 2017- 2020 attached at Appendix 1 be approved and adopted.**

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The strategy broadly outlines Redditch Borough Councils (RBC) approach to commercialisation and financial sustainability and should be considered as an extension of our existing transformation programme. Assumptions and detailed estimates for savings realised / income achieved are addressed within the detail of the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 3.2 The strategy adopts a broad view of commercialisation, including all aspects of the ongoing transformation programme. This programme includes service reviews and redesign, shared services, revenue generation, pricing and maximising the value of our assets.
- 3.3 There will increasingly be a need to adopt a culture of actively looking for commercial opportunities without losing focus upon the transformation programme, existing customer base and the quality and ethos of public service delivery.
- 3.4 Services making positive financial contributions, either through commercial activity or internal efficiency, shall increasingly be considered as the norm.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive Committee**31st October 2017

In line with our systems thinking principles our staff will be involved in identifying and developing opportunities to transform and commercialise our services.

- 3.5 This strategy advocates that the commercialisation approach is open to all services (or elements of services). The approach initially is to pick a number of key opportunities. This will ensure organisational learning is built up, services and processes are transformed and redesigned, and projects resourced in the longer term without the need for extensive support.
- 3.6 The draft strategy (Appendix 1) has been designed to cover priority opportunities. A Commercialisation Programme Board has been established and has identified and prioritised three work streams that provide the greatest opportunities in terms of the council becoming more commercial. These are:
- Use of land and assets
 - Contracts
 - Income including fees and charges

Financial Implications

- 3.7 There are limited financial implications arising directly from this strategy.

Legal Implications

- 3.8 There are no legal implications arising directly from this strategy.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.9 The strategy will help to provide a clear direction for service areas around the Council's approach to commercialisation. It will also help to ensure all parts of the Council design and deliver appropriate services to meet the needs of our communities.
- 3.10 The strategy has been discussed at the Commercialisation Programme Board and at Corporate Management Team. The Unions have also been consulted on its contents.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 There are no customer/equalities and diversity implications arising directly from this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There are no risk management implications arising directly from this report.

Executive Committee31st October 2017

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Commercialisation and Financial Strategy 2017 - 2020

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Commercialisation and Financial Strategy

Redditch Borough Council
2017 – 2020

Authors:	Deb Poole - Head of Transformation & Organisational Development Guy Revans – Head of Environment Jayne Pickering – Director of Finance and Resources
Date:	13/09/2017
Release Version:	V1.3

Index	Page
Commercialisation in Context	1
Overview	1
Commercialisation Strategy Drivers	2
Commercialisation Vision	2
What do we mean by commercialisation	2
Commercialisation principles	3
Links to Council strategies and policies	4
Key aims and objectives	4
Creating the right environment	5
Priority opportunities	5
Outcomes	6
Financial Strategy	7
Generating income from Council services through charging, trading and investment	7
Reducing costs by improving efficiency and removing waste from the system	8
Increasing Capital and Revenue returns by delivering housing and economic growth	8
Exploring the impact of changes in Government funding for the Council	9

1. Commercialisation in Context

1.1 Overview

This document outlines Redditch Borough Councils (RBC) approach to commercialisation and should be considered as an extension of our existing transformation programme.

There have been some excellent examples within our Council of shared services, transformation and cost saving initiatives being successfully carried out. These initiatives include; comprehensive sharing of services, redesigning services using a systems thinking approach, re-letting and re-negotiating contracts and consideration of other operating models.

Whilst excellent progress has been made there is a recognition that these measures alone will not be enough offset the significant funding pressures that RBC has experienced and further envisage in the coming years.

This strategy adopts a broad view of commercialisation, including all aspects of our ongoing transformation programme. This programme includes service reviews and redesign, shared services, revenue generation, pricing and maximising the value of our assets. All without compromising our corporate principles (see below) or our commitment to customer care.

Our Corporate Principles

- Design all of our services from the customer's perspective to ensure we respond to the needs of our communities.
- Help people to help themselves where appropriate.
- Be corporately responsible by ensuring we meet our ethical, environmental and social responsibilities, and that services support our communities to develop.
- Constantly innovate, to make the best use of our resources to ensure we deliver efficient, quality services and eliminate waste.
- Make decisions and provide challenge based on data, evidence and learning.
- Use the Council's unique position in the community to encourage and support change amongst partners and other agencies.
- Put the customer at the heart of what we do, treating people and issues fairly, with respect and honesty.
- Identify the best way to work, to satisfy customers' needs, by pushing departmental and organisational boundaries.

1.2 Commercialisation Strategy Drivers

The following key drivers have informed the development of this strategy:

- The Council has an ambition to be more financially sustainable in order to continue to deliver quality services to our residents;
- The Councils need to reduce waste in all services is forcing it to look at operating costs, methods of service delivery and operating models;
- The Council needs to ensure that the chosen methods of service delivery always make most effective use of resources;
- The Council needs to support services for local people as well as raise money to invest in the strategic purposes and priorities detailed in the Council Plan.
- The Council will need to make significant additional income and make better use of assets to offset the ongoing reduction in budgets

1.3 Commercialisation Vision

Our vision is for Redditch Borough Council to become a systems thinking organisation that is efficient, effective, innovative and entrepreneurial.

This will be achieved by exploiting service transformation and commercial opportunities through trading, to ensure services are put onto a more sustainable long term footing.

1.4 What do we mean by commercialisation

Commercialisation for RBC has been defined as encompassing the following areas:

Shared services;
Transformation and efficiency;
Investments;
Marketing and selling of services and income generation opportunities;
Pricing analysis (fees and charges);
Consideration of concessions;
Better use of Council assets;
Better contract management;
Continuous improvement in procurement;
Digital and online options.

There will increasingly be a culture of services actively looking for additional opportunities without losing focus upon our ongoing transformation programme, existing customer base and the quality and ethos of public service delivery.

Services making positive financial contributions, either through commercial activity or internal efficiency, shall increasingly be considered as the norm. In line with our systems thinking principles our staff will be involved in identifying and developing opportunities to transform and commercialise our services.

This strategy advocates that the commercialisation approach is open to all services (or elements of services). The approach initially is to pick a number of key opportunities. This will ensure organisational learning is built up, services and processes are transformed and redesigned, and projects resourced in the longer term without the need for extensive support.

1.5 Our Commercialisation Principles

- We will ensure that there is a culture within our organisation that embraces change and that the work force has the appropriate skills to deliver successful commercial activities.
- All business cases will use the approved business case template and will include a robust options appraisal, market analysis, business modelling and full costings.
- We will challenge individuals or services that do not follow the approved transformation and business case frameworks.
- We will explore and exploit as many options for alternative methods of service delivery as possible.
- We will create an environment where people are encouraged and able to take considered risks and accept that some ideas may fail.
- Ensure that services will be fit for purpose and fit to compete in the market place.
- Be honest about current performance and accept that not all current services are ready for market.
- Be prepared to invest now for a return in the future.
- Carefully consider any requirement for a concession and understand why a concession is being offered.
- We will continually measure and review of our portfolio of external service offerings to ensure that they are delivering good financial returns and value to our residents and customers.
- Act in a socially responsible way and consider the impact of our business plans on the wider market place.
- To consider and risk assess who will be affected by stopping, changing or charging for any of our services.
- Whatever we do should contribute to the delivery of our strategic purposes.
- Consider opportunities to work with or facilitate the work of community partners to improve the efficiency and/or quality of service provision.

1.6 Links to Council strategies and policies

In devising the Commercialisation and Financial Strategy we have been mindful of the need for it to align with and complement other key documents that contribute towards the overall success of the Council. In particular, this strategy has been aligned to:

- Council Plan 2017-2020;
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Investment and Acquisitions Strategy
- Risk Strategy
- Equalities Strategy
- Engagement Strategy
- Branding and Marketing Guidelines
- Approved business case model

2. Key aims & objectives

- The overarching aim of the strategy is to deliver a financial return which contributes to the councils spending plans and helps deliver services and council plan priorities for the local community.
- To deliver this aim we will develop a programme of work that identifies potential commercial opportunities, ensuring that the agreed commercial principles are applied.
- We will ensure that the commercialisation programme is properly resourced and managed to successfully deliver the aims of the strategy.
- We will develop a structure to ensure fledgling commercial opportunities are nurtured and supported.
- We will seek to strengthen our reputation with residents, local businesses, the Local Government sector, staff, other customers, partners, and stakeholders in general.
- We will ensure that strategic and operational transformation programmes are undertaken across all major service areas, to enable us to seek more innovative approaches to delivery, drive out waste and challenge existing approaches to best meet the needs of our communities.
- We will support non-statutory services to reduce their subsidy including reducing overheads and increasing income in order to reduce risk of closure or reduction in service.
- Actively engage in market development and market shaping where no such market currently exists and using customer insight and data to manage specification and demand.
- Explore alternative investment models to support service delivery e.g. through social investment.

- Invest and use our financial strengths to deliver a financial return.
- Become a services provider to new and existing customers both from within the local authority environment and beyond, particularly where we are uniquely placed to do so.
- Use the commercial knowledge acquired through this programme to gain a competitive advantage.

3. Creating the right environment

Careful consideration will be given to creating the right environment within the organisation to nurture innovative ideas and develop them into robust project proposals. This will involve the following activities:

- Carryout a culture and skills review to establish if we have the culture and skills that will enable commercialisation to thrive. This review will also determine whether new governance arrangements and ways of working are required to achieve the maximum benefits from our commercialisation programme;
- Continue the communications campaign to draw in ideas from staff and generate new ideas;
- Use a framework for development of new propositions to be taken forward to outline business case stage;
- Ensuring that staff have the correct skills to successfully deliver our programme;
- Procure external support and expertise when necessary;
- Adopting a project management approach for the implementation of the programme;
- Ensuring new proposals have the right support from the Commercialisation Programme Board, Councillors and stakeholders.

4. Priority opportunities

The Council is already exploring a number of priority commercial opportunities. A Commercialisation Programme Board has also been established and has identified and prioritised three work streams that provide the greatest opportunities in terms of the council becoming more commercial. These are:

- Use of land and assets
- Contracts
- Income including fees and charges

In addition, the Council is currently investigating setting up a trading arm or arms to support the delivery of new revenue streams and have secured Local Government Association productivity expert funding to support this work.

Commercial opportunities resulting from these three work streams will be developed and assessed during 2017/18 and other opportunities will also be considered and developed by the Commercialisation Programme Board and brought to Executive Committee where appropriate.

In view of the potential opportunities, the intention is to move at pace with the implementation of this strategy. The programme to support this, together with key dates, will be detailed in a commercialisation project plan monitored through the Commercialisation Programme Board.

5. Outcomes

Taking the approach outlined within this strategy is believed to be the most appropriate for Redditch Borough Council, as it offers a number of key benefits, many of which have already been covered elsewhere within this strategy, including:

- Providing a real, tangible opportunity to make a contribution to the Medium Term Financial Strategy;
- Staff development – new skills will be acquired and can be transferred to other opportunities internally;
- Taking an approach of raising standards and generating revenue at the same time;
- Helping to provide a competitive advantage in key markets;
- Giving RBC an enhanced reputation as an innovative and forward thinking organisation;
- Transforming the organisation into an innovative workplace;
- Bringing benefits to the local economy;
- Ensuring the sustainability of non-statutory services that would otherwise be stopped due to lack of funding.

Financial Strategy 2017 - 2020

6. The Financial Strategy

The Financial Strategy sets out the Council's strategic approach to the management of its finances and provides a framework to enable the Medium Term Financial Plan to be developed to include indicative budgets and Council Tax levels over a four year period.

The overarching strategy informs the medium term financial planning of the Council which will deliver detailed plans of the respective budgets for the General Fund and Capital Programme. The objective of these plans is to deliver a sustainable budget over the medium term.

As referred to in the Commercialisation Strategy as the Council looks towards its financial challenges for 2018/19 onwards it is likely that this shift towards behaving more commercially and considering new funding models will continue. Increasing income generation is key to ensuring that the Council has a core funding stream to support our future service delivery whilst Government funding is reducing. However, we must also ensure focus is given to how we take advantage of new forms of local government finance, for example, through business rates growth.

A robust financial strategy and planning mechanism is essential to turn the Council Plan and strategic purposes into action within the communities of Redditch . The priorities are set out in the Council's Plan for 2017-2020. The Financial Strategy also informs the Council's capital strategy, treasury management strategy and the preparation of annual budgets. These financial plans support the Council Plan in defining the funding available to deliver the councils services.

The Financial Strategy draws on the strength of the Council's corporate governance and control environment as set out in the latest Annual Governance Statement. This provides assurance that the Council's governance and financial arrangements can be relied upon to achieve its plans and policies.

There are a number of ways that the Council will ensure that it achieves financial sustainability. The assumptions and the detailed estimates for the savings realised / income achieved will be addressed within the Medium Term Financial Plan over the four year period. Whilst referred to in the commercialisation strategy the financial strategy framework presents how consideration of these themes can be progressed into tangible savings and additional income for the Council.

7. Generating income from Council services through charging, trading and investment

- Cost recovery – assess the ratio of income to expenditure across all services with the aim to improve recovery of cost to 100% depending on nature of

service, ability to recover income and impact on the delivery of the strategic purposes. Consider increasing fees to cover expenditure whilst managing the impact on those suffering hardship

- Fees and Charges – review any areas where the Council is not currently charging and consider appropriate fee levels that balance the need for income generation and hardship.
- Identify areas of expertise and explore opportunities for trading with other Councils and organisations within the legislative boundaries.
- Review Council assets to ensure they support the delivery of the strategic purposes.
- In all cases where service redesign required or additional income realised , clear business cases are to be developed using the approved '5 case model' to ensure a consistent approach to reporting is undertaken and appropriate information is provided for the decision making body.
- Generate new marketing opportunities to ensure all opportunities are explored for generating income.
- Regularly review grant opportunities that may be available for the Council to support new initiatives.
- Ensure the Council Tax and Business Rates base are accurate to ensure all income can be recovered from residents and businesses.
- Work with community partners to explore efficiencies through joint and/or community led service delivery models.

8. Reducing costs by improving efficiency and removing waste from the system

- Regularly review contract arrangements (including shared services) with the aim to reduce cost or improve service delivery.
- Develop digital access to reduce costs and improve choice of access method for the community.
- Explore different payment methods to reduce costs and provide greater customer choice. For example, reduce the use of cash and cheques and encourage more direct debits and online payments.

9. Increasing Capital and Revenue returns by delivering housing and economic growth

- The Investment and Acquisition Strategy gives a structured approach to assess schemes based on robust criteria to enable a revenue rate of return to be secured for future projects. Assets will be reviewed to identify those with

the greatest potential for delivering enhanced capital value and/or revenue income.

- Review asset base to identify any areas of vacant land that may be used for investment opportunities to generate income, increase employment, skills and business rate growth.

10. Exploring the impact of changes in Government funding for the Council

- Review the impact of the Business Rate Legislation, impact on the Council and potential changes to pool arrangements.
- New Homes Bonus – assess the impact of future changes to methodology and ensure that all housing developments are included.
- Provide greater financial modelling of funding streams to enable informed decisions to be made across a number of scenarios.

This overarching financial strategy will ensure that the Council has a framework in place to address the future challenges and will inform the detailed Medium Term Financial Plan over the next four years.

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017**LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2016/17**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr John Fisher
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda Singleton
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	None Specific
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	Key Decision

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Council Tax Support Scheme must be reviewed annually.
- 1.2 The report proposes no changes, with the exception of applying the uprating figures determined by the Government.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

- 2.1 No changes are made to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2018/19.**

3. KEY ISSUES**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 As Members are aware, changes were made to the Council's Local Council Tax Support Scheme with effect from April 2014, which resulted in support being capped at 80% of Council Tax liability so that all working age claimants would pay a minimum of 20% towards their Council Tax Liability.
- 3.2 It is proposed that there are no changes to the level of support provided by the Council, and as previously agreed the various allowances be uprated in line with the Secretary of State's annual announcement. This will ensure that the scheme is affordable given the year on year reduction of funding for local support schemes.

Legal Implications

- 3.3 On 1 April 2013 Council Tax Benefit was abolished and replaced by a new scheme of Council Tax support called "Council Tax Support Schemes". Under s13A and Schedule 1A of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 (inserted by s10 Local Government Act 2012), each local authority was required to make and adopt a Council Tax Support Scheme specifying the reductions which are to

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017

apply to the amounts of council tax payable within their districts

- 3.4 Statutory Instrument 2012/2885, "The Council Tax Reduction Schemes (Prescribed Requirements)(England) Regulations 2012" ensured that certain requirements prescribed by the Government were included in each Scheme (subsequently amended by S.I. 2012/3085)
- 3.5 As the billing authority the Council is required by the Local Government Finance Act 2012 to consider whether to revise its scheme or to replace it with another scheme, for each financial year.
- 3.6 The Authority must adopt its scheme, and make any revisions, no later than 31 January in the financial year preceding the one when it will take effect, so that it will be necessary for the Council's 2018/19 scheme to be in place by 31st January 2018.
- 3.7 Paragraph 3 to Schedule 1A into The Local Government Finance Act 1992 set out the preparation that must be undertaken prior to the adoption or revision of a scheme, including prescribed consultation requirements. As the recommendation is that no revisions to the current scheme should be made for the financial year 2018/2019 (to which this report applies), the requirement to consult does not have to be met. However, officers will publicise the fact that the current scheme is to continue, subject to up-lift in rates as set by the Department of Work and Pensions, as referred to at 3.8 below.
- 3.8 Instruction is received from the Department of Work and Pensions on an annual basis, of changes to benefits rates and personal allowances. These must be taken into account for housing benefit calculations and it streamlines the claims process if they are also applied to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.9 Officers continue to provide support to any person liable for council tax who is experiencing severe hardship. This may be in the form of personal budgeting advice, short term financial support, debt management advice, or support to maximise income.
- 3.10 Officers work with the local DWP, Locality Teams, Connecting Families and local job coaches to provide a holistic approach to financial support needs.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 The 'uprating' of the benefits rates and personal allowances to be taken into account, in line with the Secretary of States announcement on those that must be taken into account for other benefits, will potentially result in small changes to the amounts of support provided. These will vary according to circumstances and will be minimal

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**31st October 2017

- 3.12 The benefit cap is not applied in respect of council tax support as it outside of the national benefits scheme.
- 3.13 A 'hardship' scheme, with a budget of £25k per annum, remains in place to support any liable person who has been caused financial hardship by changes to Council Tax Support.
- 3.14 The hardship scheme is administered through the Financial Independence Officers, which ensures that a full financial assessment takes place and all avenues of support can be explored.
- 3.15 Through this scheme 188 awards were made totalling £25,138 in 2016/17. In the current financial year we have made 106 awards to the value of £15,725.
- 3.16 Not changes to the current hardship scheme are proposed.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Any changes to council tax support whilst increasing council tax income to the Council and our major preceptors has financial implications for our residents and therefore officers ensure that support on managing finances and advice on other potential benefits is made available.

5. APPENDICES**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Held in Revenues Service

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Tel.: 01527 881241

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**31st October 2017**DISCRETIONARY NON-DOMESTIC RATES REVALUATION SUPPORT SCHEME**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr John Fisher
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda Singleton, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	None Specific
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	Key Decision

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 Non-Domestic Rating law provides for periodic revaluations of the Rateable Values from which a ratepayer's liability for rates are calculated. Revaluations can lead to significant increases in the rates payable by some ratepayers. Relief from the effects of revaluation are provided for through transitional relief under which large increases in rates are phased in over a number of years.
- 1.2 The last revaluation took place in April 2010 and therefore the 2017 revaluation resulted in a number of businesses at a national level facing large increase in their rates liability.
- 1.3 The Government has provided local authorities with funding so that they may design their own local schemes to support ratepayers facing significant increases in their bills. The report asks for agreement on the criteria for allocating this additional relief.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that:**
- 2.1.1 **The criteria for allocation of Discretionary Revaluation Support as appended to this report in Appendix 1 are adopted.**
- 2.1.2 **The Executive Director of Finance is provided with delegated authority , after consultation with the relevant portfolio holder, to adjust the percentage relief awarded in years 2018/19 and onwards in order to ensure that the maximum level of support is provided to businesses and that the Government funding meets the overall costs of the relief.**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017**3. KEY ISSUES****Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The Government has provided funding for the award of Discretionary Revaluation Support. The amount of funding available to Redditch Borough Council for the award of the scheme will be:

Amount of Discretionary Funding awarded (£000s)			
2017/18	2018/19	2019/20	2020/21
124	60	25	4

- 3.2 The level of funding available to the authority for award of the relief has been fixed and will not be adjusted should the costs of the scheme exceed Government funding. Therefore if the overall costs of Revaluation Support exceeds funding the authority would be required to meet a proportion of the costs.
- 3.3 The availability of Government funding could not be used as criteria to refuse relief. The scheme has been designed to ensure that the costs of relief remain within the allocated funding whilst maximising support for eligible ratepayers. Projections for the costs of relief are contained within Appendix 2.
- 3.4 Authorities are required to consult their major precepting authorities on the scheme as a condition of funding. The authority is mindful of the condition for relief and precepting authorities have been provided with a copy of the proposed Revaluation Support Scheme. The precepting authorities provided comments on the scheme indicating their agreement with the principles and distribution of relief.
- 3.5 The rules for varying an award of Discretionary Relief require one year's notice prior to the removal of the relief. The award of relief then continues to the end of the year in which removal would take effect. This requirement for notice provides a risk that adjustments to awards cannot be made should circumstances change and potentially limit the authority's ability to control the costs of the relief.

Legal Implications

- 3.6 Billing authorities have the power to award discretionary relief under Section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988. Section 47 prevents the award of relief to any billing authority or precepting authority.
- 3.7 The Non-Domestic Rating (Discretionary Relief) Regulations 1989 (The Regulations) provide the requirements for notifying ratepayers of their entitlement to relief, and limiting the authorities powers to vary or alter the decision.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

- 3.8 The criteria for the award of relief have been designed to account for the legal requirements of the act and regulations. All relief will be conditional upon eligibility criteria and rules for calculating relief.

State Aid

- 3.9 State Aid law is the means by which the European Union regulates state funded support to businesses. Providing discretionary relief to ratepayers is likely to amount to State Aid. However the Revaluation Support Scheme for ratepayers will be State Aid compliant where it is provided in accordance with the De Minimis Regulations (1407/2013)².
- 3.10 The De Minimis Regulations allow an undertaking to receive up to €200,000 of De Minimis aid in a three year period (consisting of the current financial year and the two previous financial years). It is necessary for the authority to establish that the award of relief will not result in a business receiving more than €200,000 of De Minimis aid.
- 3.11 The Revaluation Support Scheme is designed to be state aid compliant. Undertakings receiving relief will be required to declare that the total of any relief that they have received is De Minimis as a condition of the receipt of relief.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.12 The operation of the Revaluation Support Scheme will provide the Customer Access and Financial Support Service with an additional administrative and operational requirement. To minimise the impact on the service the Revaluation Support Scheme is designed to ensure that relief is calculated automatically and will not require a manual recalculation on changes in circumstances.
- 3.13 The software used for the administration does not - at the point at which the Scheme has been designed - provide the functionality for the award of relief. The Scheme has therefore been designed on the basis of discussions with the Council's software provider as to how the functionality will be developed.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.14 None

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

- 4.1 The criteria for the award of the relief have been designed to limit the financial risks to the authority and to ensure that the overall cost of the relief remains within the level of Government Funding.
- 4.2 Reporting on the costs of Non-Domestic Rates relief are produced on a monthly basis and these reports will be used to highlight any financial risks associated with the costs of the relief.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Discretionary Revaluation Support Criteria

Appendix 2 - Projected Costs of Discretionary Revaluation Support

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. KEY**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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Appendix 1**Redditch Borough Council – Discretionary Revaluation Support Scheme****Background**

- 1 Following the national revaluation of non-domestic rates premises the Government announced a discretionary fund of £300m over four years from 2017/18 to support those businesses that face the steepest increases in their business rates liability.
- 2 The Government's intention is that every billing authority in England will be provided with a share of the £300m to support their local businesses. The support will be provided by way of Discretionary Rates Relief awarded under section 47 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988.
- 3 Redditch Borough Council has developed a Discretionary Revaluation Support Scheme which has been designed to provide support to businesses affected by the revaluation and to ensure that support is provided in line with the Government's principles for relief.

Qualifying Criteria for Discretionary Revaluation Support

- 4 Discretionary Revaluation Support Relief will be provided where the following qualifying criteria are met.
 - The rateable value for the property is less than £200,000.
 - The increase in rates payable as a result of the 2017 revaluation is greater than 12.5% after award of all other applicable relief
 - The ratepayer occupied the premises on 31 March 2017 and 1st April 2017.
 - The ratepayer occupies fewer than 4 hereditaments within England.
 - The ratepayer occupies the premises for ordinary commercial business purposes.
 - The premises are not used for an excluded purpose.
 - The ratepayer has submitted a State Aid declaration.
 - The premises meet the definition of a relevant non-domestic hereditament as contained within The Non-Domestic Rating (Unoccupied Property) (England) Regulations 2008.
- 5 Commercial Business Purposes will be the use of the premises in connection with the ordinary functions of a business either through:
 - a. the retail provision of goods or services to the general public;

- b. the production, manufacture or storage of goods for sale to businesses or the general public; or
- c. the office administration of a commercial businesses or enterprise.

This is not intended to be a definitive list of commercial business purposes but is indicative of those activities and uses which we will consider to be suitable for Discretionary Revaluation Support.

6 Excluded purposes for the operation of Discretionary Revaluation Support are:

- The use of the premise as a Car Park;
- The use of the premises as a school or educational establishment;
- The use of the premises for banking, pay-day lending, or betting shops;
- The use of the premises as a hospital, health centre, or health care surgery; and
- The use of the premises for Governmental purposes, for example the use as a Job Centre, or offices of the Civil Service or Executive Agencies of Central Government.

Calculation of Revaluation Support Relief

7 Revaluation Support Relief will be calculated after any or all of the following have been applied:

- a. Exemptions from rating or mandatory rate reliefs;
- b. Transitional Relief or Premium;
- c. Any applicable discretionary rate reliefs awarded under existing local schemes or national mandated Government schemes.

8 The level of relief will be calculated as a percentage of the increase in rates above the transitional limit for medium properties (12.5% in 2017/18) payable between the current rates year and immediately preceding rates year. The level of the relief to be provided in each year will be

Rate Year	2017/18	2018/19	2020/21	2021/22
% Relief on Increase	85	45	20	0

9 The costs of relief for 2018 and subsequent years cannot be adequately forecast as the effect of adjustments to rateable values following appeals is not known. The Executive Director of Finance will have delegated authority to alter the level of relief to be provided in 2018 and subsequent years to ensure that:

- a. Support to ratepayers as a whole is maximised in each subsequent year; and
- b. The overall costs of the relief remain within the authority's share of the Government funding.

Notification of Revaluation Support

- 10 Discretionary Revaluation Support will be awarded automatically on a year by year basis. Ratepayers will be advised of the amount of relief they will be awarded and the end date of the relief.
- 11 In year one ratepayers will be advised that the award of relief is conditional on a declaration that the relief is state aid compliant and that they meet the requirement to occupy fewer than 4 hereditaments within England
- 12 The notification of Revaluation Support will include the conditions under which the relief may be removed or adjusted.

Adjustment and Removal of Revaluation Support

- 13 Revaluation Support will be awarded as percentage of the increase in rates liability year on year. Therefore where there is a reduction in liability as a result of a change in the rateable value of the property the level of relief will be reduced accordingly.
- 14 Relief will not be awarded on the element of rates liability relating to any increase in rateable value effective after 1st April 2017.
- 15 The relief is conditional on a state aid declaration being made if a declaration that the relief is state aid compliant is not received then relief will be removed.

Appeals in Relation to Revaluation Support

- 16 Entitlement to Revaluation Support and the level of relief to be awarded will in most cases be clear. However, in the first instance appeals against a refusal to award relief will be determined by the Financial Support Manager.
- 17 Appeals must state clearly the reasons why the ratepayer qualifies for relief in accordance with the Revaluation Support Scheme or, as applicable, the reasons why the calculated relief is incorrect.

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Projected Costs of Discretionary Revaluation Support Scheme

1 Potential Qualifiers for Revaluation Support Scheme

The Government provided principles and assumptions relating to the distribution of the funding for Discretionary Relief Schemes. The assumptions were that the rateable property has a rateable value for 2017/18 that is less than £200,000 and the increase in the rateable property's 2017/18 bill is more than 12.5% compared to its 2016/17 bill. Analysis has indicated the potential qualifiers sorted by the Valuation Office Agency's analysis codes

Property Description	Number of Properties	Total 2017 Liability £	Total Increase in Liability £
Petrol Filling Station and Premises	2	115,678.50	21,305.00
Vehicle Repair Workshop Premises	2	30,887.52	3,783.52
Garage and Premises	1	16,245.16	2,088.16
Showroom and Premises	1	70,413.00	15,262.00
Hotel and Premises	2	108,472.77	22,108.77
Public House and Premises	5	125,618.59	20,658.39
Offices and Premises	15	146,970.78	33,876.32
Car Park and Premises	7	180,555.30	35,661.20
Restaurant and Premises	1	7,775.46	999.46
Café and Premises	2	53,934.64	10,956.64
Shop and Premises	18	342,538.36	58,423.36
Bank and Premises	1	37,114.35	4,640.35
Showroom and Premises	1	46,942.00	10,094.00
Retail Warehouse and Premises	1	8,330.85	1,070.85
Warehouse and Premises	2	45,623.05	5,729.05
Miscellaneous Commercial	2	40,268.84	5,050.84
School and Premises	23	278,788.48	96,085.73
Library and Premises	1	57,480.00	6,552.00
Museum and Premises	1	21,229.58	2,623.58
Workshop and Premises	3	20,132.89	4,073.89
Concrete Batching Plant and Premises	2	23,277.09	2,944.84
Leisure Centre and Premises	1	73,287.00	8,378.00
Theatre and Premises	1	17,078.24	2,195.24
Miscellaneous Leisure	1	8,747.39	1,124.39
Surgery and Premises	5	62,311.29	7,924.29
Health Centre and Premises	2	35,663.23	4,479.73
Hospital and Premises	1	16,800.55	2,159.55
Fire Station and Premises	1	27,416.87	3,408.87
Communication Station and Premises	1	9,302.78	1,195.78
Totals	106	2,028,884.56	394,853.80

2. Adjustment to potential qualifiers based on local criteria

The legislation governing awards of discretionary relief precludes the award of relief to Precepting Authorities, therefore any properties occupied by Redditch Borough Council have been removed from the list of potential qualifiers.

In addition the relief will be targeted at:

- i) ratepayers that face the most significant increases in their rates bills, and
- ii) smaller and medium sized businesses.

It should not be provided to governmental or public sector organisations.

Relief will be provided to

- a) Properties that were occupied at 1st April and 31st March 2017 therefore ensuring that relief is provided to ratepayers affected by revaluation
- b) Properties used for commercial businesses
- c) Properties which are not Car Parks; Schools or Educational Establishments; Health Centres, Hospitals or Surgeries; Banks or Financial Services
- d) Ratepayer's occupy less than 4 premises with England

When adjusted for local factors the potential qualifiers are

Property Description	Number of Properties	Total 2017 Liability £	Total Increase in Liability £
Petrol Filling Station and Premises	1	36,643.50	4,431.00
Garage and Premises	1	16,245.16	2,088.16
Showroom and Premises	1	70,413.00	15,262.00
Hotel and Premises	2	108,472.77	22,108.77
Public House and Premises	3	43,091.26	5,447.06
Offices and Premises	6	149,210.78	18,538.28
Restaurant and Premises	1	7,775.46	999.46
Café and Premises	1	25,673.64	7,541.64
Shop and Premises	9	150,794.43	19,094.43
Showroom and Premises	1	8,330.85	1,070.85
Warehouse and Premises	2	45,623.05	5,729.05
Miscellaneous Commercial	2	40,268.84	5,050.84
Workshop and Premises	2	20,132.89	2,587.89
Miscellaneous Leisure	1	8,747.39	1,124.39
Totals		33	731,423.02
			111,073.82

3. Property Level Analysis of Costs

Relief will be provided on the increase in rates bills at the following percentages

Rate Year	2016/17	2017/18	2018/19	2020/21
% Relief on Increase	85	45	20	0

The expected costs of the relief are:

Property Rateable Value	85% Relief	45% Relief	20% Relief
61500	2,791.35	1,477.77	656.79
82500	3,883.62	2,056.03	913.79
34750	1,623.23	859.36	381.94
81000	4,004.98	2,120.28	942.35
21000	910.22	481.88	214.17
147000	12,972.70	6,867.90	3,052.40
20500	849.54	449.76	199.89
26250	955.73	505.98	224.88
31750	1,259.14	666.60	296.27
35250	1,774.94	939.67	417.63
62500	2,214.88	1,172.58	521.15
29750	955.73	505.98	224.88
41500	2,002.49	1,060.14	471.17
92000	3,504.35	1,855.25	824.55
65500	2,943.06	1,558.09	692.48
55000	1,729.43	915.58	406.92
72500	3,458.85	1,831.15	813.85
27500	898.08	475.46	211.31
72500	3,337.48	1,766.90	785.29
22000	1,061.93	562.20	249.87
76500	3,766.35	1,993.95	886.20
40500	1,848.75	978.75	435.00
22250	895.05	473.85	210.60
23500	1,137.78	602.35	267.71
55500	2,700.33	1,429.59	635.37
25750	1,304.66	690.70	306.98
37000	1,380.50	730.85	324.82
157000	15,288.10	8,093.70	3,597.20
75000	3,034.08	1,606.28	713.90
35000	1,638.40	867.39	385.51
21250	864.71	457.79	203.46
21250	1,011.93	535.73	238.10
101000	6,410.39	3,393.74	1,508.33
Totals	94,412.75	49,983.22	22,214.76

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**31st October 2017**CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr P Witherspoon
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	Non Key

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report outlines the Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan which has been developed by the Connecting Families Strategic Group (comprised of a number of public and voluntary and community sector partners) and has been adopted by Worcestershire Health and Well Being Board.
- 1.2 The Children and Young People's Plan is a partnership plan and, as such, should be owned by all agencies working with children, young people and families in Worcestershire. The purpose of the plan is to:
- Set expectations around the way we work defining shared values and culture.
 - Clarify our collective ambition and aspirations for all children and young people in Worcestershire.
 - Focus on key priorities and success measures.
 - Provide a framework for all agencies and organisations working with children, young people and families to make the necessary impact to improve lives; and
 - Build on and add value to existing plans.
- 1.3 This is a copy of the covering report that was used by Worcestershire County Council when presenting the children and young People's Plan for Members' consideration in Worcestershire. Whilst this is a County plan Worcestershire County Council is keen to receive the support from local district Councils.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that:

- 2.1 **the new Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) 2017-2021 be endorsed; and**
- 2.2 **authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services, in so far as it is within the Council's remit to work with Worcestershire County Council and all other relevant agencies and organisations to contribute to the drawing up an action plan to put the CYPP into effect.**

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017**3. KEY ISSUES**

- 3.1 In February 2017, the Health and Wellbeing Board approved the development of the new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) for all children and young people in Worcestershire. It also agreed to strengthen the already well-established Connecting Families Strategic Group as the key partnership group to take responsibility for developing and implementing the CYPP and for this Strategic Group to be a formal sub-group of the Health and Wellbeing Board.
- 3.2. In April 2017, the Health and Wellbeing Board received an update on the progress in developing the new CYPP and noted the emerging priorities and content. It also approved the look and feel of the new CYPP and the consultation and engagement plan.
- 3.3. The Connecting Families Strategic Group has now met in its new format three times, and has actively led on the development of the CYPP. The Strategic Group formally recommended to the Health and Wellbeing Board to approve the new CYPP on the 11 July 2017. This recommendation was based on recognising that the new CYPP is the start of a journey, it simply sets out the overarching vision and ambition for all children and young people and as such will be refreshed/challenged on a regular basis.
- 3.4. As the new CYPP needs to be owned by all agencies, the Connecting Families Strategic Group is also recommending that all agencies adopt the plan within their individual agency policy frameworks.

Case for change

- 3.5. The development of the new CYPP is informed by both demographic and outcome challenges (data) as well the views of children, young people, parents/carers and practitioners. The case for change from a data perspective is informed by the Joint Strategic Needs Assessment and ongoing performance information. This information will be reviewed quarterly and the detail behind the Plan will be adapted in response.
- 3.6. As an overarching summary, the data currently highlights a number of potential issues and areas of concern which has informed the development of the new CYPP. These include:-
- The number of children and young people aged 19 or under in Worcestershire is projected to be 131,800 by 2025. This is an increase of 3,600 from 2015.
 - Birth rate is declining but is on the rise among disadvantaged families which could lead to additional demand challenges on public services.
 - Over 15,800 children across Worcestershire live in low income households.
 - The broad range of health inequalities for the under 5s.
 - Key Stage 2 results continue to be below expectations.
 - Too many children are not receiving a quality education and this is leading to poor outcomes and growing impact on wider public services.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

- Growing prevalence of children diagnosed with special education needs and disabilities and understanding what support may be needed to meet their needs.
- Education attainment of vulnerable pupils including those eligible for free school meals, looked after children and children with special education needs and disabilities. The gap is still too big between these vulnerable groups and their peers.
- Progress of Care Leavers into suitable accommodation and education, employment and/or training. 48% of care leavers are currently not in education, employment or training.
- Emotional wellbeing and mental health needs of children and young people; and
- Demand on social care at every level (Children in Need, Child Protection and Looked After Children) and the capacity, capability and quality of social care practice.

Consultation and engagement

3.7. A wide ranging consultation and engagement plan was drawn up which included engagement with children, young people, parents, carers and staff who work with them including:

- | | | |
|---------------------|-----------------------|----------------------|
| • Social Care Teams | • Family Support | • Districts |
| • CCGs | • CAMHs | • Parenting |
| • Health Visitors | • Speech and Language | • Housing Providers |
| • Police | • Voluntary Sector | • Sexual Health team |
| • Schools | | |

3.8. A variety of consultation methods were used to maximise the level of engagement.

Survey

An online survey was created which was shared widely via a variety of networks.

The same 5 questions were asked of 4 groups so that responses could be analysed in the same way. The 4 groups were:

- Children (0-12).
- Young People (13 – 24).
- Parents/Carers of children and young people; and
- Practitioners who work with children, young people and families.

Respondents who fitted in more than one group were able to give their answer from more than one perspective e.g. a 23 year old parent. An easy read version was also made available via the website.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

Social media: There was full social media communication plan raising the awareness of the survey and that a new Worcestershire Children's and Young People's plan was being developed. This included messages on Twitter, LinkedIn, Facebook and Yammer (internal and external networks). All of the six districts and the County Council had displays on their plasma screen and their own social media channels.

Engagement packs: An engagement pack was created and shared with partner agencies via a variety of networks.

Schools: Several schools used the recent elections for discussions with children and supported them to complete the survey in lessons.

The children of Franche Primary school created several videos which were used in social media posts.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O58AwnLY5OA>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sW99BHgxRtU&>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tLzmmS0uOk8>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=skj8VI7OK74&>
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Gg6aUPBMJw8&>

School Council were also invited to get involved by discussing and responding to the five questions in their meetings this term.

Libraries: Engagement Trees were placed in all 21 libraries, the same questions were asked at all 21 libraries each week for 5 weeks. A total of c.1450 face-to-face responses were received, the vast majority of which were from libraries.

Partners: A workshop was held for partners on 15th June to agree the priorities for Worcestershire prior to finalising the content. A wide range of partners attended and discussions have been fed into the final document.

Youth Cabinet: Have been briefed and we are working with them on the next steps to ensure they are fully involved.

Parents' Voice: Ran their own social media campaign promoting the survey and also ran two focus groups with invited parents (invited through social media) to have round table discussions about the plan. Their responses have been fed into the survey responses.

Survey Results

- 3.9. Over 2600 responses received (as of 30th June 2017)
- 1144 online survey
 - c. 1450 face to face (final data is still being submitted)

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**31st October 2017

- 3.10. A breakdown of respondent type and district area can be seen in the tables below.

Respondent types		District	
Children (12 or under)	735	Bromsgrove	607
Young People (13-24)	207	Malvern Hills	311
Parents/Carers	963	Redditch	129
Practitioners	575	Worcester City	560
Other	164	Wychavon	448
Note: there is some overlap between Young People/Parent and practitioner categories and respondents can be more than one (and answer from each perspective)		Wyre Forest	345
		Outside Worcestershire	31

Gender		Disability	
Male	372	Yes	129
Female	1010	No	961

Note: Demographic data was not captured for face-to-face respondents. Sexual orientation and ethnicity data is included in the full analysis along with cross-tabs of demographic data.

- 3.11. As a summary views were captured from 5 different viewpoints:

- those aged 12 and under,;
- young people aged 13 to 24;
- parents/carers;
- practitioners; and
- other interested citizens.

Respondents were asked what was important to children in Worcestershire and what the main challenges they face were.

- 3.12. Children and young people tended to respond to these questions in a more simplistic fashion. For instance, they would focus on issues of 'happiness', 'family' and 'friends' which all could be described as outcomes. Adults, whilst still touching on these outcomes, gave much more detailed answers that focus on **how** these outcomes might be achieved. For example, they commonly call for well-funded and easily accessible family support service to help families that need additional support. This family support is not an outcome in itself but could be seen as a mechanism to achieve outcomes for children such as happiness and having a loving and supporting family.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

- 3.13. A summary of the responses and respondent type can be seen in the tables below. *(Note: the views of other interested citizens have not been included in the initial summary as priority has been given to analysing feedback from the four main groups).*

Question: What is most important to children and young people?

Answer	Children	Young People	Parent / Carers	Practitioners
Family	✓	✓		
Friends	✓	✓		
Pets	✓			
Sports and physical activity	✓		✓	✓
Education		✓	✓	✓
Employment opportunities		✓	✓	✓
Safety - family environment and having safe places to go		✓	✓	✓
Activities		✓	✓	✓
Support services - early years, family, mental health, relationships and sexual health			✓	✓

Question: What are the main issues and challenges for children and young people?

Answer	Children	Young People	Parent / Carers	Practitioners
Education and school - pressure and provision	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lack of safe and affordable places to go outside of school			✓	✓
Learning to get along with other people	✓	✓	✓	✓
Cuts in services that offer support to children and young people			✓	✓
Mental health and wellbeing		✓	✓	✓
Lack of safe, local and affordable activities	✓	✓	✓	✓
Use of social media for bullying			✓	✓

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017**Question: How could the lives of children and young people be improved?**

Answer	Children	Young People
More <i>affordable</i> and <i>available</i> activities	✓	✓
More time with friends and family	✓	
Less bullying and/or more friends	✓	✓

Worcestershire's Children and Young People's Plan: 2017 – 2021

- 3.14. The CYPP is attached as Appendix 1. It has been designed to be a 'plan on a page' to set the framework and intent for further work. More detail and information is included on the website www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cypp.
- 3.15. As set out above, the CYPP will set the expectation around the way all agencies will work and will need to be actively embedded across the system. The plan states that agencies will:
- Listen to, hear and understand children, young people and families
 - Find strengths and build on positives to help people help themselves
 - Prioritise partnerships to improve outcomes – doing things with people, instead of to them, for them or doing nothing
 - Focus on adding value and keep asking: Is anyone better off? Is anyone worse off?
 - Be brave enough to always do the right thing for children and young people.
- 3.16. In addition to clarifying the shared values and expectations around the way agencies work, the plan follows a logic model of five key steps
- The overarching vision for all children and young people
 - The ultimate outcomes
 - The key priorities
 - The areas of work/activity that need to be implemented?
 - The measurements of success?

Our vision is for

Worcestershire to be a wonderful place for all children and young people to grow up

We believe it is important that children and young people:-

- Are safe from harm
- Reach their full potential
- Make a positive contribution in their communities
- Live healthy, happy and fun filled lives

We will effect change by working together to:-

- Help children live in safe and supportive families and communities (homes and places)

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

- Promote safe, healthy and positive relationships
- Support children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning
- Provide access to a quality and appropriate education / learning experience for all
- Prepare young people for adult life
- Improve outcomes for our vulnerable children and young people
- Increasing young people's voice in community life, participation and engagement in developing services
- Increase access to safe and affordable activities and places to go outside of school
- Encourage physical activity and healthy eating
- Improve access to social, emotional mental health and well-being services
- Support young people, parents and carers to overcome the barriers to sustained employment

We will work together to:-

- Actively embed the children and young people plan's shared values within all agencies
- Improve safeguarding services
- Reform services for children with special education needs and disabilities
- Break the cycle of families continuing to need/rely on specialist services
- Tackle the gaps in education system/provision that prevent children and young people from accessing full time education
- Develop and implement a prevention and early help strategy
- Strengthen the social, emotional and mental health offer
- Secure partnerships that support delivery of our priorities and use public money wisely

We will know if the plan is working by the:-

- Decrease in the number of children and young people with a repeat child protection plan
- Increase in the percentage and timeliness of children who are looked after that are in permanent homes (placements)
- Increase in the percentage of children with a good level of development in early years
- Improvement in educational outcomes and positive destinations for all children and young people
- Decrease in achievement gaps at all stages
- Surveys of children and young people's views: are they having fun and having a positive influence in their communities?
- Decrease in the number of first time entrants into the youth justice system
- Increase in children, young people and parental satisfaction with emotional wellbeing or mental health services
- Improvement of health outcomes and closing of inequalities gap.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

Implementing the Plan and Next Steps

- 3.17. Approving the CYPP is the start of a journey, as the CYPP simply sets out the vision and values to put children and young people at the heart of everything we do (far more than what happens now). There is more work to be done to set out an action plan of what is going to be delivered as individual organisations, and together as partners, to improve the lives of children and young people. The Plan in its current form sets out initial intentions and all partners are being asked to endorse and adopt the Plan and actively embed the shared values into their culture.
- 3.18. To develop the action plan there is more work to do and the Executive Committee is asked to authorise the Head of Community Services to work with Worcestershire County Council and all relevant agencies and organisations to draw up an action plan to put the CYPP into effect. This action will provide clarity on what work is currently in progress and how the CYPP can add value to this. It will also identify and address gaps of activity and focus.
- 3.19. To start the development agencies and organisations are being asked to
- Consider/map their key priorities with those in the CYPP to identify common areas
 - Consider how they could support the key priorities
 - embedding this approach in the 'way we work' (which is in line with the Council's systems thinking approach).
- Details of the Council's contribution to CYPP can be found at Appendix 4.
- 3.20. Work is also in progress to develop a performance dashboard to demonstrate progress. This will flow from the overarching success measures outlined in the CYPP and will have the necessary level of detail around performance progress. It is intended to build this detail on the www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cypp website pages along with links to the range of plans and programmes of work that support the implementation of the CYPP.
- 3.21. The implementation of the CYPP will feature as a standard agenda item at each Connecting Families Strategic Group (meets monthly). There will also be a quarterly review of progress which will feed into the Health and Wellbeing Board meeting schedule.

Financial Implications

- 3.22. There are no financial implications arising from adopting the plan as this work will be done within existing budgets.
- 3.23. A more joined up approach should enable agencies to use their resources more efficiently in the future. Where there are any additional resource implications these will be reported separately. Finance officers are currently working on a Cost Benefit framework to enable identification of the long term partner benefits from the Connecting Families approach.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

Legal Implications

- 3.24 District Councils have a duty under Section 1 of the Children Act 2004 to ensure that their functions are discharged with regard to the need to safeguard and promote the welfare of children.
- 3.25 There is a duty on local authorities under Section 10 of the Children Act 2004 to make arrangements to promote co-operation to improve the wellbeing of all children in the authority's area. A range of individual organisations and professionals working with children and families have specific statutory duties to promote the welfare of children and ensure they are protected from harm.
- 3.26 In addition Section 11 of the Children Act 2004 places a duty on District Councils that provide children's and other types of services including housing, sport, culture and leisure services, licensing authorities and youth services.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.27 The Council is already working towards the Children and Young People's Plan through its work on Connecting Families and its transformation programme.
- 3.28 We will continue to review our service provision and all that we do to ensure it helps achieve the CYPP vision and outcomes. This cannot be done by one organisation alone and to achieve this we need to transform the public and voluntary sector – the Council will continue to seek to drive this.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.29 The CYPP has been developed in consultation with a number of statutory and non-statutory bodies and focuses on supporting the needs of some of the most vulnerable individuals and groups across the county.
- 3.30 This Partnership Plan was subject to consultation as described above.
- 3.31 From an equalities perspective, the CYPP has involved children and young people in a variety of ways throughout the development process and has highlighted their views and perspectives, not just those of parent/carers or practitioners. It also acknowledges other equality and diversity impacts, such as disability and mental health and wellbeing and the importance of equal opportunities for children and young people.
- 3.32 As part of the consultation process, the online survey also captured (optional) demographic data from the respondents. Further information on this is included in Appendix 3.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE31st October 2017

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Supporting the plan presents no risks to the Council. The plan supports several of the council's strategic purposes, including help me lead my life independently.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Children and Young People's Plan

Appendix 2 – Additional Data Aug 2017

Appendix 3 – CYPP Qualitative research – report August 2017

Appendix 4 – Council Contribution to the Children and Young People's Plan

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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Worcestershire Children and Young People

At the heart of everything we do



Worcestershire's Children and Young People's Plan

2017 - 2021

Find out more online:
www.worcestershire.gov.uk/CYPP

This plan is owned by all agencies working with children, young people and families in Worcestershire






Provides a framework for all agencies and organisations working with children, young people and families to make the necessary impact to improve lives

We will:

- Listen to, hear and understand children, young people and families
- Find strengths and build on positives to help people help themselves
- Prioritise partnerships - to improve outcomes, doing things with people, instead of to them, for them or doing nothing
- Focus on adding value, Keep asking is anyone better off? Is anyone worse off?
- Be brave enough to always do the right thing for children and young people

Our vision is for Worcestershire to be a wonderful place for all children and young people to grow up

Ultimate Outcomes	Our Priorities	What are we going to do?	How we'll know if we've made a difference
 <p>Are safe from harm</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Help children live in safe and supportive families and communities (homes and places) 2. Promote safe, healthy and positive relationships 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Actively embed the children and young people plan's shared values within all agencies • Improve safeguarding services • Reform services for children with special education needs and disabilities • Break the cycle of families continuing to need/rely on specialist services • Tackle the gaps in education system/provision that prevent children and young people from accessing full time education • Strengthen the focus on prevention and early intervention within all aspects of the children and young people's plan • Strengthen the social, emotional and mental health offer • Secure partnerships that support delivery of our priorities and use public money wisely 	<p>Decrease in the number of children and young people with a repeat child protection plan</p> <p>Increase in the percentage and timeliness of children who are looked after that are in permanent homes (placements)</p>
 <p>Reach their full potential</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Support children to have the best start in life and be ready for learning 4. Provide access to a quality and appropriate education/learning experience for all 5. Prepare young people for adult life 6. Improve outcomes for our most vulnerable children and young people 		<p>Increase in the percentage of children with a good level of development in early years</p> <p>Improve educational outcomes and positive destinations for all children and young people</p> <p>Decrease in achievement gaps at all stages</p>
 <p>Make a positive contribution in their communities</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 7. Increase young people's voice in community life, participation and engagement in developing services 8. Increase access to safe and affordable activities and places to go outside of school 		<p>Surveys of children and young people's views: are they having fun and having a positive influence in their communities?</p> <p>Decrease in the number of first time entrants into the youth justice system</p>
 <p>Live healthy, happy and fun filled lives</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 9. Increase physical activity and healthy eating 10. Improve social, emotional mental health & well-being outcomes 11. Support young people, parents and carers to overcome the barriers to sustained employment 		<p>Increase in children, young people and parental satisfaction with emotional well-being or mental health services</p> <p>Improvement of health outcomes and closing of inequalities gap</p>

Page 13 Agenda Item 13

Our Partnership:

All District Councils | Clinical Commissioning Groups | Department of Work and Pensions (West Mercia District) | Early Years Settings | Employers | Hereford and Worcester Fire and Rescue Service
 Local Enterprise Board (Business and Skills Sector) | Public Health | Schools and College | Training Providers | Voluntary and Community Sector | West Mercia Police | Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust
 Worcestershire Children's Safeguarding Board | Worcestershire County Council | Worcestershire Health and Care Trust

What you told us is important?

Sleep because I dream

Being good and staying out of trouble

Just had a baby girl, she is the most important thing in my life

People being less harsh and being nice

Being appreciated and having an equal opportunity

Being given the opportunities to achieve the same as everyone else, not being defined by my post code

That I'm able to access support and a club that supports my needs

If learning is more fun

My family as they are everything

Family, friends, phone, PS4, cricket bat and ball, hockey ball and stick

Additional District Information

The following information has been collated by WCC from various sources for use in the Districts.

Population estimates

- Mid 2016 there were an estimated 128,992 children and young people aged 0-19 in Worcestershire.
- Mid 2016 there were an estimated 159,938 children and young people aged 0-24 in Worcestershire.

District breakdown

- The number of children and young people aged 19 or under in **Bromsgrove** is projected to be 24,300 by 2025. This is an increase of 1,200 from 2015
- The number of children and young people aged 19 or under in **Malvern Hills** is projected to be 16,200 by 2025. This is an increase of 700 from 2015
- The number of children and young people aged 19 or under in **Redditch** is projected to be 20,400 by 2025. This is a decrease of 200 from 2015
- The number of children and young people aged 19 or under in **Worcester City** is projected to be 25,100 by 2025. This is an increase of 1,100 from 2015
- The number of children and young people aged 19 or under in **Wychavon** is projected to be 26,300 by 2025. This is an increase of 600 from 2015
- The number of children and young people aged 19 or under in **Wyre Forest** is projected to be 21,700 by 2025. This is an increase of 300 from 2015

Number of children living in low income households

- Over 1,600 children under 16 in **Bromsgrove** live in low income households
- Over 1,700 children under 16 in **Malvern Hills** live in low income households
- Over 3,100 children under 16 in **Redditch** live in low income households
- Over 3,400 children under 16 in **Worcester City** live in low income households
- Over 2,500 children under 16 in **Wychavon** live in low income households
- Over 3,300 children under 16 in **Wyre Forest** live in low income households

Key Stage Results

Note - Children are grouped by where they attend school, this may not be the same district in which they live.

The figures below include all state schools in Worcestershire.

% Reaching Expected Standard in Reading, Writing and Maths at end of KS1 (Provisional 2017)

Bromsgrove: 63.5

Malvern Hills: 65.3

Redditch: 62.0

Worcester: 63.7

Wychavon: 70.3

Wyre Forest: 62.7

National: 63.7

**% Reaching Expected Standard in Reading, Writing and Maths at end of KS2
(Provisional 2017)**

Bromsgrove: 67.3
 Malvern Hills: 61.2
 Redditch: 47.9
 Worcester: 59.6
 Wychavon: 51.8
 Wyre Forest: 56.7
 National: 57.2

Numbers of Looked after Children, children on a Child Protection Plan and Child in Need and the number of individuals with a Targeted Family Support Worker

	Looked after children	Child Protection Plan	Child in Need	Targeted Family Support
Bromsgrove	60	70	110	120
Malvern Hills	70	60	90	60
Redditch	120	70	140	300
Worcester City	110	120	200	270
Wychavon	90	80	120	170
Wyre Forest	110	140	150	220
Out of County/confidential	210	20	30	n/a
Notes				
Figures rounded to nearest 10				
TFS as at end of June 2017; others at end July 2017				
Looked after - address is placement address; others use display address/main address				
Child in Need - local definition				

Early Help/Early Intervention Figures

Redditch	2016/17 Q2	2016/17 Q3	2016/17 Q4	2017/18 Q1
	Jul Aug Sep	Oct Nov Dec	Jan Feb Mar	Apr May Jun
Number of individuals with a completed early help assessment	70	48	42	85
Percentage of two year old children benefitting from funded early education	58%	69%	67%	56%
Percentage of 18-16 yr olds not in education, employment or training	Not reported on this quarter	2.5%	3.5%	3.6%
Percentage of previous year 11 RONIs who are in education, employment and training (annual figure)		91.9% (2014)	90.4% (2015)	92.3% (2016)
Percentage of 16-24 population claiming Job Seekers Allowance	1.0%	0.7%	0.8%	0.9%
Number of Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents recorded by West Mercia Police calls	1049	774	792	923
Under 18s conceptions rate per 1,000 population aged 15-17 (annual figure)		34.5 (2012)	28.8 (2013)	34 (2014)

Bromsgrove	2016/17 Q2 Jul Aug Sep	2016/17 Q3 Oct Nov Dec	2016/17 Q4 Jan Feb Mar	2017/18 Q1 Apr May Jun
Number of individuals with a completed early help assessment	80	66	66	40
Percentage of two year old children benefitting from funded early education	59%	67%	62%	62%
Percentage of 18-16 yr olds not in education, employment or training	Not reported on this quarter	1.5%	2.1%	2.0%
Percentage of previous year 11 RONIs who are in education, employment and training (annual figure)		91.1% (2014)	89.4% (2015)	94.9% (2016)
Percentage of 16-24 population claiming Job Seekers Allowance	0.6%	0.5%	0.6%	0.5%
Number of Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents recorded by West Mercia Police calls	685	603	545	724
Under 18s conceptions rate per 1,000 population aged 15-17 (annual figure)		19 (2012)	17.7 (2013)	14.7 (2014)

Malvern Hills	2016/17 Q2 Jul Aug Sep	2016/17 Q3 Oct Nov Dec	2016/17 Q4 Jan Feb Mar	2017/18 Q1 Apr May Jun
Number of individuals with a completed early help assessment	76	50	48	54
Percentage of two year old children benefitting from funded early education	72%	86%	69%	78%
Percentage of 18-16 yr olds not in education, employment or training	Not reported on this quarter	2.2%	3.2%	3.7%
Percentage of previous year 11 RONIs who are in education, employment and training (annual figure)		94.2% (2014)	94.5% (2015)	94.7% (2016)
Percentage of 16-24 population claiming Job Seekers Allowance	0.8%	0.8%	0.7%	0.7%
Number of Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents recorded by West Mercia Police calls	630	520	447	567
Under 18s conceptions rate per 1,000 population aged 15-17 (annual figure)		22.1 (2012)	19.2 (2013)	10 (2014)

Worcester City	2016/17 Q2 Jul Aug Sep	2016/17 Q3 Oct Nov Dec	2016/17 Q4 Jan Feb Mar	2017/18 Q1 Apr May Jun
Number of individuals with a completed early help assessment	160	95	109	106
Percentage of two year old children benefitting from funded early education	65%	78%	61%	76%
Percentage of 18-16 yr olds not in education, employment or training	Not reported on this quarter	3.6%	5.0%	5.6%

Percentage of previous year 11 RONIs who are in education, employment and training (annual figure)		92.7% (2014)	93.6% (2015)	87.8% (2016)
Percentage of 16-24 population claiming Job Seekers Allowance	0.8%	0.7%	0.6%	0.7%
Number of Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents recorded by West Mercia Police calls	1830	1332	1334	1594
Under 18s conceptions rate per 1,000 population aged 15-17 (annual figure)		43.1 (2012)	34.1 (2013)	27.4 (2014)

Wychavon	2016/17 Q2 Jul Aug Sep	2016/17 Q3 Oct Nov Dec	2016/17 Q4 Jan Feb Mar	2017/18 Q1 Apr May Jun
Number of individuals with a completed early help assessment	150	98	92	69
Percentage of two year old children benefitting from funded early education	68%	80%	66%	70%
Percentage of 18-16 yr olds not in education, employment or training	Not reported on this quarter	1.7%	2.6%	2.4%
Percentage of previous year 11 RONIs who are in education, employment and training (annual figure)		96.4% (2014)	93.5% (2015)	97.6% (2016)
Percentage of 16-24 population claiming Job Seekers Allowance	0.4%	0.4%	0.4%	0.3%
Number of Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents recorded by West Mercia Police calls	1048	824	715	1012
Under 18s conceptions rate per 1,000 population aged 15-17 (annual figure)		21.6 (2012)	22 (2013)	18.8 (2014)

Wyre Forest	2016/17 Q2 Jul Aug Sep	2016/17 Q3 Oct Nov Dec	2016/17 Q4 Jan Feb Mar	2017/18 Q1 Apr May Jun
Number of individuals with a completed early help assessment	206	73	85	85
Percentage of two year old children benefitting from funded early education	72%	76%	70%	80%
Percentage of 18-16 yr olds not in education, employment or training	Not reported on this quarter	1.9%	2.4%	2.7%
Percentage of previous year 11 RONIs who are in education, employment and training (annual figure)		97.1% (2014)	98.1% (2015)	97.4% (2016)
Percentage of 16-24 population claiming Job Seekers Allowance	0.6%	0.5%	0.7%	0.6%
Number of Anti-Social Behaviour Incidents recorded by West Mercia Police calls	1258	1050	943	1182
Under 18s conceptions rate per 1,000 population aged 15-17 (annual figure)		25.3 (2012)	29.1 (2013)	16.2 (2014)

Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan

**Report on the findings of qualitative research to understand
priorities and challenges for children and young people in
Worcestershire**

July 2017

Worcestershire County Council Research Team



Thank You

To everyone who contributed to the survey – your responses have been used in the formation of the new Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan. The plan can be found on the website:

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cypp>

If you have any comments you would like to add please email:

CYPP@worcestershire.gov.uk

Contents

1. Executive Summary	3
2. Introduction and methodology	3
3. Results by key question	5
3.1 What are the most important things to children and young people?	6
Summary of the most important things to children and young people.....	8
3.2 What do children and young people like to do?.....	9
Summary of what children and young people like to do.....	10
Summary of the main challenges/issues for children and young people.....	13
3.4 How could the lives of children and young people be improved?	14
Summary of how the lives of children and young people could be improved	16
3.5 How could parents/carers be better supported?.....	17
Summary of how parents/carers could be better supported	19
3.6 If you were king/queen of Worcestershire what would you change?	20
Summary of what would you change if you were king or queen for a day	21
Annex 1 Demographic profile of respondents	22
Annex 2 Online Survey.....	26
Annex 3 Easy read survey.....	39
Annex 4 Question Tree	48

1. Executive Summary

In February 2017, partner agencies across Worcestershire began developing a new Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP). A CYPP is designed to provide a single, strategic, overarching plan for all local services for children and young people in an area.

To inform the development of this new plan a range of consultation methods were set in motion to ensure maximum engagement with all interested parties and importantly with children and young people themselves. This report provides the results on a key piece of qualitative research that explored five key questions from five different perspectives - those of a child, young person, parent/carer, practitioner or other interested citizen. The key questions covered;

- the most important things to children and young people;
- the main issues and challenges for children and young people;
- how the lives of children and young people be improved; and
- If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for the day what would you change?

Over 2,590 responses were received providing a rich source of information about the challenges facing children and young people and how their lives could be improved.

Three common themes emerged across all questions. First, respondents emphasised their desire to support wider investment in **public services**, second to provide more **places for children and young people to go and things for them to do**, and finally to **improve the education system** distinct from other public services.

The other noticeable trend that emerged is a difference between the perspectives of children and adults. Two of the most commonly selected challenges chosen by adults were not raised as issues at all by children or young people. Adults highlighted the need for improvement of **education**; including an increase in funding. They also selected **social media** as a particular challenge that led to some extreme suggestions for it to be tightly regulated or even banned.

The differences between children's and adults' views highlighted through this question, point towards very different perspectives on the challenges faced by children when seen through the eyes of a child or through the eyes of an adult.

2. Introduction and methodology

A Children and Young People's Plan (CYPP) is an important element of the changes proposed in the Children Act 2004 and provides a single, strategic, overarching plan for all local services for children and young people in an area.

In February 2017, Worcestershire County Council's (WCC) Health and Wellbeing Board (HWBB) approved the development of a new CYPP for all children and young people in Worcestershire. As part of this work, WCC and partners has sought evidence of the

priorities, needs and wants of children and young people in our area. A key part of this evidence gathering has been direct engagement with children, young people and other interested stakeholders to seek their views. This report presents the findings of that engagement so that it may be used in the development of the new CYPP.

A variety of consultation methods were used to maximise the level of engagement with the new CYPP. This report focuses on two specific elements of that engagement.

The first was an online survey (see Annex 2) that we shared widely via a variety of networks. The survey posed the same five questions to five different groups to allow us to compare responses. The five groups were;

- Children (aged 12 and under);
- Young People (aged 13 to 24);
- Parents/Carers of children and young people;
- Practitioners who work with children, young people and families; and
- Other interested adults.

Respondents who fitted in more than one group were able to give their answer from more than one perspective. For example, a 23 year old parent was able to answer from the perspectives of a young person and a parent. An easy read version of the survey was also made available via the website (see Annex 3).

The second form of engagement used a 'face-to-face' methodology. The questions we used in the online survey were physically placed in public spaces where interested parties were likely to visit (mostly libraries).

Respondents were invited to answer one of our five questions every week for five weeks. Respondents wrote their answers on 'post-it' notes and attached them to an 'question tree' poster (see Annex 4) allowing for an exchange of ideas between respondents. The notes were colour coded to reflect the type of respondent. All responses were collected each week and the results captured in a consistent way to the online survey allowing the results to be combined.

The results presented in this report are not to be relied upon as a statistically accurate reflection of the views of residents of Worcestershire. Data was entered as if the respondents' post-it notes lived in that district of that particular library. The engagement reported upon here has been qualitative in nature and to a large degree respondents have been self-selecting.

The face-to-face element of the engagement did not collect demographic data and we have not attempted to weight the online survey responses to reflect the demographic profile of Worcestershire. (See Annex 1 for a breakdown of the demographic profile of respondents where it was collected.)

However, the engagement has captured the views of a wide range of residents and the results do supply a rich evidence source that can be used to develop Worcestershire's next CYPP.

3. Results by key question

Participants in our research were all asked to give their views on five key questions from their own perspective as a child, young person, parent/carer, practitioner or other interested citizen. These key questions covered;

- the most important things to children and young people;
- the main issues and challenges for children and young people;
- how the lives of children and young people be improved; and
- if you were king or queen of Worcestershire for the day what would you change?

If a respondent identified themselves in two or three categories, such as a young person and a parent and a practitioner then they were given the opportunity to answer questions from all valid perspectives.

In addition to the four key questions, some participants were asked questions relating only to their particular respondent type such as from their view as a child or a practitioner.

This remainder of this section sets out the findings for each key question as well as the specific questions for a particular respondent type. For the key questions, findings are presented for each respondent type with similarities and differences highlighted. Some brief district analysis of the questions is provided here. A further detailed district breakdown of results will be included in an annex to the main report.

3.1 What are the most important things to children and young people?

All respondents were asked this question although it was phrased slightly differently to the different respondent types. The different phrasing is set out in Table 1.

Table 1 - Different phrasing of question on what is important to children and young people

Respondent type	Question phrasing
Child	What are the most important things to you?
Young person	As a young person, what is most important to you?
Parent/carer	As a parent / carer, what do you think is most important for children and young people in Worcestershire?
Practitioner	As a practitioner, what do you think is most important for children and young people in Worcestershire?
Interested citizen	What do you think is most important for children and young people in Worcestershire?

Table 2 shows the most frequently selected items that each respondent type gave to the question on what are the most important things to children and young people.

Respondents were allowed to choose multiple items so percentages will not total 100% of the number of responses given. A base number of those opting to answer each question is shown for information.

Table 2 - What is important to children and young people in Worcestershire?

Answer	Children*	Young people**	Parents & carers***	Practitioners****	Citizens*****	Total*****
Family and friends	278	91	70	39	38	516
Education, learning and reading	68	26	238	91	79	502
Access to activities, clubs, things to do, chances to play	57	0	191	78	65	391
Staying safe	0	7	213	127	29	376
Access to support services when needed	0	3	137	168	14	322
Sports / physical activities / physical health	68	11	77	31	20	207
Other	18	23	32	30	33	136
Employment - opportunities and choices	1	9	52	53	10	125
Equality and respect (giving and receiving)	0	6	37	48	22	113
Having fun and being happy	5	11	34	28	21	99
Being outdoors / at the park / access to green spaces	9	0	64	10	7	90
Animals and nature	72	8	0	0	0	80
Mental health and well-being	0	0	31	29	16	76
Using devices / watching content (TV, phones, consoles)	23	15	0	0	0	38
Childcare (available and affordable)	0	0	20	3	2	25
Eating and drinking	1	14	0	0	0	15

- * 261 Children chose to answer this question
- ** 92 Young people chose to answer this question
- *** 731 Parents / carers people chose to answer this question
- *** 424 Practitioners chose to answer this question
- ***** 224 Citizens chose to answer this question
- ***** 1,687 Respondents answered this question

Please note that the tables have been ranked on the highest overall responses. The categories highlighted in bold, italics and a larger font size are the top three highest scores for each respondent type.

Any responses that received less than 10 answers were placed in the 'Other' category alongside the original 'Other' responses. A very wide range of other important things were suggested by respondents and ranged from **material wealth** and **possessions** to a **sense of community** and **addressing poverty**.

District variations

Education was one of the highest ranked answers for every single district, evidencing the importance of education to all types of respondents across Worcestershire. Other high scores included leisure activities, access to support & counselling and safer communities. Family was only in the top three for Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest – bearing in mind Worcestershire ranked it as most important.

Summary of the most important things to children and young people

In understanding the results shown in the table above, it is important to note a methodological difference in the way children were asked this question compared to all other groups. Children were presented with an initial list of options to choose from as well as given the chance to enter any other items they wished to tell us about. They were also asked why they were important to them. All other groups were presented with a free text box into which they could answer.

Even with this difference in mind, children and young people tended to respond to this question in a more simplistic fashion than adults. For instance, both children and young people most frequently choose **family** and **friends** as the things that are most important to them. Other items frequently selected can be categorised simply as the things they like to do or how they like to feel such as **sport** and being with **animals and nature**.

These can all be described as outcomes, i.e. the children and young people see importance in the doing or the feeling of each of these. When children explained why these things were important they most commonly said in straightforward terms that they loved doing them or that they made them feel happy.

"Because I love them." **Girl, 12 or under who chose their family as important to them**

"I play tennis and it makes me happy and [I] love competing." **Girl, 12 or under who chose sport as important to them**

Adults, whilst still selecting these outcomes in some numbers, have given much more detailed answers that focus on **how** these outcomes might be achieved. For example, parents most commonly call for well-funded and caring **education** systems. And practitioners call for easily accessible **support services** such as a family support service to help families that are in crisis.

"Education, education, education." **Gender not provided, parent who chose education as important**

"Access to high quality, inclusive education and safe places to play." **Male, parent who chose education as important**

"Preventative services and easy to access support for when things are tough. Children's centres with lots going on, and easy access to health visitors."
Female, practitioner who chose support services as important

Well-funded education and easily accessible family support are not outcomes in themselves but can be seen as mechanisms to achieve outcomes for children such as happiness and having a loving and supporting family.

Two other categories were commonly selected as a whole but not universally by all groups. The first focussed on keeping children **safe** and was selected in large numbers by adults but not by the children and young people.

"For them to be and feel safe." **Female, parent who chose safety as important**

The second was having access to **activities and things to do** (other than sport specifically) that was chosen in large number by all groups with the exception of young people.

"Interesting and well managed recreational facilities to encourage interest and exercise..." **Female, citizen who chose access to activities as important**

3.2 What do children and young people like to do?

Only children and young people were asked this question although it was phrased slightly differently for the two groups. The different phrasing is set out in Table 3.

Table 3 - Different phrasing of question on what do children and young people like to do

Respondent type	Question phrasing
Child	What do you like to do?
Young person	As a young person, what do you like to do?

Table 4 shows the most frequently selected items that each respondent type gave to the question on what do children and young people like to do.

Respondents were allowed to choose multiple items so percentages will not total 100% of the number of responses given. A base number of those opting to answer each question is shown for information.

Table 4 - What do children and young people like to do?

Answer	Children*	Young people**	Parents & carers	Practitioners	Citizens	Total ***
Sports / physical activities	265	41	Question not asked	Question not asked	Question not asked	306
Using devices / watching content (TV, phones, consoles)	187	25				212
Family and friends	182	27				209
Learning, reading and visiting the library	152	21				173
Being outdoors / at the park	161	5				166
Being creative	63	16				79
Playing with my toys	74	0				74
Other	17	25				42
Clubs (e.g. cubs)	39	0				39
Eating and drinking	15	6				21
Animals and nature	20	0				20

- * 394 children chose to answer this question
- ** 93 Young people chose to answer this question
- *** 587 Respondents answered this question

Please note that the tables have been ranked on the highest overall responses. The categories highlighted in bold, italics and a larger font size are the top three highest scores for each respondent type.

Any responses that received less than 10 answers were placed in the 'Other' category alongside the original 'Other' responses. They included answers as diverse as **volunteering, sleeping, shopping** and **travelling**.

District variations

Sport was ranked as one of the top three in every single district highlighting that as a whole, children and young people are active. Sport is in fact the highest rated aspect in every district with the exception of Wyre Forest – which was family and friends. 'Family and friends' was rated in the top three in all districts with the exception of Malvern Hills, whilst reading was rated in the top three in all districts except Bromsgrove. 'Going to the park and being outdoors' was rated in the top three in Bromsgrove, Worcester and Wyre Forest. Malvern Hills and Redditch had a low number of responses for this question. Differences between rankings across the districts were not always significant (in some cases just one or two responses between different activities).

Summary of what children and young people like to do

Participating in **sports and physical activities** was the most common answer for both children and young people were asked what they like to do. Respondents frequently referred to taking part in a wide variety of sports often through an organised club and also to keep them healthy.

"[I] play sport - Mainly play football, some cricket, it's enjoyable and a good way to get me off my Xbox and my phone." **Boy, 12 or under**

"I like going to my club because it keeps you fit and healthy but it is also nice to be part of a club." **Gender not provided, 12 or under**

Respondents also frequently selected **using devices / watching content**, spending time with their **family and friends, being outdoors / at the park** and **learning, reading and visiting the library** in large numbers. These four categories were selected at least twice as frequently compared to all other answers given.

"Go to the cinema, play computer games, meet up with friends in coffee shops." **Gender not provided, 13 to 24**

"I love to read!" **Gender not provided, 13 to 24**

There is strong agreement about the categories selected most frequently when comparing the responses given by children and young people. The only exception was that a low number of young people selected being outdoors/at the park, whereas it was very popular with children.

3.3 What are the main issues/challenges to children and young people?

All respondents were asked this question although it was phrased slightly differently to the different respondent types. The different phrasing is set out in Table 5.

Table 5 - Different phrasing of question on the main issues/challenges

Respondent type	Question phrasing
Child	What are your main issues or challenges?
Young person	As a young person, what are your main issues and challenges?
Parent/carer	As a parent / carer, what do you think are the main challenges or issues for children and young people in Worcestershire?
Practitioner	As a practitioner, what do you think are the main challenges or issues for children and young people in Worcestershire?
Interested citizen	What do you think are the main challenges or issues for children and young people in Worcestershire?

Table 6 shows the most frequently selected items that each respondent type gave to the question on what the main challenges are to children and young people.

Respondents were allowed to give multiple answers so percentages will not total 100% of the number of responses given. A base number of those opting to answer each question is shown for information.

Table 6 - What are the main challenges/issues for children and young people?

Answer	Children*	Young people**	Parents & carers***	Practitioners****	Citizens*****	Total*****
Mental and physical health - lack of support	17	18	317	263	70	685
Lack of safe and affordable places to go	18	5	196	75	44	338
Education – under-funded, improvements needed	0	0	137	70	33	240
Behaviour of others / bullying / learning to get along	49	12	83	59	27	230
Social media and technology	0	0	110	63	36	209
School work	73	9	49	37	2	170
Other	28	14	35	30	21	128
Financial challenges and poverty	0	11	23	45	15	94
Employment	0	9	42	17	16	84
Transport - available and affordable	0	2	49	17	14	82
Drugs / alcohol	0	0	21	11	13	45
Childcare - affordable and available	0	3	15	3	1	22
Sexual and domestic abuse	0	0	0	11	4	15
Taking on physical activities	12	0	0	0	0	12

- * 115 children chose to answer this question
- ** 59 Young people chose to answer this question
- *** 613 Parents / carers people chose to answer this question
- **** 407 Practitioners chose to answer this question
- ***** 200 Citizens chose to answer this question
- ***** 1,394 Respondents answered this question

Please note that the tables have been ranked on the highest overall responses. The categories highlighted in bold, italics and a larger font size are the top three highest scores for each respondent type.

Any responses that received less than 10 answers were placed in the 'Other' category alongside the original 'Other' responses. As with the other questions in the survey a range of other challenges were suggested by respondents and ranged from **rural isolation** and **decreasing your carbon footprint** to **ageism** and **working parents**.

District variations

Bromsgrove and Malvern Hills have the same first two ranks which are 'mental and physical health - lack of support' and 'lack of safe and affordable places to go'. Bromsgrove's third issue was joint with 'behaviour of others / bullying / learning to get along' and 'school work'. Malvern Hills third rank was education similar to Bromsgrove's concerns. Worcester received a high number of responses and had the same rankings as Malvern Hills. Redditch highest issues were 'lack of support', 'lack of safe and affordable places to go' and last were joint with 'behaviour of others / bullying / learning to get along' and 'social media and technology'.

Both Wychavon and Wyre Forest first two ranks were 'lack of safe and affordable places to go' and 'mental and physical health - lack of support' but their third ranks differed. Wychavon last rank was 'social media and technology' and Wyre Forest's was 'school work'. It is important to note that responses for Wyre Forest were very close with some having a difference of one response between ranks.

Summary of the main challenges/issues for children and young people

This question about challenges facing children and young people in Worcestershire led to strikingly different responses between the different groups of respondents. Children, in particular, put forward a very limited range of challenges when compared to the adult groups. Children and adults also chose very different challenges from each other.

For example, children most commonly chose their **school work** as their biggest challenge followed by issues around **learning to get along and bullying**.

"My main challenge is to do well on my SATS." **Girl, 12 or under**

The adults, on the other hand, chose the issue of **mental and physical health** as their most commonly selected challenge which included a lack of access to and funding of related services. Their second most commonly selected issue was the **lack of safe and affordable places to go**.

"The main challenge is there is no money to spend. The most major issue is a lack of mental health services." **Female, parent / carer**

"Lack of affordable facilities, costs to their families or themselves, ability to travel to facilities." **Female, practitioner**

Interestingly, the next two most commonly selected challenges chosen by adults were not raised as issues at all by children or young people. Adults highlighted the need for improvement of **education** as well as its under-funding. They also selected **social media** as a particular challenge that led to some extreme suggestions for it to be tightly regulated or even banned.

"Funding for Schools is one of the lowest in the UK so standards of education will suffer." **Male, citizen**

"Social media is taking over their lives! But this is global - not just within Worcestershire!" **Female, parent / carer**

The differences between children's and adults' views highlighted through this question, point towards very different perspectives on the challenges faced by children when seen through the eyes of a child or through the eyes of an adult.

3.4 How could the lives of children and young people be improved?

All respondents were asked this question although it was phrased slightly differently to the different respondent types. The different phrasing is set out in Table 7.

Table 7 - Different phrasing of question on how lives could be improved

Respondent type	Question phrasing
Child	How could your life be improved?
Young person	As a young person, how could your life be improved?
Parent/carer	As a parent / carer, what do you think would improve the lives of children and young people?
Practitioner	As a practitioner, what do you think would improve the lives of children and young people?
Interested citizen	What do you think would improve the lives of children and young people?

Table 8 shows the most frequently selected items that each respondent type gave to the question on how the lives of children and young people could be improved.

Respondents were allowed to give multiple answers so percentages will not total 100% of the number of responses given. A base number of those opting to answer each question is shown for information.

Table 8 - How could the lives of children and young people be improved?

Answer	Children*	Young people**	Parents & carers***	Practitioners****	Citizens*****	Total*****
Support services - affordability and availability	0	9	285	259	48	601
More things to do and places to go	42	24	263	104	68	501
Education - better funded, more rounded	8	4	174	91	44	321
Other	78	23	19	30	18	168
More time with friends and family	18	0	40	44	22	124
Learning to get along / less bullying	18	7	38	31	19	113
Better employment prospects	4	13	31	24	11	83
Education - less stress	8	8	22	22	3	63
Better transport	3	6	24	4	9	46
Financial challenges and poverty	0	20	11	7	6	44
Doing more sport / exercise / eating well	15	0	12	6	6	39
Becoming more eco-friendly	7	2	19	1	7	36
Better library services	12	7	0	0	0	19
Tackling world issues - terrorism, poverty, war	16	0	0	0	0	16
Learning and working hard	15	0	0	0	0	15

- * 218 Children chose to answer this question
- ** 100 Young people chose to answer this question
- *** 619 Parents / carers people chose to answer this question
- **** 398 Practitioners chose to answer this question
- ***** 215 Citizens chose to answer this question
- ***** 1,550 Respondents answered this question

Please note that the tables have been ranked on the highest overall responses. The categories highlighted in bold, italics and a larger font size are the top three highest scores for each respondent type.

Any responses that received less than 10 answers were placed in the 'Other' category alongside the original 'Other' responses. Even more so than with other questions in the survey, a very wide variety of other improvements were suggested by respondents and ranged from **having a pet** and **watching more television** to **more affordable childcare** and **better shops**.

District variations

Across all districts 'more things to do and places to go' was ranked as the highest improvement. Education was ranked as the second highest suggested improvement for all districts. Some other highly ranked improvements were 'system change' and 'support services'; which is a key issue to tackle with tight budgets.

Summary of how the lives of children and young people could be improved

This question sparked a particularly wide range of responses from the different groups. While the majority of the responses can be seen as direct solutions to the challenges identified in the previous question, others spoke of self-improvement independent of the challenges.

Having **more things to do and places to go** was the most common category overall for comments about how children's and young people's lives could be improved; it was the most frequently mentioned category for children, young people and interested citizens, and the second most frequent for parents/carers and practitioners. This can be seen as a direct answer to the lack of such facilities raised in the 'main challenges' question in section 3.3.

"More out of school social and educational opportunities. All parks being developed and equipped like Ghulevelt Park. Community events, challenges and initiatives aimed at kids e.g. Wearable arts competitions, junior triathlons, mud runs, treasure hunts, try a sport day" **Female, parent / carer**

Children, however, did put forward ideas that had not been raised as challenges. Addressing global issues such as **war and poverty** and making things better through their own efforts such as through **working harder** or **eating healthier** were among the most common answers given.

"Stop all wars and give money to the poor." **Gender not provided, 12 or under**

As well as the provision of more things to do and places to go, adults tended to stick to providing solutions to the challenges they raised previously. It is therefore not surprising to see more control of **the affordability and availability of support services** and **better education** as clearly the next two most common suggestions.

"No 'one size fits all' rules. Look at how children's needs change over the years of the childhood and cater for all age groups." **Female, parent/carer**

"Improve services to support all families, not just those that live in certain areas." **Gender not provided, parent/carer**

"Getting help for children who desperately need it but "don't meet the threshold" - they are falling through the cracks." **Gender not provided, practitioner**

"An emphasis on access to support and better knowledge of the services available with seamless referrals to partner organisations. Early intervention and referral to avoid crisis" **Female, practitioner**

"More support being offered by more agencies." **Male, parent/carer**

"Increase school budgets." **Female, citizen**

The differences in answers given between children and adults again point to quite different perspectives of the world around them.

3.5 How could parents/carers be better supported?

Only parents/carers and practitioners were asked this question although it was phrased slightly differently for the two groups. The different phrasing is set out in Table 9.

Table 9 - Different phrasing of question on how parents/carers could be better supported

Respondent type	Question phrasing
Parent/carer	As a parent / carer, how do you think parents / carers could be supported better?
Practitioner	As a practitioner, how do you think parents / carers could be supported better?

Table 10 shows the most frequently selected items that each respondent type gave to the question on how parents/carers and practitioners could be better supported.

Respondents were allowed to choose multiple items so percentages will not total 100% of the number of responses given. A base number of those opting to answer each question is shown for information.

Table 10 - How could parents/carers be better supported?

Answer	Children	Young people	Parents & carers *	Practitioners **	Citizens	Total ***
Better support networks & information / advice	Question not asked	Question not asked	199	123	Question not asked	322
More groups for parents and children (children's centres / educating / workshops / community / drop-ins)			135	94		229
More specialist services with shorter waiting times and better quality (such as early help and social workers)			95	79		174
Other			55	64		119
Increase activities for youth / better advertisement / affordable			64	28		92
Improving education			41	15		56
More funding / financial support			29	23		52
Childcare - more available and affordable			36	10		46
Consistency and better communication across services (schools, parents, social workers)			31	12		43
More support for working parents / services to have available hours for working parents			29	9		38
Mental health support for children and families			21	15		36
Concerns being listened to / involved in decisions			19	14		33
Parents to take responsibility			13	18		31
Improve public transport / cycle lanes and footpaths / safety			17	5		22
Awareness of social media	12	8	20			

* 525 Parents/carers chose to answer this question

** 357 Practitioners chose to answer this question

*** 882 Respondents answered this question

Please note that the tables have been ranked on the highest overall responses. The categories highlighted in bold, italics and a larger font size are the top three highest scores for each respondent type.

Any responses that received less than 10 answers were placed in the 'Other' category alongside the original 'Other' responses. They included answers ranging from more provision of **respite care to listening more** to young people.

District breakdown

Overall this question received a high number of responses across the districts – especially Worcester. This may be because this question was only asked to 'parents/carers', 'practitioners' or 'other', thus meaning that they are more inclined to be involved in the survey compared to children and young people. For all districts, 'better support networks & information / advice' was ranked as the highest; this highlights a key area of improvement for all districts. Other top highly ranked solutions were 'more groups for parents and children', 'more specialist services with shorter waiting times and better quality' and 'increase activities for youth / better advertisement / affordable' – which is closely linked to the previous question's responses.

Summary of how parents/carers could be better supported

Both parents/carers and practitioners most commonly selected the provision of more support groups/services and more information on how to access them as the best way to better support parents/carers.

"Greater and more robust publicity on how to access support services in Worcestershire." **Male, parent**

"Support sign posted and making sure health visitors and children's centres are resourced and have enough time and staff to properly support those in need." **Female, parent**

"Informing families that we are there to support them before problems escalate and providing the early intervention required to address needs before they become too severe." **Female, practitioner**

"Provide better support to parents/carers to understand and navigate the system, e.g. to better understand how schools can support children (and parent) what schools are doing, and how they are doing them. Sometimes they need to be more clear what they do or don't do, as services can change rapidly, due to changing priorities or budgets." **Gender not provided, practitioner**

Other suggestions put forward tie in strongly with the ideas that were identified by respondents as important or as challenges in other sections of the survey. Themes such more **activities** for young people and better **education** were again frequently selected for example.

3.6 If you were king/queen of Worcestershire what would you change?

All participants were asked this question in an identical way. The exact phrasing is set out in Table 11.

Table 11 - Phrasing of question on what you would do if you were king or queen for the day

Respondent type	Question phrasing
All	If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for a day, what would you change and why?

Table 12 shows the most frequently selected items that each respondent type gave to the question on what you would do if you were king or queen for the day.

Respondents were allowed to give multiple answers so percentages will not total 100% of the number of responses given. A base number of those opting to answer each question is shown for information.

Table 12 - If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for a day, what would you change?

Answer	All respondents*
Improved public services	287
Improved activities and places to go	263
Improved education	168
Government or system change	147
Becoming more eco-friendly	95
Learning to get along / less bullying more respect	89
Other	89
Improved travel	85
More support for parents and children	81
Less stressful school environment	75
Reducing financial challenges and poverty	73
Economic changes to benefit Worcestershire - job security - promotion of services available - more shops	41
Housing issues - too many or not enough	33
Social media - less use and more controls	28
Improving children's childhood	27
More security	9

* 1162 respondents chose to answer this question

Summary of what would you change if you were king or queen for a day

The top three selected suggestions for what respondents would do if they were king or queen of Worcestershire for the day are consistent with the themes that emerged in the rest of the survey. Respondents emphasised their desire to improve and invest in a wide range of **public services**, to provide more **places for children and young people to go and things for them to do**, and to **improve the education system** distinct from other public services.

"Additional help to essential services to keep the county safe (police, NHS etc). I feel that the targets set for hospitals are impossible to achieve and they are set up to fail. I would put more postnatal support for families to help families that are struggling financially and physically. I would also help fund local youth centres and children's centres so children know they have a safe place to go." **Gender not provided, age not provided**

"Make leisure facilities and activities free for children and carers." **Male, parent**

"Budget for schools, to make sure that schools were getting the money they need to ensure the best education and environment for their pupils." **Female, parent and practitioner**

The one theme that did not come through strongly in the rest of the survey but was clearly the fourth most common suggestion for this question is the idea of radical change to the government or 'the system'.

"I would stop all the tax breaks for the super-rich and big businesses for good and divert the money into healthcare and education instead. I would throw a massive, free street party, with free transport so everyone could enjoy a good day out." **Gender other than male or female, parent**

"I would do a county job swap - I would take our School Leaders and get them to take over the county council for a day I would then get senior management at the county council to be teaching assistants for the day I would also give every school £1,000 to spend on a work based activity" **Female, parent and practitioner**

All the other themes such as learning to get along / less bullying and reducing financial challenges and poverty are consistent with the messages given by respondents throughout the survey.

Annex 1 Demographic profile of respondents

Table 13 - How old are you (All respondent types*)

Item description	Frequency
12 or under	749
13 to 24	209
25 or over	1618

***2576 respondents chose to answer this question**

Table 14 - Are you a parent/carer of a child or young person? (All respondent types*)

Item description	Frequency
Yes	971
No	475

***1446 respondents chose to answer this question**

Table 15 - Are you a practitioner who works with children and young people or their families? (All respondent types*)

Item description	Frequency
Yes	581
No	667

***1248 respondents chose to answer this question**

Table 16 - What is your role? (practitioners only*)

Item description	Frequency
Question not answered	129
Health practitioner (not mental health)	125
Education (e.g. teacher, governor, teaching assistant)	115
Family and parental support	53
Other	37
Activity, club or group for children (e.g. cubs)	28
Mental health, counselling and pastoral care	22
Charity and volunteering	18
Social work and safe guarding	15
Fostering and childcare	14
Religious	9
Housing	8
Police	4

***577 respondents chose to answer this question**

Table 17 - How would you describe yourself and your interest in how Worcestershire works for its children and young people? ('Other' respondents only, i.e. not parent/carers or practitioners*)

Item description	Frequency
Grandparent	60
Interested resident / Citizen (not identified as senior)	42
Former role with children and young people	27
Interested resident / Senior citizen	23
Current parent of adults	14
Other	7
Future parent	5

***178 respondents chose to answer this question**

Table 18 – Which district do you live in? (Split by respondent type)

Respondent Type	Bromsgrove	Malvern Hills	Redditch	Worcester City	Wychavon	Wyre Forest
Children	249	74	15	141	137	127
Young people	62	36	19	42	26	18
Parent/carers	177	111	65	278	180	127
Practitioner	109	57	60	96	67	87
Other	38	62	28	48	66	22
Total	607	311	162	560	448	345

*** Please note that the numbers in the respondent type will not add up to the totals as respondents could be a multiple respondent type. For example, a parent/carers could also be a practitioner.**

*** 2464 respondents chose to answer this question, including 31 respondents from outside of Worcestershire.**

Table 19 - Are you a boy or a girl? (CHILD*)

Item description	Frequency
Girl	94
Boy	78

***172 respondents chose to answer this question**

Table 20 - What is your gender? (Young people, parents/carers, practitioners and other respondents*) Query other figures in spreadsheet

Item description	Frequency
Female	916

Male	294
------	-----

***1210 respondents chose to answer this question**

Table 21 - Are you...? (sexual orientation) (online respondents only*)

Item description	Frequency
Heterosexual / straight	888
Bisexual	12
Gay / Lesbian	9
Other	2
Prefer not to say	74

***985 respondents chose to answer this question**

Table 22 - Do you have a disability? (All online respondents. Information provided for small number of face-to-face respondents*)

Item description	Frequency
No	961
Yes	129

***1090 respondents chose to answer this question**

**Table 23 - What background or ethnic group do you identify yourself as being?
(online respondents only*)**

Item description	Frequency
White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British	1269
White: Irish	11
White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller	1
White: Other White	40
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean	10
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African	1
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian	3
Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed	4
Asian/Asian British: Indian	18
Asian/Asian British: Pakistani	0
Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi	4
Asian/Asian British: Chinese	1
Asian/Asian British: Other Asian	6
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African	0
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean	0
Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black	0
Other ethnic group: Arab	0
Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group	0
Prefer not to say	48

***1416 respondents chose to answer this question**

Annex 2 Online Survey

Worcestershire Children & Young People's Plan



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Confidentiality -

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ALL QUESTIONS ARE OPTIONAL. You can miss out any questions you do not want to answer. The closing date for this survey is **10pm on Monday 12th June 2017**

In order to take you through all the questions which apply to you, please answer the following questions

Firstly, how old are you? We will ask slightly different questions depending on your age group

- 12 or under
- 13 to 24
- 25 or over



Reset

Next →

The questions that follow are for you to answer on your own. It is very important that you give honest answers. You can miss out any questions you don't want to answer.

What are the most important things to you? Please tick up to three

- My family
- My friends
- School
- Sport
- My pet
- My toys
- The park
- My club - please tell us about this in the box below
- My books
- My phone
- My hobby - please tell us about this in the box below
- Other - please tell us what in the box below

Please tell us why these are important to you?

What do you like to do? Please tick all the things you enjoy doing

- Play on my computer/games console
- Watch TV
- Play with my toys
- Go to the park
- Play sport - please tell us about this in the box below
- Go to my club - please tell us about this in the box below
- Visit my grandparents
- Play with my friends
- Go to the library
- Read a book
- Play outside
- Other - please tell us what in the box below

What are your main issues or challenges?

How could your life be improved?



If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for a day, what would you change and why?

What is the best way for you to tell us what you think in the future?

Which district do you live in?

- Bromsgrove (including Hagley)
- Malvern Hills (including Tenbury & Upton)
- Redditch
- Worcester City
- Wychavon (including Evesham, Droitwich & Pershore)
- Wyre Forest (including Kidderminster, Bewdley & Stourport upon Severn)
- Outside Worcestershire



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Are you...

- A boy
- A girl

Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Which background or ethnic group do you identify yourself as being?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Irish | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Chinese |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Other Asian |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Other White | <input type="radio"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black Caribbean | <input type="radio"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Caribbean |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Black African | <input type="radio"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: Other Black |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group: White and Asian | <input type="radio"/> Other ethnic group: Arab |
| <input type="radio"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed | <input type="radio"/> Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Indian | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | |

Thank you for your time. Your answers really matter to us. Please hit the submit button to send us your responses



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Firstly, how old are you? We will ask slightly different questions depending on your age group

- 12 or under
 13 to 24
 25 or over

Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person?

- Yes No

Are you a practitioner who works with children and young people or their families?

- Yes No



[Reset](#) [Next →](#)

As a young person, what is most important to you and why?

As a young person, what do you like to do and why?

As a young person, what are your main issues and challenges?



[← Back](#) [Reset](#) [Next →](#)

As a young person, how could your life be improved?



[← Back](#) [Reset](#) [Next →](#)

If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for a day, what would you change and why?

What is the best way for you to tell us what you think in the future?

Which district do you live in?

- Bromsgrove (including Hagley)
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What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Are you...

- Heterosexual / Straight
- Gay / Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Which background or ethnic group do you identify yourself as being?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Irish | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Chinese |
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12 or under

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12 or under

13 to 24

25 or over

Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person?

Yes

No

Are you a practitioner who works with children and young people or their families?

Yes

No



Reset

Next →

As a parent / carer, what do you think is most important for children and young people in Worcestershire?

As a parent / carer, what do you think are the main challenges or issues for children and young people in Worcestershire?


[← Back](#) [Reset](#) [Next →](#)

As a parent / carer, what do you think would improve the lives of children and young people?

As a parent / carer, how do you think parents / carers could be supported better?


[← Back](#) [Reset](#) [Next →](#)

If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for a day, what would you change and why?

What is the best way for you to tell us what you think in the future?

Which district do you live in?

- Bromsgrove (including Hagley)
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What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Are you...

- Heterosexual / Straight
- Gay / Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Which background or ethnic group do you identify yourself as being?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Irish | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Chinese |
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Are you a parent or carer of a child or young person?

- Yes No

Are you a practitioner who works with children and young people or their families?

- Yes No

What is your role?



As a practitioner, what do you think is most important for children and young people in Worcestershire?

As a practitioner, what do you think are the main challenges or issues for children and young people in Worcestershire?



As a practitioner, what do you think would improve the lives of children and young people?

As a practitioner, how do you think parents / carers could be supported better?



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Are you...

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- Bisexual
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Which background or ethnic group do you identify yourself as being?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi |
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| <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | |



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 13 to 24
 25 or over

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Are you a practitioner who works with children and young people or their families?

- Yes No

[Reset](#) [Next →](#)

How would you describe yourself and your interest in how Worcestershire works for its children and young people?

[← Back](#) [Reset](#) [Next →](#)

If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for a day, what would you change and why?

What is the best way for you to tell us what you think in the future?

Which district do you live in?

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- Malvern Hills (including Tenbury & Upton)
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What is your gender?

- Male
- Female
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Are you...

- Heterosexual / Straight
- Gay / Lesbian
- Bisexual
- Other
- Prefer not to say

Do you have a disability?

- Yes
- No
- Prefer not to say

Which background or ethnic group do you identify yourself as being?

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="radio"/> White: English/Welsh/Scottish/Northern Irish/British | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Bangladeshi |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Irish | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Chinese |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Gypsy or Irish Traveller | <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Other Asian |
| <input type="radio"/> White: Other White | <input type="radio"/> Black/African/Caribbean/Black British: African |
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| <input type="radio"/> Mixed/multiple ethnic group: Other Mixed | <input type="radio"/> Other ethnic group: Any other ethnic group |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Indian | <input type="radio"/> Prefer not to say |
| <input type="radio"/> Asian/Asian British: Pakistani | |



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Annex 3 Easy read survey



At the heart of everything we do



We want Worcestershire to be a great place for children and young people to grow up.

Everything we do is for children and about children.



We are making a Children's and Young People's Plan.

We want you to help us by telling us what is important to you.



These are the people we want to hear from:

- children
- young people
- parents and carers
- people who work with children
- people who are interested in our plan



Please answer the questions below.

We will use your answers to help us plan for the future of children and young people in Worcestershire.

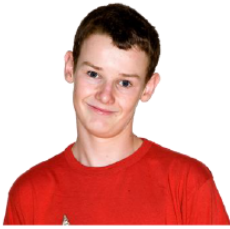


We will keep your answers private.

You do not have to tell us your name or contact details.

We will only use your answers to help us with the plan.

If you don't want to answer a question, you can miss it out.



If you are a child or a young person up to the age of 24, please answer these questions.



What things in your life are most important to you?



What do you like to do?



Do you have any problems?

How could your life be made better?



**If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for the day
what would you change and why?**



Now please answer the About You questions on pages 6-8.



If you are a parent or carer of a child or young person please answer these questions.

OR



If you work with children or young people please answer these questions.

What things do you think are most important for children and young people in Worcestershire?



What do you think are the worst problems for children and young people in Worcestershire?



What do you think would make children's and young people's lives better?



How do you think parents and carers could be helped to make things better?



If you were king or queen of Worcestershire for a day what would you change and why?





About You

Everyone, please answer these questions.

How old are you?



Younger than 12



13 - 24



25 or older



Are you a...

Man or boy?



Woman or girl?

Do you have a disability?



Yes

No

I don't want to say

Where do you live?

Bromsgrove. This includes Hagley

Malvern Hills. This includes Tenbury and Upton

Redditch

Worcester City

Wychavon. This includes Evesham, Droitwich and Pershore

Wyre Forest. This includes Kidderminster, Bewdley and Stourport upon Severn

Outside Worcestershire



What is your background or ethnic group?

White British

White other

Asian or Asian British

Black

Mixed or more than one group

Other



Please tell us more below if you can't find your ethnicity in this list.



Please send your questionnaire to:

Allie Webster
Operational Manager – Partnerships
Families, Communities and Partnerships
Worcestershire County Council

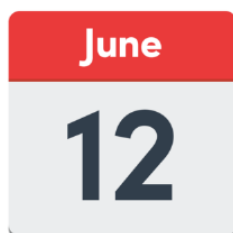


County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester
WR5 2NP



Or you can send it by email

Awebster2@worcestershire.gov.uk



Please send us your questionnaire by 10pm on **Monday 12th**
June 2017.

Annex 4 Question Tree



Appendix Four**COUNCIL CONTRIBUTION TO CHILDREN AND YOUNG PERSONS PLAN**

The Council can and does contribute in numerous ways to support the CYPP.

Housing Services support to families with children

- Support, advice and guidance to prevent homelessness.
- Provision of supported accommodation for young parents and care leavers
- Re-housing of families affected by domestic abuse.
- Aid and adaptations to properties for children with physical disabilities.
- The use of enforcement powers to improve the condition of private rented housing.
- Help to access affordable/free furniture & household items when setting up home.
- Help to set up utilities.
- Help to apply for benefits.
- Help to gain employment including referrals to the Job Coach. This supports mentoring role of parent and aspirations for children.
- Access to support agencies such as drug & alcohol abuse and domestic abuse support.
- Help to access activities in the community including local voluntary sector.
- Help to access healthcare – GP, Dentist, Mental Health.
- Help to sustain tenancy by monitoring compliance of tenancy conditions.
- Help with budgeting & debt advice and access to other agencies as necessary.
- Advice re basic cooking skills/healthy eating.
- Contribute to multi agency working with social care/mental health.

Community safety work to support children & young people.

- Locations of ASB – working with residents, consultative groups and partners to identify locations of youth ASB and implementing strategies to address and divert at risk young people to positive activities. (Matchborough, Winyates, Astwood Bank Park, Tunnel Drive, Paddock Lane). Crime risk surveys completed to improve the built environment and reduce opportunities for committing ASB in identified locations. Provided funding and commissioned projects to provide specialist workers engage with difficult to reach young people and young people with challenging behavioural issues. Deliver targeted group activities and programmes to address issues of youth ASB; project include, the Polish youth club, Woodrow football sessions, targeted youth work sessions with groups of young people.

- Crime incidences – working with partners, local communities and victims to identify crime committed by C&YP and implementing crime prevention strategies to reduce opportunities and facilitators for crime. (Matchborough/Winyates, Kingfisher shopping centre/Town Centre crime survey). Work with young people who have carried out hate crime incidents, provide awareness sessions with perpetrators and deliver targeted sessions to young people referred by schools.
- Crime victimisation – working with partners, local communities and victims to identify crimes and locations where C&YP are victims or are vulnerable to crime and implementing crime prevention strategies to reduce opportunities and vulnerability.
- Drugs and intoxicating substances – working with partners, residents, consultative groups and communities to identify locations and risks to C&YP through availability of drugs and intoxicants and identifying and implementing strategies to reduce opportunity, availability and vulnerability. Respond to locations identified with targeted work with the YP in and out of school
- High Risk locations – working with partners and communities to identify locations where C&YP are at risk of physical harm and developing collaborative strategies to minimise risk. (Tunnel Drive disused railway tunnel)
- Home Security Assessments/Works - Providing crime prevention advice and measures to families affected by domestic abuse which ensures that children are able to stay safely in their own homes and near their families, school and other support networks.
- School Sessions – Deliver sessions to YP in a classroom setting on a range of community safety issues, these sessions include topics such as Hate Crime, ASB, drugs and alcohol, Domestic Abuse, community responsibility and internet safety .
- Targeted group work – Deliver targeted sessions to young people who have been identified by schools as being at risk of harm or engaging in criminal behaviours; CRUSH programme, CSE awareness, Anti-Social Behaviour and anger management
- One to one mentoring sessions – we work within schools to deliver one to one mentoring to young people referred to the service; Sessions pick up on issues such as Hate Crime, ASB, drugs and alcohol, Domestic Abuse, community responsibility, CSE, risk taking behaviour and internet safety .

The table below outlines the number of referrals in the last three years:-

Academic school year	September 14 – July 15	September 15 – July 16	September 16 – July 17
Number of Referrals	50	62	92
Referral Route - Schools	33	59	67
Referral Route - Connecting Families	13	15	23
Referral route – Channel Panel	1	2	2
Referral route - YMCA	3	-	-

Parenting and Family Support Service work to support children and young people

Parenting

- Provision of a range of age related parenting Programmes.
- Ensure that all safeguarding policies and procedures are followed; having professional curiosity with groups and being aware of parents disguised compliance.
- Keep updated with other services available for parents, child and young families to attend other than our own service that improves healthy lifestyles, access to affordable places to have family time, further education etc.
- Assess family's needs based on what they want to attend and what is needed to help better and improve the lives of Child and young people.
- Ask and make parents aware how much the child's lived experience is important to us.
- Sending worksheets and options for young people to have their say in how they feel they are parented and their view on their relationship with family member.
- Being a role model in groups we deliver to show health positive relationships.
- For the ultimate outcomes we ensure children are safe from harm: from parents accessing our groups for parents promotes parents to ensure their children live in safe environments such as PEEP we look at stimulating home environment and what that looks like and talk about internet safety for example through talking teens group. Also working closely with social care and improving working relationships with them for them to refer families to our service for parenting support and ultimately keeping children safe and parents role of this.
- Reach their full potential: we offer parents through PEEP to look at the early years of their children including their development and building a positive relationship.

Family Support

- Provision of targeted one to one family support working with the following principles:
 - The needs of all family members are taken into consideration, including extended family members if their involvement impacts the children we are supporting. Involvement of parents or other significant adults in assessment even if they do not live at the family home or their contact with the child/young person is minimal.
 - The views of the child/young person are key to our assessment and our evidenced within our recording.
 - Work with other involved agencies/professionals ensuring regular review meetings are held and information is shared.
 - An assertive approach and escalation of concerns.
 - Improving the lived experiences of the children/young people they support, through helping them to achieve their goals, access specialist services such as CAMHS, offering extensive emotional and practical support and ensuring parents are able to meet the needs of their children, if not further support is

put in place such as accompanying parents to appointments or referring to additional support services such as DWP.

- Building relationships by ensuring awareness of the family's history, their likes, dislikes and interests, by taking an active role in understanding their present situation and what needs to be changed in order for the children to be safer, happier and achieve their potential.
- Provision of extensive Protective Behaviours Support in order to ensure young people understand what are safe choices, they make informed choices in regards of relationships, how to keep themselves safe, who are their supportive networks, safety plans are in place etc. further training includes behaviour management/anger management, Autism Awareness, Solihull Approach and Solution Focussed Techniques.
- Support young/new parents to access the correct support such as safe adequate housing, specialist support for themselves, support groups, emotional and practical support to give their children a better future than they may have experienced themselves, by giving parents the tools, knowledge and emotional support to 'break the cycle'.
- Support young people to access alternative educational options if they have been excluded or are not coping within mainstream educational settings, exploring apprenticeship options or college courses.
- Ensure school have a good understanding of the child/young person's individual needs based on their abilities and the impact of home life or past experiences, ensuring school implement individual support to those pupils such as a mentor or time out cards.
- Support young people to access young people's groups and improve independence activities such as a catching a bus or going clothes shopping.
- Provision of budgeting support and work closely with Job Coaches, CAB and DWP.
- Working closely with social care, sharing concerns with community social workers, hosting a weekly allocations meeting which is attended by Social Care, Early Intervention Family Support, Parenting, Family Support.

Leisure and Cultural Services' support to children and young people

- Provision of a range of leisure services for families, children and young people to support both their physical and mental well being. Examples include:
 - Activities for children receiving free school meals.
 - Take Part Tighter for all ages activities.
 - Activity sessions during the school holidays.
- Partnership working with the police and community safety team to deliver diversionary activities at identified 'hot spot' locations.
- Use of section 106 monies for the provision of outdoor sports, play and leisure facilities.
- Provision of high quality green and open spaces to enable access to physical activity and supporting mental wellbeing.
- Development and support of community sports and cultural organisations to increase local provision to young people including grant funding applications for capital projects.

- Development and delivery of in school session to ensure high quality PE opportunities are provided within and outside of the national curriculum.
- Access to museums and theatres to provide learning opportunity, access to programmed activities (e.g. Youth theatre groups to develop skills in team work, social skills and confidence. History productions for local school to access).
- Provision of community centres that enable the voluntary sector and businesses to deliver local services eg play groups, nurseries, groups for children with disabilities.
- Listening to the views of children and young people through surveys and designed services to meet local need and aspiration.
- Provision of large scale community events programme to increase the quality of life of residents and to provide community cohesion opportunities for other public sector and communities bodies to engage with CYP.
- Operating a concessionary policy that support hard to reach families and removes financial barriers to participation and/or attendance which includes looked after children.
- Provision of numerous work placements, volunteering opportunities and apprenticeship opportunities to increase work place knowledge and experience and to offer young people greater life skills.

Planning and Regeneration's support to children and young people

- Providing appropriate play facilities in new housing developments.
- Consideration of secure by design standards to design out crime making developments safer and reducing the risk of anti-social behaviour.
- Supporting economic growth and employment opportunities for parents and young people.
- Supporting businesses to work with schools to promote the local skills young people need.

Voluntary Sector's support to children and young people

- Engagement with the local voluntary sector to promote volunteering opportunities for families.
- Engagement with the voluntary sector to support the provision of services that meet the local needs of families, children and young people.
- Awarding of grants to the local voluntary sector to fund services that support children and young people in their mental, physical and emotional wellbeing.

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE****31st October 2017****MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2018/19 - 2021/22 – BUDGET ASSUMPTIONS**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr John Fisher
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering (Exec Director)
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	None specific

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To recommend the budget assumptions to be used in preparing the detailed 2018/19 budget and provisional budgets for 2018/19 - 2021/22.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Executive recommends to Council that the revenue assumptions detailed in 3.4 be incorporated into the budget setting process.**

3. KEY ISSUES**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The Council is legally obliged to set a balanced budget. The budget setting process is complex and must be undertaken in a planned way. It is equally important that assumptions used in the preparation of the budget are agreed, reasonable and consistently applied by all services. A number of recommendations from the Councils External Auditors, Grant Thornton, are addressed by ensuring robust assumptions and a transparent planned approach is undertaken when agreeing the budget. It is proposed that a 4 year financial model is prepared for the Medium Term Financial Plan.
- 3.2 The budget forecasts will be based on a number of assumptions, known levels of expenditure and anticipated levels of resources. It is anticipated that the Autumn Budget 22nd November will confirm the assumptions relating to external funding and financial pressures that the Council may face over the next 4 years. There are a number of areas of the Council's budget where risks to the projections contained in this report have been identified. The most significant of these are:-

- The Autumn Budget and associated implications.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**31st October 2017**

- Confirmation of the New Homes Bonus will reduce to four years from 2018/19. This accounts for a significant level of funding and any further reductions in allocation would have a detrimental impact on the Councils financial position
- Potential additional resources from the proposed Worcestershire Business Rate 100% pilot.
- Monitoring of the 2017/18 budget will provide Executive with regular updates on any pressures/savings for the Council. Any associated on going implications will be incorporated into the budget projections for 2018/19 and future years.
- Savings – The detailed plans to deliver the level of savings required for 2018/19- 2021/22 are currently being considered in line with the efficiency plan. It is accepted that the savings require clear monitoring to ensure they are being delivered.
- Specific Grants and Contributions – The number and amount of specific grants received by the Council may be lower/higher than anticipated. The budget assumes no increase or reduction in specific grants. If the grant decreases, the associated expenditure must also be reduced to reflect the reduction in the grant received.
- Council Tax – Central Government provided a cap on the amount of Council Tax increase a Local Authority could make before a referendum of the local residents was required. The budget assumes a £5 increase in 2018/19-2021/22
- Council Services- The impact of the economic climate on the residents of Redditch and the increased demand this may have for Council Services could impact on cost of services as could general demographic changes.
- Inflation - Impact of changes in the price of goods and services used by the Council compared to the percentage assumed in the budget projections.
- Fees and charges income – Impact of any economic slowdown on levels of usage of charged for Council services could lead to income levels not being achieved.

3.3 The timing of the Autumn Budget means that this report is based on the available information at this point in time. Future reports will make Executive aware of any changes that impact on the current budget assumptions.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**31st October 2017**

- 3.4 As part of the budget setting process the Council makes a number of assumptions in respect of the key elements of the Council's revenue budget. The following paragraphs in this section outline the areas where these assumptions are made.

Council Tax

The budget assumes an increase in Council Tax for 2018/19-2021/22 of £5.

Pay Inflation

The budget assumes that the pay award will be 2% for 2018/19-2021/22. This has increased from the previous assumption of 1% and reflects the current view on public sector increases.

Superannuation Rates

The 3 year actuarial valuation has provided certainty of the forward rate 2017/18 to 2019/20 at 14.7%. In order to achieve a discount from our pension costs the Council has made an advance payment of 90% of the anticipated future payments 2017/18 to 2019/20. This has achieved an average saving of £102k per annum after allowing for interest cost. For the medium term financial plan it is assumed that this will be repeated in 2020/21 to continue receiving this discount.

The Council has made an advance payment of the backfunding also providing certainty for 2017/18 to 2019/20. As with the forward rate an advance payment has been made but for all the backfunding costs 2017/18 to 2019/2. This has achieved an average of £127k per annum after allowing for interest cost. For the medium term financial plan it is assumed that this will be repeated in 2020/21 to continue receiving this discount..

The risk is the later years of the medium term financial plan following the next actuarial valuation in 2019 which will impact 2020/21-2022/23. Although it is planned to continue with the advance payment arrangements to achieve a discount the trend is for the underlying pension costs to increase.

Price Inflation

The budget assumes 0% inflation across the majority of the Council's non-pay expenditure budgets including grants that the Council gives out. Contractual arrangements and other significant inflation issues will be considered on a case by case basis. It is proposed that utilities are increased by 6% and Business rates increased 3.9% (business rates increase by the retail price increase in September).

Discretionary Fees and Charges

Fees and Charges are reviewed on an annual basis and officers assess the impact of increases in income charges on the demand on the services. It is recommended that, in line with the current Medium Term Financial Plan the increase for 2018/19 – 2021/22 be 3.9%. The total additional income generated from the 3.9% increase is approximately £195k and therefore any reduction on 3.9% would have to be included as a budget pressure for 2018/19-2021/22. Service managers have been asked to analyse their current fees and charges taking into consideration cost recovery, current usage/demand with a view to optimising income to the Council. Any increase above 3.9% will be explained by officers within the fees and charges report in December.

3.5 Capital

Heads of Service will undertake a full review of the capital programme is currently being undertaken. This review will provide a four year capital programme for 2018/19-2021/22 this will take into consideration the estimated reduction in capital resources and the limited revenue available to fund capital borrowing in these years future years. Following this review a report to Executive in January 2018 will recommend the 4 year programme.

- 3.6 This is an initial report on the budget process which identifies the decision making, assumptions and principles. The forecasts will be refined over the coming months and further reports will be presented to Executive leading up to the approval of the budget and Council Tax in February 2018.

Legal Implications

- 3.7 The Council is under a duty to calculate the budget in accordance with Section 32 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 and must make three calculations namely:
- An estimate of the Council's gross revenue expenditure; an estimate of anticipated income and a calculation of the difference between the two. The amount of the budget requirement must be sufficient to meet the Council's budget commitments and ensure a balanced budget. The amount of the budget requirement must leave the Council with adequate financial reserves. The level of budget requirement must not be unreasonable having regard to the Council's fiduciary duty to its Council Tax payers and non-domestic rate payers.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**31st October 2017**

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.8 Budget Holders will prepare budgets to enable services to be delivered to meet the Councils Strategic Purposes. It is expected that officers will work across the organisation to establish financial projections that best meet the wider community needs and identify any savings or additional income to fund any budget shortfalls.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.9 Clarity on budget assumptions will ensure services are delivered to meet customer needs and expectations

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The risks associated with the budget process and calculations mainly relate to the uncertainties around external funding and the resulting pressures on the budget. To mitigate this risk officers will work on a number of scenarios to ensure all options can be reported to members in a timely fashion.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Anita Clayton (substituting for councillor Jane Potter), Natalie Brookes (substituting for Councillor Andrew Fry), Matthew Dormer, Pattie Hill, Gareth Prosser, Paul Swansborough, Jennifer Wheeler and Nina Wood-Ford

Also Present:

Councillor Debbie Chance (attending in her capacity as Portfolio Holder for the Local Environment)
Councillors Michael Chalk and Greg Chance

Officers:

Sue Hanley, Guy Revans and Andy Morris

Democratic Services Officers:

Jess Bayley and Amanda Scarce

27. ELECTION OF CHAIR

A nomination for the position of Chair was received for Councillor Jane Potter and Members agreed that she should be appointed the Chair of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

Following Councillor Potter's appointment as Chair of the Committee a vacancy arose in the position of Vice Chair of the Committee. A nomination for the position of Vice Chair was received for Councillor Gay Hopkins and Members agreed that she should be appointed the Vice Chair of the Committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **Councillor Jane Potter be appointed Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year; and**

.....
Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

- 2) **Councillor Gay Hopkins be appointed Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the remainder of the 2017/18 municipal year.**

28. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Andrew Fry and Jane Potter with it being confirmed that Councillors Natalie Brookes and Anita Clayton were attending as their respective substitutes.

29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

30. MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE HELD ON 4TH JULY 2017

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4th July 2017 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

31. SEASONAL GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE - PRE-SCRUTINY (HEAD OF ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES - TO FOLLOW)

A detailed report and presentation was presented by the Head of Environmental Services and the Environmental Operations Supervisor, which explained the business case for the introduction of a Garden Waste Scheme in Redditch with effect from February 2018.

The presentation covered in detail a number of areas, including:

- Why the Council wanted to introduce a Garden Waste system in Redditch, including expanding the services available to residents and increasing revenue and recycling rates.
- The results of the survey which had been carried out both online via social media and postal responses, which showed the demand was there for such a scheme.
- The recycling rates for the Borough which for composting was the lowest in the County at 2.18%.
- The cost of the service and the projected revenue which could be achieved from this.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

- How the introduction of the service would reduce the volume in the domestic waste stream.
- How the system would work in Redditch – it would be operated by Bromsgrove District Council’s experienced Garden Waste Crews.
- The service would commence on 27th February 2018 and run until the end of November 2018, with 20 collections on alternate weeks throughout this period.
- Information was provided on what could be included within the garden waste brown bin.
- How the scheme would be promoted and the leaflets that would be provided to residents, together with details of information available on the website.
- How residents could sign up to the scheme and the social media campaign that would run from October 2017. Sign up could be through the website, by phone or at the One Stop Shops.
- The first 2,000 people would receive a reduced set up fee of £10 before 31st January 2018. Payment was by direct debit only.

Following presentation of the report Members raised a number of questions, which were responded to by the Officers. In particular Members raised concerns that a similar scheme had been piloted before and questioned whether in areas where only one or two residents signed up this was value for money. It was also noted that some people might not be able to fill a whole bin or might need more than one. Officers confirmed that it was possible for residents to “club” together and share a bin or for a household to have more than one bin.

As the recycling figures for composting were low, Members asked whether the Council should be doing more to promote composting and the availability of composters. Officers confirmed that this was an ongoing campaign which was promoted throughout the Borough in conjunction with the County Council. This provided an additional service for those already composting.

Whilst appreciating the data in respect of the levels of recycling, Members were mindful that the demographics of Redditch were very different to other areas, which were much more rural. Members also asked whether there was a limit to the number of bins that could be issued and the system could cope with. The Head of Environmental Services explained that initially there was capacity for 4,000 with the option to add another 800 if necessary. The initial set up cost was discussed together with details of the discount scheme and the option for this to be reduced further or the

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

period extended, Members also queried when the Council could see the benefit of the revenue that could potentially be raised and it was confirmed that this should be quite quickly following the first year of the scheme. It was confirmed that the set-up fee was only payable for the first year and the subscription would roll over to the next year, with a letter being sent confirming this each year.

Members raised concerns around whether some residents would want to have a third bin to have to store and/or put out and officers advised that this was simply offering residents another form of recycling and it was their choice as to whether they wished to take up the offer. It was commented that given the amount of time spent taking rubbish to the recycling centre the new scheme provided good value for money.

The Head of Environmental Services responded to the concern raised by Members in respect of the scheme which had been exploited previously and it was explained that there had been greater financial risk due to it being set up by the Council. However as this scheme would be delivered by Bromsgrove District Council's existing team that risk was greatly reduced. The vehicles used also had a much lower environmental impact and this was a much more positive scheme going forward.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) from March 2018 Redditch Borough Council will introduce, and Bromsgrove District Council will run as part of the shared services agreement for Environmental Services, a seasonal (March to November inclusive) garden waste service on behalf of Redditch Borough Council;**
- 2) the charge will be £45 for the initial season to be increased in line with fees and charges as appropriate;**
- 3) a set-up fee of £20 per customer is charged in the first year of service and for new customers in each following year;**
- 4) an introductory offer of a £10 set-up fee will be used to encourage early sign up before 31st January 2018;**
- 5) the Head of Environmental Services, in consultation with the designated Portfolio Holder, has authority to temporarily reduce or remove the set-up fee as**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

promotional tool to increase and encourage subscriptions;

- 6) should the Recommended Option be pursued, a capital commitment for the next four years of £31,000 in year 1 and £15,000 in years 2 to 4 is to be included in the capital programme;
- 7) once the maximum number of customers has been approached a customer waiting list will be employed. Officers will bring a further report and business case with options for extending the service should it be required;
- 8) the chargeable Orange Sack Service is formally retired as part of the new service charges; and
- 9) a communication plan is devised and implemented to advise residents of the changes to RBC waste collection service and the requirement to use brown bins only for garden waste.

32. HOMELESSNESS SHORT, SHARP REVIEW - REPORT (COUNCILLOR WOOD-FORD)

Councillor Wood-Ford gave a short presentation which summarised the Homelessness Short, Sharp Review's final report and recommendations. Members were advised that Recommendation 1 had already been agreed, recommendation 3 was for the Committee to agree and Recommendations 2, 4 and 5 were to report to the Executive Committee for its consideration.

Following receipt of the presentation Members discussed a number of areas in detail, including:

- The Housing First Schemes – concerns were raised as to where the funding would come from for such a scheme and how it would help. It was explained that it would be particularly helpful for single males over the age of 40, as it had been highlighted that support was lacking for this group of people, with currently the main offer being within hostels and outside of the Borough. The Deputy Chief Executive suggested that funding would be sought at a national level through the West Midlands Combined Authority and it would be through this process that a scheme would be developed.
- Members of the review commented that they had been pleasantly surprised at the amount of support which was available within the Borough. However there was also a

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

group of people for whom help was available but who chose not to accept it.

- Swanswell – details around this organisation were provided in respect of their substance abuse programmes and the group had been disappointed that they had been unable to arrange an interview with them. Their work was of such importance that the group felt it would be most useful for the Committee to invite them to attend a future meeting.

In summing up, Councillor Wood-Ford highlighted how impressed the group had been with the work of the Food Bank and the support it provided, which covered a number of other areas. Thanks were given to the group for their detailed short sharp review and it was noted, for future reference, that holding such a review over the summer period had not been ideal due to holiday commitments. Councillor Wood-Ford also took the opportunity to thank the Democratic Services Officer for her hard work over a very short period of time.

Following discussions it was also requested that the MP be asked to write to the Secretary of State for Work and Pensions, the Rt. Hon. David Gauke, MP.

RESOLVED that

Swanswell be invited to attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to deliver a presentation outlining the services they provide to residents in Redditch.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **Redditch Borough Council should take part in any opportunity to deliver Housing First in properties in the Borough. This should include applying to participate in any Housing first pilot schemes operated by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA);**
- 2) **the Leader of the Council should write to the Secretary of State for Work and pensions, the Rt. Hon. David Gauke MP, urging him to end the freeze on Local housing Allowance (LHA) rates; and**
- 3) **the Council's Communications and Arts and Events teams should notify the CAB of any forthcoming events in Redditch which they could attend to promote their services and heighten awareness of their services in the Borough.**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

The Committee NOTED that

the draft Redditch Borough Council Housing Allocations Policy has been adopted by the Council.

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

The Committee considered the minutes from the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th September 2017. Members noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendation in respect of the Housing Allocations Policy had been approved by the Executive Committee.

Members also considered the content of the Executive Committee Work Programme for the period 1st October 2017 to 31st January 2018. Officers explained that the Committee and Budget Scrutiny Working Group were already scheduled to pre-scrutinise a number of items on the work programme. Upon questioning Officers confirmed that the Matchborough and Winyates District Centre Redevelopment Consultation was already scheduled for pre-scrutiny at a meeting in December 2017.

34. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee noted that an extra meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee would take place on 10th October 2017. This meeting would provide Members with an opportunity to reconsider the Leisure Services Provision Short Sharp Review Group's findings together with a chance to pre-scrutinise Officers' suggestions in respect of the future delivery of leisure services.

35. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The following progress reports were provided for Members' consideration:

a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group

In the absence of the Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, Councillor Jane Potter, Officers advised that at the latest meeting of the group Members had received an update on the contracts that had been issued in the first quarter of the financial year. Members had also discussed in detail the

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

financial information required to enable the group to make a constructive contribution to the Council's budget setting process during the year.

b) Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review

Officers confirmed that Councillors Matthew Dormer, Gareth Prosser and Yvonne Smith had been appointed by their group leaders to sit on the review. A nomination was received for the position of Chair of the review in respect of Councillor Gareth Prosser.

c) Mental Health Services for Young People Task Group

The Committee was advised that the Task Group had convened in July to discuss questions to include in a questionnaire for local schools about Personal, Social, Health and Economic Education (PSHE) lessons. The group had agreed to postpone distribution of the questionnaires until September when the school holidays would finish. The group would reconvene in due course and report back their findings to the Committee.

d) Performance Scrutiny Working Group

Following the resignation of the previous Chair of the group from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members were advised that there was a vacancy which needed to be filled by a member of the Committee. A nomination was received for the position of Chair of the Working Group in respect of Councillor Matthew Dormer.

Councillor Dormer proceeded to present a report on behalf of the group in respect of the need for an After Care Social Worker to be based at Redditch Town Hall. This had arisen following a meeting with Officers at which Members had discussed the Council's arrangements for housing care leavers in the Borough. It was confirmed that currently this service was only available in Worcester and that there were no financial implications to the Council arising from this recommendation.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **Councillors Matthew Dormer, Gareth Prosser and Yvonne Smith be confirmed as Members of the Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review group;**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

- 2) Councillor Gareth Prosser be appointed Chair of the Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review Group; and
- 3) Councillor Matthew Dormer be appointed Chair of the Performance Scrutiny Working Group for the remainder of the municipal year.

RECOMMENDED that

an after Care Social Worker should be provided with a base to work in the Housing Options team's office at Redditch Town Hall in order to work with care leavers in Redditch.

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

The Committee received updates in respect of the following external scrutiny bodies from Councillor Nina Wood-Ford

- a) West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Councillor Wood-Ford confirmed that there had not been a meeting of the Committee since 4th July 2017. The next meeting of the Committee was due to take place on 12th September 2017.

- b) Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)

Councillor Wood-Ford explained that there had been two meetings of HOSC since the last Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. The first had been held on 19th July and had followed the most recent CQC rating of the Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust being inadequate. There had appeared to be some positives and a number of areas had been rated as very good, there were improvements to the work force culture, greater accountability and improvement to the training, recruitment and retention of staff. It was believed that 34 new consultants had been employed over the three hospital sites.

Transport issues had been discussed following the removal of the free bus service and it was anticipated that voluntary drivers would be used with the cost being less than that of a taxi. The service would include home pick-ups and Malvern

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 7th September, 2017

CAB was already providing some services to Worcester Royal Hospital.

An additional £29m funding had been confirmed and would be spent on a number of projects including a bridge between the main hospital and the Aconbury West wing and take the beds from the Mental Health Unit at Aconbury East at a cost of £16m. This project would take between 18 and 24 months to complete. A similar project had previously been carried out in Kidderminster. It was understood that there had also been a survey carried out of those who were awaiting treatment in corridors, following the high demand on accident and emergency services.

The second meeting had involved meeting with the new Chairman and Chief Executive, who appeared to be knowledgeable about what was needed to address many of the problems faced by the Trust. Members discussed a number of areas which had been reported in the local press, including the need for more theatres, elective surgery taking place at the Alexandra Hospital and the fact that the Trust remained in special measures.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.22 pm

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

31st October 2017

ADVISORY PANELS, WORKING GROUPS, ETC - UPDATE REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To provide, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels, and similar bodies which report via the Executive Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that

subject to Members' comments, the report be noted.

3. UPDATES**A. ADVISORY PANELS**

	<u>Meeting</u>	<u>Lead Members / Officers</u> (Executive Members shown <u>underlined</u>)	<u>Position</u> (Oral updates to be provided at the meeting by Lead Members or Officers if no written update is available)
1.	Planning Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Bill Hartnett</u> Ruth Bamford	Meeting date: Las meeting – 3rd October 2017 Next meeting – 31 st October 2017

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

31st October 2017

B. OTHER MEETINGS

2.	Constitutional Review Working Party	Chair: <u>Cllr Bill Hartnett</u> Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr John Fisher</u> Claire Felton	Last meeting – 30th October 2017 Next meeting – TBC at the time of publication
3.	Member Support Steering Group	Chair: <u>Cllr John Fisher</u> Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Bill Hartnett</u> Claire Felton	Last meeting – 16th October 2017 Next meeting – 22 nd January 2018
4.	Grants Assessment Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Gay Hopkins</u> Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> Judith Willis / Helen Broughton	Last meeting – 24th October 2017 Next meeting – 4th December 2017

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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