

Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker
Recommendations that remain to be implemented

Access for Disabled People Task Group

(Considered by the Executive Committee on 21st August 2012 and subsequently reiterated on the 11th June 2013 and on 1st April 2014)

Recommendation 6: a disability awareness session should be delivered as part of the Member Development Programme at Redditch Borough Council.

(The Overview and Scrutiny recommended on 1st April that the Member Development Support Steering Group consider extending the invitations to attend this session to all Members rather than confining to just new Members. This was approved on 8th April 2014 by the Executive Committee).

An equalities training session, to which all Members have been invited, is due to be delivered on Thursday 24th July at Redditch Town Hall. This will include disability awareness training.

Sickness Policy Short, Sharp Review

(considered by Executive Committee on 20th November 2012)

Recommendation 3: an A5 laminated guide to the Council's Sickness Absence Policy should be provided for the use of managers and staff.

Officers have investigated the potential for an A5 laminated guide to the Council's Sickness Absence Policy to be provided. They reported at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 1st April that Officers had found that it

was not possible to fit sufficient information about the process onto a single card. However, the Committee reiterated the point that they were simply asking for some key bullet points to be included on guides to the process. At the request of Members Officers have been asked to draft a version of this guide and to present it for the consideration of the Committee in due course. This draft guide is now due to be considered at a meeting of the Committee on 2nd September 2014.

Redditch Market Review

(considered by Executive Committee on 12th March 2013)
(There were seventeen recommendations in total)

All of the recommendations were all APPROVED subject to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport taking the lead on working on the detail of proposals and on the adoption of a bold and radical approach to recommendations 1 and 2 in particular, including a full assessment of the options for delivering a vibrant and viable market.

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members expressed concerns about the slow progression of action that had been taken to implement the group's recommendations on this subject, as nine recommendations remained to be implemented over 12 months after the review had been completed. The Committee therefore requested that a bespoke monitoring update report on this subject be presented for Members' consideration in 2014/15. Officers have arranged to deliver this update on 21st October 2014. Therefore no additional information has been provided on this subject in this report.

Arts and Culture Centre Task Group

(considered by the Executive Committee on 9th April 2013)

All nine of the group's recommendations were ENDORSED by the Executive Committee. However, the Committee could not decide on all of the recommendations as it is not the decision making body for outside organisations.

The following conclusions have been reached: Recommendation 2a, 4, 5, 6, 8 and 9 were APPROVED. Recommendations 1, 2, 4a, and 7 were recommendations to the Arts in Redditch Network. The Arts in Redditch Network has considered the Task Group's recommendations. The network has reserved the right to submit a more detailed response at a later date and may adapt their response accordingly at this stage. A final decision on these recommendations therefore remains PENDING.

Recommendation 4: art exhibition space, where local artists can display their work, should be introduced at the Palace Theatre and the Abbey Stadium:

The Abbey Stadium art exhibition space has been developed and completed.

The Place Theatre exhibition space remains a viable option to develop if the budget is available the AIR network wish to proceed with it. At this time the AIR network are concentrating on the 'pop up' galleries.

Recommendation 7: in an ideal world an arts centre would be established in Redditch by a community group. However, in order for this objective to be achieved the community group needs to be aware of and to address the following barriers:

The establishment of an Arts Centre remains the clearly stated long-term objective of the Arts in Redditch network. This commitment is featured in the 'About Us' pages of the website, and was re-stated at the launch event on the 22nd October 2013.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the extent to which local arts groups would make use of an arts centre; b) the financial costs involved in establishing and maintaining an arts centre; c) funding application requirements; d) creating a sustainable business case; e) legal liability and accountability issues; f) availability of volunteers to operate the centre; and g) management arrangements for the centre. 	<p>To further promote the profile of the arts community in Redditch, the Arts in Redditch network organised a 'pop-up gallery' at the Kingfisher Centre, over the period 10th - 19th May. This helped to showcase the visual arts scene in the town, help bring participants together and also encourage greater participation in arts activities with over 4000 visitors.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 9</u>: the 'Creative Redditch' artwork should be prioritised for use on the next bus shelter that is installed in Redditch town centre.</p>	<p>The Engineering and Design team of the Council has worked with Choose How You Move to install a covered cycle shelter in the town centre. Following damage to the panels (consisting of scratched "tags") the clear panels were replaced with the Choose How You Move artwork ahead of the Tour Series (at Worcestershire County Council's expense). In the current financial climate there are no plans to replace these panels due to the costs of doing so.</p> <p>However, action has been requested to deal with the longstanding damage to the shop front at the former Poundstretcher's unit. In view of its prominence and importance to the town centre Officers would be keen to see that this is progressed as soon as is reasonably possible. It is possible this could involve use of artwork.</p>

Access for Disabled People Task Group – Monitoring Update Report

(considered by the Executive Committee on 11th June 2013)

The recommendations were endorsed, subject to changes to the wording of both recommendations.

Recommendation 2: an in year bid, to be paid for from balances, should be made to fund the installation of a canopy over the ramp access to Shopmobility.

The Executive Committee recommended on 11th June that a canopy should be installed at this location. However, the Committee proposed that the installation of this canopy should be paid for using funds from the Shopmobility donated reserves.

Previously Members have been advised that approval will be required from the Kingfisher Centre due to the land being in their ownership. Following this planning permission would also be required.

Since the last update was received on this matter Officers have reported that a planning application has been submitted for an amendment to access for Car Park 3 and an additional access point to Car Park 1. Officers are therefore currently unable to take any further action on this recommendation until planning has been either accepted or refused as they will need to assess how any outcomes of this planning process will affect the erection of the canopy.

Medium Term Financial Plan
The recommendation was endorsed by the Executive Committee
(Considered by the Executive Committee 11th February 2014)

Recommendation: the current position for 2014/15-2016/17 be noted and Officers be requested to review the savings that can be delivered to achieve a balanced budget.

Officers are working to review potential savings. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is due to receive the Future Financial Plan report in September / October which will contain further information on this subject.

Football Task Group: Interim Report
(Considered by the Executive Committee on 8th April 2014)

Recommendation 2: Redditch United Football Club be encouraged to discuss with Officers how to make the best use of the current football club site and to look at more local options to accommodate its expansion.

Officers have met twice with representatives of the club and offered further advice and guidance on the Club's options at the current ground. Conversations are ongoing and additional support will be provided as required.

Landscaping Task Group: Final Report
(Considered by the Executive Committee on 8th April 2014)

<p><u>Recommendation 1:</u> New Members should be invited to visit teams responsible for tree maintenance, landscaping and cleansing services as part of the Member Induction process to provide them with an opportunity to learn about the work of these teams.</p>	<p>Officers will be contacting new members during July to offer them the opportunity to visit either a place team and or the tree team to look at how these teams work.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 1a:</u> A short briefing outlining the work of the place intervention, tree intervention and landscaping teams should be provided prior to a Council meeting early in the municipal year to provide those Members who are unable to participate in the member induction visit with an opportunity to learn about the work of these teams.</p>	<p>A suitable date is being sought for the presentation prior to a Council meeting during the latter half of 2014.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 2:</u> A contact list of key senior and operational Officers, containing the telephone and email details together with the basic information about the Officers' responsibilities, should be provided for the consideration of Members.</p>	<p>A list of key Officer contact details was provided to Members as part of the induction process in May 2014. This list of contact details will continue to be provided as part of the Member Induction process in years to come.</p> <p>Officers are in the process of pulling a list together for Environmental Services. However, given that the Council is trialling a number of different ways of working it is likely to change a number of times over the rest of this financial year.</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 4:</u> Data relating to landscaping cases reported for each area be provided for Members' consideration on an annual basis. Every Member should receive data for the areas they cover on a trial basis initially to gauge levels of take-up across the Council and with the option to receive or not according to Members' wishes.</p>	<p>The team have developed a report to allow this to happen and all members will be sent the information that is relevant to their wards at the end of the financial year.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 6:</u> Officers should undertake a feasibility study, risk assessment and cost benefit analysis to assess the potential for the Council to bulk plant trees in Council open spaces and other appropriate locations. This feasibility study should take into account the following matters:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> a) the legal implications, if any, of this action; b) the financial costs involved in planting and maintaining these plants; c) the availability of grants from the government and other sources to help pay for bulk planting in the Borough; d) demand within the market; e) where bulk planting would take place in the Borough; f) the size of the plots available for bulk planting; g) the implications for the Council's Planning Department in relation to the Local Plan; and h) the potential revenue that could be accrued by the Council. 	<p>The Forestry Commission Woodland Creation grant funding scheme is currently closed until further notice. There are currently no other known grant funding bodies which offer similar grant funding opportunities to assist landowners to develop new woodlands.</p> <p>The cost / benefit for the authority to carry out such a project independently is not particularly attractive. Whilst the costs of buying the stock, etc. required to establish a woodland would be reasonably low any potential revenue from its proactive management would take many tens of years to materialise.</p> <p>Officers feel that until grant funding is available, there is little merit in identifying sites, as this would need to be done in accordance with the type of grant funding received as this will determine land size and type as well as what is planted – which ultimately determines the potential yield and timescales. The potential income from such a project would again need to be assessed at this time to ascertain its viability.</p>

Recommendation 7: Officers should investigate how to dispose of logs in a way that would maximise income for the Council. Part of this investigation should involve a risk assessment. Any revenue from these sales should be reinvested in landscaping services.

Loose firewood timber that arise from the Council's in-house arboricultural operations is currently priced at £30.00 per cubic metre + vat. This is for unconverted timber and we have a regular demand.

We are still looking at the potential to increase the value of this timber by split processing it in batches, which would also potentially open up the available market and customer base for us. However, we are aware that there are local suppliers as well as national suppliers that can provide logs at very competitive prices.

Abbey Stadium Task Group

Considered by the Executive Committee on 24th June 2014

(Decisions on Recommendations 3 and 4 from the group were deferred by the Executive Committee)

Recommendation 1: The Council should explore the option for the Abbey Stadium to be managed by a leisure trust.

The recommendation was largely APPROVED, though in the following reworded form:

“the Council should explore the options for a leisure trust to manage some or all of its facilities, including the Abbey Stadium”.

As this recommendation was only approved at the end of June 2014 and it is likely that significant time will be required to address this proposal there is no update available at this stage for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Updates will be provided for future tracking documents.

<p><u>Recommendation 2:</u> Subject to the Executive Committee agreeing to investigate the trust management option further the Overview and Scrutiny Committee arrange to pre-scrutinise any final business case relating to the future operation of the Abbey Stadium.</p> <p>The recommendation was largely APPROVED, though in the following reworded form:</p> <p><i>“The Overview and Scrutiny Committee be given the opportunity to pre-scrutinise any final business case relating to the future operation of some or all of the Council’s leisure facilities, including the Abbey Stadium, prior to its submission to the Executive Committee.”</i></p>	<p>Consideration of the business case has been added to the Committee’s Work Programme. However, it is not currently possible to confirm when this business case will be available for Members to scrutinise (if such a business case is produced).</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 5:</u> Officers identify appropriate marketing measures to promote membership of the Abbey Stadium to people aged 55 years and over.</p>	<p>Officers are looking to launch a new health and wellbeing activity programme at the Abbey Stadium for the over 50s this autumn and will be starting the advertising campaign for this over the summer period. This will include a wrap around advert in the local paper as well as working in partnership with a number of agencies who cater for this age group as well as with the stadium’s cafe. At the moment details remain to be finalised but this programme should include health sessions in the gym, swimming lessons, Racketball and tai chi. One of the exit routes for this is to signpost people to join the Abbey Stadium gym.</p>

Recommendation 6: there should be expansion of the offer and additional marketing (including displays) of retail provision at the Abbey Stadium.

The more visual display for secondary spend and an increased range will be installed no later than the end of August 2014. The size of the display will be around three times the current size with a much bigger variety of stock to purchase.