

additional papers 1



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thu 7 Jul
2022
6.30 pm

Council Chamber
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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

Thursday, 7th July, 2022

6.30 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:

Bill Hartnett (Chair)
Joanna Kane (Vice-Chair)
Salman Akbar
Imran Altaf
Michael Chalk

Brandon Clayton
Sid Khan
Timothy Pearman
Gareth Prosser

- 5. Asset Rationalisation for Easemore Road - Pre-Decision-Scrutiny** (Report to follow) (Pages 1 - 10)
- 6. Future Use of the Town Hall and Customer Access - Pre-Decision-Scrutiny** (Report to follow) (Pages 11 - 26)
- 8. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme - Selecting Items for Scrutiny** (Pages 27 - 46)

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Executive Committee

12 July 2022

ASSET RATIONALISATION FOR EASEMORE ROAD - DECLARATION OF LAND SURPLUS TO REQUIREMENT AND DEVELOPMENT PROPOSALS AT COMMUNITY HOUSE, EASEMORE ROAD, TOWN CENTRE

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matthew Dormer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Report Authors	<p>Job Title: Engineering Team Leader Contact email: pete.liddington@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 534108</p> <p>Job Title: Contracts and Utilities Officer Contact email: christopher.wells@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 64252 Ext: 2559</p>
Wards Affected	Abbey
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	No
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	Communities which are safe, well maintained and green
Non-Key Decision	

1. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee **RESOLVE** that:-

the existing Community House building and associated land in Easemore Road (rear of No. 103), be declared surplus to Council requirements and disposed of at market value.

2. BACKGROUND

2.1 The existing Community House building is unfortunately no longer suitable to retain within its current condition. Following a recent detailed condition survey and report, it is now envisaged that over the next five years a minimum of some £340k will need to be spent on just planned preventative maintenance.

2.2 Examples of the issues to be addressed to the structure are:

- Asbestos Containing Materials (ACMs) were found throughout the building;
- Rising damp;

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- Contravention of Fire regulations;
 - Structural deficiencies;
 - Lath and plaster requires testing for anthrax prior to extraction works due to age of the building;
 - Timber rot in various locations;
 - Upgrade works to fire detection system and emergency lighting throughout;
 - Investigation required of existing drainage, potential failure contributing to dampness throughout the building;
 - Issues with electrical distribution boards that are life expired.
- 2.3 As a result of 2.1 - 2.2, it is considered that the most appropriate way forward is to demolish the existing structures and replace it with the housing development, as shown in Appendix 1 (Drawing No. P2049/175A refers). Based on preliminary comments received both from Worcestershire County Council (Highways) and Planning Services as a result of submitted pre-apps, this Indicative Layout is considered acceptable for the submission of an Outline Planning application, subject to receipt of formal confirmation.
- 2.4 'Where Next' have a lease on the site adjacent to, and south-west of the Community House proposed redevelopment site, but regrettably over the years they have encroached substantially onto this site. Consequently, preliminary discussions have taken place with their representatives and 'Where Next' understand that they will need to vacate this encroached area. In doing so, Officers will work with them to develop better accessibility to their entire site from the main entrance off Wellesbourne Close.
- 2.5 'Where Next' were originally relocated on this site in 1980s, when they were transferred from their previous leased site now occupied by Sainsbury's on the Alvechurch Highway roundabout, adjacent Middlehouse Lane. The Council at that time, wanted to dispose of this site as part of the major store development, and therefore relocated 'Where Next,' encompassing the construction of the existing office and glass houses at Wellesbourne Close.
- 2.6 Consideration has been given to include the 'Where Next' formal site off Wellesbourne Close as part of the complete redevelopment of the site, but there are a number of factors that do not support such a

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proposal. 'Where Next' site becomes narrow very quickly, therefore development would be limited to providing a very small number of additional dwellings. Use of the site would of course obviously require 'Where Next' to be relocated, and there would undoubtedly be pressure for the Council to not only supply this alternative site, but also provide new infrastructure, presumably at no cost to 'Where Next.'

3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 3.1 The sale of this land will generate capital receipts to the General Fund, and all capital receipts from disposals are deemed to be a Corporate capital resource available for allocation in line with Corporate priorities.
- 3.2 The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government issued guidance in giving Local Authorities greater freedoms with how capital receipts can be used to finance expenditure. This Direction allows for the following expenditure to be treated as Capital, 'expenditure on any project that is designed to generate ongoing revenue savings in the delivery of public services, and/or transform service delivery to reduce costs, and/or transform service delivery in a way that reduces costs or demand for services in future years, for any of the public sector delivery partners.'

4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 4.1 The primary tenant and the sub-tenants of Community House have been aware for some considerable time that the condition of the building will warrant their eventual displacement, so our proposals are not new to them. Although the Council has no legal obligations to provide replacement accommodation, Officers have met with both the primary tenant and the sub-tenants to realise an understanding of their accommodation needs. Officers have also met with other community group tenants of our other properties in the area, to assess space availability to help best relocate all the current occupants of Community House.
- 4.2 Although the Council may dispose of its land or property in any manner it wishes, the Council is required to dispose of any interest in land at Best Value in accordance with Section 123 of the Local Government Act 1972. To achieve this requirement, it is normal for the Council to market the sites for sale to achieve the highest capital receipts possible.

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5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 **Communities which are safe, well maintained and green** – the existing arrangements provide a mixture of small business ventures situated within an ageing building, with an extensive car park at the rear. Easemore Road in this locality is predominantly a residential area, being in close proximity to the town centre, with excellent bus routes being readily accessible. Consequently, with the new proposal of providing the housing development, this appears to be a more appropriate fit than business use, complimenting the existing residential properties.

Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 As part of the land sale, Officers recommend that it will be stipulated, that the proposed housing development will not include any on-site fossil fuelled installations, and will also obtain the highest Energy Performance Certificate rating possible (to be agreed with Council).

6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS**Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 An Equalities Impact Assessment is required and undertaken.

Operational Implications

- 6.2 In consultation with Worcestershire County Council, they have requested the existing bus stop situated on Easemore Road, close to the existing access to the rear car park, to be repositioned slightly. In addition, they have also requested the provision of dropped kerbs and tactile paving provision at various locations in close proximity to the site, to facilitate better pedestrian movement. Also, the existing Traffic Regulation Order will need to be amended on Easemore Road, to facilitate that 'No Waiting at any Time' restrictions are provided, this to ensure that sight visibility lines for the new access are unobstructed by parked vehicles. The cost of these works will be met by the successful purchaser/developer presumably through a Section 278 Agreement.
- 6.3 Referring to 2.4, 'Where Next' have requested assistance in providing an improved vehicular access arrangement within their approved site, in view of our 'request' for them to vacate the land that they have encroached upon. These are minor engineering works, and it is

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suggested that as a condition of the sale of the site, the successful purchaser/developer undertakes such works.

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 7.1 The existing condition of Community House is a financial and safety risk to the Council, this would be mitigated by relocating the current tenants and then removal of the building.
- 7.2 Failure to achieve best value for the land is mitigated through the process for selling at market value.

8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS

Appendix 1 - Indicative Layout

Appendix 2 - Site Location Plan

Pre-application advice received from Worcestershire County Council (Highways).

Executive Committee

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9. REPORT SIGN OFF

Department	Name and Job Title	Date
Portfolio Holder	Councillor Matthew Dormer	
Lead Director/Head of Service	Claire Felton - Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	
Financial Services	Peter Carpenter Interim Deputy S151 Finance	
Legal Services	Clare Flanagan Principal Solicitor	
Policy Team	Emily Payne Engagement and Equalities Advisor	
Climate Change Officers	Kath Manning - Climate Change and Energy Support Officer Anna Wardell-Hill Environmental Policy and Awareness Officer	



Appendix 1

Proposed Layout Schedule
 Site Area - 0.61 ha (1.50 acres)

Dwelling Types	
5 No. 3-bed houses	
3 No. 3-bed houses	
2 No. 2-bed bungalows	
2 No. 3-bed bungalows	
Total - 12 No. dwellings, 24 No. cps - Density = 19.7 No. dwellings/ha	

- Key**
- Extent of site area within ownership of Redditch BC
 - Extent of site area within ownership of Redditch BC, but occupied by Where Next
 - Location of Electric Vehicle Charging Point - 1 No. EVCP per dwelling (Output - 7kW)
 - Proposed location of bin and cycle storage areas within rear gardens
 - Existing adopted 225mm dia FWS retained in POS
 - Existing adopted 300mm dia SWS retained in POS
 - Parking spaces with minimum dimensions of 6 x 3.2m
 - Existing tree belt retained subject to topographical and tree survey. Extent of feature shown approximately at this stage
 - Existing tree belt retained subject to topographical and tree survey. Trees to be removed to accommodate Piles 7-10
 - Secured access to facilitate rear garden access to Plots 2 and 5
 - Secured access to facilitate rear garden access to Plots 8 and 9
 - Private combined vehicular/pedestrian access
 - Adopted access - Informal Street designation by WCC's Streetscape Design Guide
 - Existing Bus Stop located at to be repositioned at
 - Refuse/recycling bins collection area for Plots 4 - 10
 - Pedestrian crossings (dropped kerbs) and tactile paving to be provided
 - Existing TPOs to be amended to provide 'No waiting at any Time' restrictions to accommodate new visibility splays

12/05/2022	A	Amendments following Pre-apps from RBC and WCC
Date	Rev	Details

Project:
Proposed Residential Development
Rear of No.103 Easemore Road
Redditch

Drawing:
Indicative Layout

Drawn:	PTL	Scale:	1/500 @ A2
Surveyed:	OS	Date:	Jul 2021
Drawing No:	P2049/175A		

Engineering and Design Services
 Town Hall
 Walter Stranz Square
 Redditch
 Worcs B98 8AH

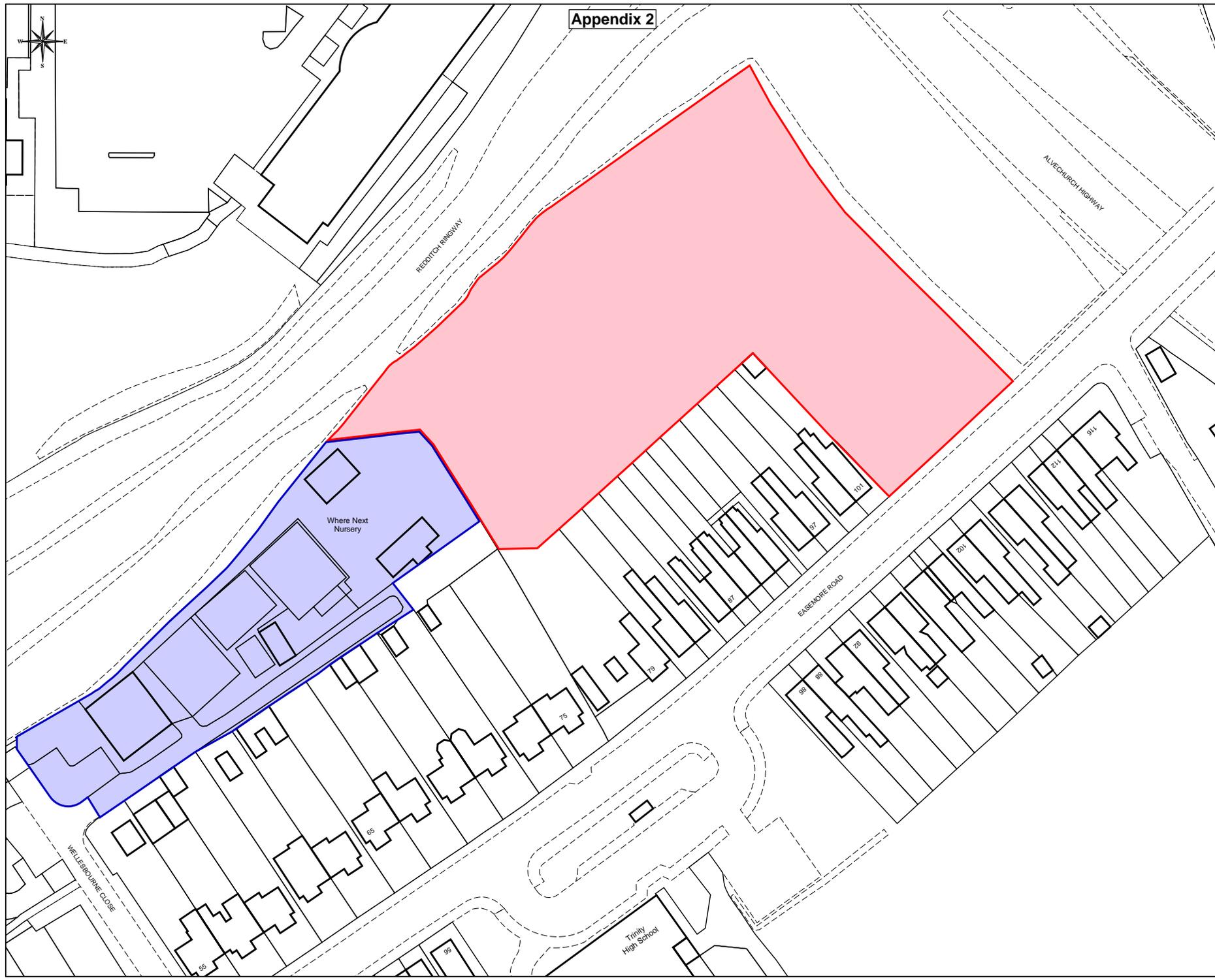


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Appendix 2



Key

- Extent of site area within ownership of Redditch BC
- Extent of site area within ownership of Redditch BC, but occupied by Where Next

Date	Rev	Details

Project:
Proposed Residential Development
Rear of No.103 Eastmore Road
Redditch

Drawing:
Location Plan

Drawn: PTL	Scale: 1/500 @ A2
Surveyed: OS	Date: Jun 2022

Drawing No: **P2049/191**

Engineering and Design Services
 Town Hall
 Walter Stranz Square
 Redditch
 Worcs B98 8AH



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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive Committee****12th July 2022****Future Use of the Town Hall and Closure of Cashiers Service**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor – Karen Ashley Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Peter Carpenter
Wards Affected	All Wards
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY

This report sets the steps and work required to be undertaken with Customers in order to close of the Cashiers Service on the 30th September 2022.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Executive are asked to:

2.1 Approve the Closure of the Cashiers Service on the 30th September 2022.

2.2 Note the alternatives for Customers to make payments and the training and guidance that will take place up to the closure date.

2.3 Approve the proposals to sublet parts of the Town Hall

2.4 Delegate authority to the Head of Legal Democratic and Property Services and the Section 151 Officer following consultation with the Leader to negotiate terms and enter into the lease arrangements necessary to enable 2.3.

3. KEY ISSUES**The Cashiers Service - Background**

3.1 The Cashiers Service operates out of the Town Hall from Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. Visitor numbers for “in person” payments at the Town Hall have fallen by 90% due to the pandemic and the introduction of allpay for the majority of services.

3.2 Housing (50%), Council Tax (40%) and Sundry Debtors (5%) account for the highest service payments from customers. All these services offer allpay as well as many other methods of payment as an alternative to cashiers’ payments, including web, telephone, standing order and Direct Debit.

3.3 Cash and card payments at the counter account for fewer than 4% of transactions, compared to allpay (10%), web/telephone (15%) and direct debit (70%). Over a 2 week period in March, only 202 visited cashiers (20 a day).

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- 3.4 The council still relies on its cashing service for in-house transactions despite a range of alternatives being offered. Services such as dial-a-ride have drivers presenting at the Town Hall on a daily basis to deposit as little as £50 for the day. Other services include Leisure, and Housing (washing machine monies etc) and bulky waste customers who choose to pay in cash.
- 3.5 Redditch and Bromsgrove Cash Offices are the sole remaining cash offices in the county, and one of the last remaining cash offices in both the midlands, and the country due to cheaper and more viable alternatives becoming available. Several councils made the decision to not re-open their cash offices during the pandemic.

Alternatives to Face to Face Payments

- 3.6 As an alternative to the “face to face” cashiers service, there are numerous alternative payment arrangements for the customer. This links to the Councils updated Customer and Digital Strategy.
- Direct Debit
 - Allpay (to pay rent, council tax and sundry debtors invoices)
 - Online card payment through council website
 - Automated Telephone Payment (ATP)
 - Bank Standing Order / Bank Transfer
 - Postal Cheque
- 3.7 There are many PayPoint and Post Office locations across the borough who offer longer opening times, including evenings and weekends, enabling customers to make payments at a location and time more convenient to them. Allpay have also recently introduced Payzone as another payment outlet, adding a further 10 premises for customers to pay, including the Tesco Supermarket in Oakenshaw that has much longer opening times than the council.
- 3.8 Those who wish to continue to pay in cash for their essential bills can do so at the Post Office, Payzone and PayPoint whose locations are shown in Appendix A.

Transition Arrangements

- 3.9 It is accepted that there will need to be a comprehensive customer service offensive with officers working with customers to encourage them to switch to alternative payment methods. To an extent this has already been done and our experiences when closing the One Stop Shops at Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow will be informative in this context. It will be necessary for officers to proactively contact tenants during the period of transition to advice and encourage them through the process of change. Furthermore, we can draw on experience and lessons learned as this was done during the Covid pandemic in 2020 when the offices were forced to close

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**Executive Committee****12th July 2022**

- 3.10 Customer Service Officers can discuss alternative payment methods with each customer to ensure a smooth transition before the closure of the cash office.
- 3.11 The Council intends to open a main reception at the same time that the cash office closes that will deal with general customer enquiries, and any customers who present for payment related reasons after the closure of cash office can be advised on the alternative options
- 3.12 There will still be free-to-use self-service telephones at the Town Hall for customers who want to pay their bills using the automated telephone payment line, free and unlimited use of the public access PC's to make web payments using their credit or debit card, as well as the free and unlimited use of Wi-Fi for customers to use their own devices (mobile phones/tablets etc)
- 3.13 By working with those customers, and improving their digital skills, we will be able to help customers become more financially independent. In addition, our Financial Independence Teams work with the most vulnerable members of our communities in relation to supporting them in managing their finances. Financial independence goes hand in hand with digital independence. Customers who solely use cash as a payment method will not be getting the best deals and have limited buying power.

Alternative uses of the Space on the Ground Floor and throughout the Town Hall

- 3.14 The Council is presently in conversation with a number of public sector organisations on the use of town hall space and turning the building into a "public sector hub". These discussions are at an advanced stage and will require the Council to enter into leasehold agreements with third parties to enable the Council to work towards the provision of a Public Sector Hub which in turn enable the Council to bring together various services for the benefit of residents.
- 3.15 Members are advised that by enabling the shared use of space at the Town Hall the Council will not only bring services into one location but it will also enable security of tenure and cost for the Council and much needed public services.

4. Legal Implications

- 4.1 No Legal implications have been identified.

5. Financial Implications

- 5.1 The direct costs of closing the cash office as small for the Council made up of the following nominal savings to the council
- Cancellation of cash in transit deliveries: £500pa
 - Consumables: £250pa
 - Subscriptions / Alarms £500pa

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5.2 Closing the cash office will release valuable, prime ground floor space in the Town Hall. It is currently estimated that this space has a market rental value of approximately £150,000 per annum. It would also unlock much broader development opportunities noted above with regard to the Council's 'community hub' and partnership working vision.

5.3 In leasing space at the Town Hall, charges for utilities and servicing of that space will transfer from the Council to the leasee. This will be proportional to the space being used and significantly reduce our operating costs.

6. Strategic Purpose Implications**Relevant Strategic Purpose**

6.1 The Strategic purposes are included in the Council's Customer and Digital Strategy to enable Customers to become more financially independent, giving them the ability to manage their finances in different, cheaper ways. The Councils Budgetary and Property strategies look to optimise the use of Council resources – having the location as a "public sector hub" realises this.

Climate Change Implications

6.2 The green thread runs through the Council plan. The use of the facilities by multiple public sector delivery agents will reduce their footprint within the Borough.

7. Other Implications**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

7.1 An Equalities Impact assessment has been completed, much like the ones undertaken for the closure of the "one stop shops" referred to earlier in this report (Appendix B).

Operational Implications

7.2 The closure of the cash hall will lead to operational changes for service managers and also lead to opportunities to better use space at the Town Hall.

8. RISK MANAGEMENT

8.1 The closure of the cashiers functions will be included in the corporate risk register for the authority.

9. APPENDENCES

Appendix A – Post Office, Payzone and PayPoint Locations in Redditch

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

12th July 2022

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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E Mail: Peter.Carpenter@bromsgroveandredditchbc.gov.uk

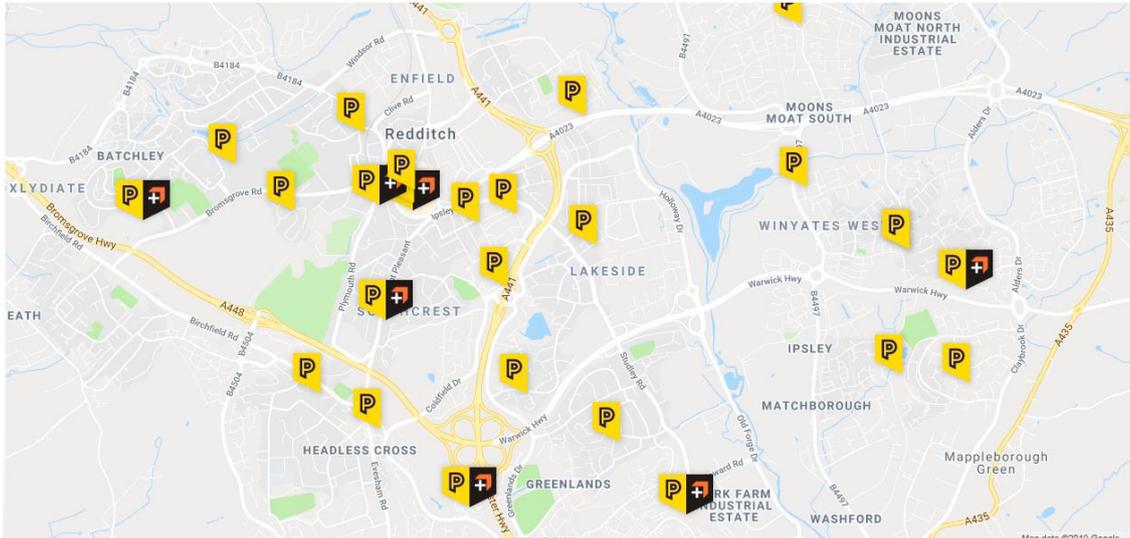
REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

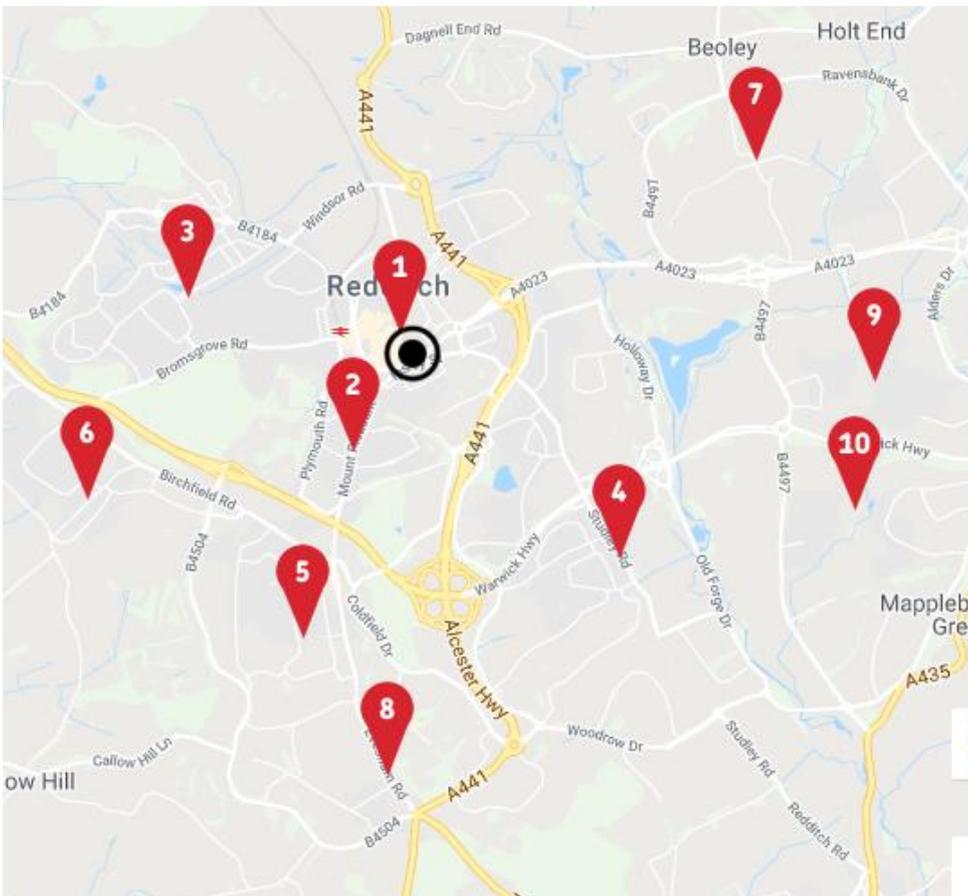
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Appendix A - Post Office, Payzone and PayPoint Locations in Redditch

Paypoint Locations



Post Office Locations



REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

Executive Committee

12th July 2022

Payzone Locations

or use your current location

Payzone Store

Tesco Extra
Coldfield Drive, Oakenshaw, B98 7RU

Monday	00:01-23:59
Tuesday	00:01-23:59
Wednesday	00:01-23:59
Thursday	00:01-23:59
Friday	00:01-23:59
Saturday	00:01-23:59
Sunday	10:00-16:00

03456779569 1.2 Miles

Directions

SuperAgent

Churchill North News
10 Parkfield Close, B98 8TA

Open today 07:00-20:30

01527585692 1.3 Miles

Directions

SuperAgent Services

B98 8AE **Payzone Store** **Post Office** **SuperAgent**

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Equality Assessment Record

Title of Service, Policy, Procedure, Spending Review being Proposed	Closure of Cashiers Service (Town Hall)
Name of Service Area	Customer Services
Name of Officer completing this assessment	Paul Stephenson
Date Assessment Started	16/06/22
Name of Decision Maker (in relation to the change)	Executive
Date Decision Made	

Please ensure the following:

- That the document is understandable to a reader who has not read any other documents, and explains (on its own) how the Public Sector Equality Duty is met. This does not need to be lengthy, but must be complete.
- That available support information and data is identified and where it can be found. Also be clear about highlighting gaps in existing data or evidence that you hold, and how you have sought to address these knowledge gaps.
- That the equality impacts are capable of aggregation with those of other EIAs to identify the cumulative impact of all service changes made by the council on different groups of people.

Overview

Provide a clear overview of the aims of the service/policy/procedure and the proposed changes being made. Will the current service users' needs continue to be met? Why is the change being proposed? What needs or duties is it designed to meet?

The Cashiers Service operates out of the Town Hall from Monday to Friday 9am-5pm. Visitor numbers for "in person" payments at the Town Hall have fallen by 90% due to the pandemic and the introduction of allpay for most services.

Housing (50%), Council Tax (40%) and Sundry Debtors (5%) account for the highest service payments from customers. All these services offer allpay as well as many other methods of payment as an alternative to cashiers' payments, including web, telephone, standing order and Direct Debit.

Cash and card payments at the counter account for fewer than 4% of transactions, compared to allpay (10%), web/telephone (15%) and direct debit (70%). Over a 2-week period in March, only 202 visited cashiers (20 a day).

The council still relies on its cashiering service for in-house transactions despite a range of alternatives being offered. Services such as dial-a-ride have drivers presenting at the Town Hall daily to deposit as little as £50 for the day. Other services include Leisure, and Housing (washing machine monies etc) and bulky waste customers who choose to pay in cash.

Redditch and Bromsgrove Cash Offices are the sole remaining cash offices in the county, and one of the last remaining cash offices in both the midlands, and the country due to cheaper and more viable alternatives becoming available. Several councils made the decision to not re-open their cash offices during the pandemic.

Alternatives to Face to Face Payments

As an alternative to the "face to face" cashiers service, there are numerous alternative payment arrangements for the customer. This links to the Councils updated Customer and Digital Strategy.

- Direct Debit
- Allpay (to pay rent, council tax and sundry debtors' invoices)
- Online card payment through council website
- Automated Telephone Payment (ATP)
- Bank Standing Order / Bank Transfer

- Postal Cheque

There are many PayPoint and Post Office locations across the borough who offer longer opening times, including evenings and weekends, enabling customers to make payments at a location and time more convenient to them. Allpay have also recently introduced Payzone as another payment outlet, adding a further 10 premises for customers to pay, including Tesco Supermarket in Oakenshaw.

Those who wish to continue to pay in cash for their essential bills can do so at the Post Office, Payzone and PayPoint whose locations are shown in Appendix A

Transition Arrangements

It is accepted that there will need to be a comprehensive customer service offensive with officers working with customers to encourage them to switch to alternative payment methods. To an extent this has already been done and our experiences when closing the One Stop Shops at Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow will be informative in this context. It will be necessary for officers to proactively contact tenants during the period of transition to advise and encourage them through the process of change. Furthermore, we can draw on experience and lessons learned as this was done during the Covid pandemic in 2020 when the offices were forced to close

Customer Service Officers can discuss alternative payment methods with each customer to ensure a smooth transition before the closure of the cash office.

The Council intends to open a main reception at the same time that the cash office closes that will deal with general customer enquiries, and any customers who present for payment-related reasons after the closure of cash office can be advised on the alternative options

There will still be free-to-use self-service telephones at the Town Hall for customers who want to pay their bills using the automated telephone payment line, free and unlimited use of the public access PC's to make web payments using their credit or debit card, as well as the free and unlimited use of Wi-Fi for customers to use their own devices (mobile phones/tablets etc)

By working with those customers, and improving their digital skills, we will be able to help customers become more financially independent. In addition, our Financial Independence Teams work with the most vulnerable members of our communities in relation to supporting them in managing their finances. Financial independence goes hand in hand with digital independence. Customers who solely use cash as a payment method will not be getting the best deals and have limited buying power.

Who is the proposal likely to affect?	Yes	No
All residents	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Specific group(s)	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
All Council employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Specific group(s) of employees	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>
Other – Provide more details below	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/>

Details

Outline who could be affected and how they could be affected by the proposal/service change. Include current service users and those who could benefit from but do not currently access the service.

The initial screening has identified that the closure of the Cashiers Service will not adversely disadvantage any of the protected groups because alternative and non-discriminatory options exist for all sections of the community.

Customers will be able to use post office/Paypoint/Payzone in any locations nationally to pay for their services, or alternatively can use one of the alternative payments in the overview. The Town Hall is still open as a location so if the customer attended the town Hall, then they can be advised of the alternatives, which includes payment via free-to-use telephone service as well as public access PC's or shown the location of a local Post Office/Payzone or Paypoint.

Evidence and data used to inform your equality impact assessment

What data, research, or trend analysis have you used? Describe how you have got your information and what it tells you.

- Information on customer numbers attending town hall
- Testimony from Customer Support Officers who are seeing customers daily

Visitor numbers for “in person” payments at the Town Hall have fallen by 90% due to the pandemic and the introduction of all pay for most services.

The Town Hall was closed during Coronavirus lockdown for a 3–4-month period and we did not have any time to consult customers upon the closure, and we did not see any occasions where customers were unable to pay by alternative methods

We also draw upon our experience of the closure of the One Stop Shop outer offices in Mar 2022 where all residents attending the centre in the 3-month period prior to closure had alternative payments offered. There were no complaints received because of this decision.

Engagement and Consultation

What engagement and consultation have you undertaken about the proposal with current service users, potential users and other stakeholders? What is important to them regarding the current service? How does (or could) the service meet their needs? How will they be affected by the proposal? What potential impacts did they identify because of their protected characteristic(s)? Did they identify any potential barriers they may face in accessing services/other opportunities that meet their needs?

There will be a 3-month transition period where all customers presenting at the centre will be spoken to and offered alternative payment methods. This will ensure that all customers will be given a sufficient timeframe to pay, review and analyse their new payment methods and come back into the centre before it closes.

Subsequently, there will be a main reception which will be hosted by the same officers following the closure who can further advise on their alternative payment methods or provide support to pay using a public access PC or telephone.

It is highly unlikely that there would be a situation where customers are faced with a closed door with no means of support, whether that be during the transitional period or afterwards. Should the building be closed due to a national outbreak (e.g. Coronavirus lockdown) then alternatives would be considered as and when it occurs.

Every service the council offers also has an alternative method of payment.

Public Sector Equality Duty

Due regard must be given to the three aims of the Equality Duty. This means that you must consciously think about the three aims as part of the process of decision-making. Consider the current service and any proposed changes, thinking about what issues may arise.

Equality Duty Aims	Evidence
Eliminate unlawful discrimination, harassment and victimisation	The closure of the Cashiers Service will not adversely disadvantage any of the protected groups because alternative and non-discriminatory options exist for all sections of the community.

<p>How does the proposal/service ensure that there is no barrier or disproportionate impact for anyone with a particular protected characteristic</p>	
<p>Advance equality of opportunity between different groups How does the proposal/service ensure that its intended outcomes promote equality of opportunity for users? Identify inequalities faced by those with specific protected characteristic(s).</p>	<p>N/A</p>
<p>Foster good relations between different groups Does the service contribute to good relations or to broader community cohesion objectives? How does it achieve this aim?</p>	<p>N/A</p>

Is there evidence of actual or potential unfairness for the following equality groups?

- Does the proposal target or exclude a specific equality group or community?
 - Does it affect some equality groups or communities differently and can this be justified?
 - Is the proposal likely to be equally accessed by all equality groups and communities? If not, can this be justified?
- (It may be useful to consider other groups, not included in the Equality Act, especially if the proposal is specifically for them e.g. lone parents, refugees, unemployed people, carers)

Impact of proposal

Describe the likely impact of the proposal on people because of their protected characteristic and how they may be affected. How likely is it that people with this protected characteristic will be negatively affected? What are the barriers that might make access difficult or stop different groups or communities accessing the proposal? How great will that impact be on their well-being? Could the proposal promote equality and good relations between different groups? How?

If you have identified any area of actual or potential unfairness that cannot be justified, can you eliminate or minimise this?

What mitigating actions can be taken to reduce or remove this impact? (Include these in the action plan at the end of the assessment) Equal treatment does not always produce equal outcomes; sometimes you will have to take specific steps for particular groups to address an existing disadvantage or to meet differing needs.

Protected Group	Impact of proposal	Justification for any actual or potential unfairness identified	If you have identified any area of actual or potential unfairness that cannot be justified, can you eliminate or minimise this?
Age	The closure of the Cashiers Service will not adversely disadvantage any of the protected groups because alternative and non-discriminatory options exist for all sections of the community.		
Disability			
Transgender			
Marriage and Civil Partnership			
Pregnancy and Maternity			
Race			
Religion or Belief			
Sex (Male/ Female)			
Sexual Orientation			

How will you monitor any changes identified?

Feedback from staff and any concerns or complaints from service users will be reviewed weekly during the transition period.

The actions required to address these findings are set out below.

Action Required	By Whom	By When	Completion Date
Review feedback from customers through CSO's	Maria Wright Paul Stephenson	Weekly	01/01/23

Implement a communication plan using social media, press releases and posters at the Town hall during the transition period so customers are fully aware.	Maria Wright Paul Stephenson	As required	01/01/23
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Sign off on completion	Name	Signature	Date
Lead Officer completing assessment	Paul Stephenson		16/06/22
Equalities Officer	Emily Payne		16/06/22

When you have completed this assessment, retain a copy and send an electronic copy to the Policy Team (Equalities) attaching any supporting evidence used to carry out the assessment.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME

27 July 2022 to 30 November 2022

(published as at 30th June 2022)



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

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

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

The Executive Committee's meetings are normally held at 6.30pm on Tuesday evenings at the Town Hall. They are open to the public, except when confidential information is being discussed. If you wish to attend for a particular matter, it is advisable to check with the Democratic Services Team on (01527) 64252, ext: 3072 to make sure it is going ahead as planned. If you have any other queries, Democratic Services Officers will be happy to advise you. The full Council meets in accordance the Council's Calendar of Meetings. Meetings commence at 6.30pm.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Matthew Dormer, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships
Councillor Nyear Nazir, Deputy Leader
Councillor Joanne Beecham, Portfolio Holder for Leisure
Councillor Peter Fleming, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services
Councillor Anthony Lovell, Portfolio Holder for Climate Change
Councillor Nyear Nazir, Community Services and Regulatory Services
Councillor Karen Ashley, Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling
Councillor Craig Warhurst, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Procurement
Councillor Lucy Harrison
Councillor Emma Marshall

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
UK Shared Prosperity Fund Key: Yes	Executive 26 Jul 2022	The date for consideration of this item changed following consultation with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Report of the Chief Executive	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance, Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services Tel: 01527 64252, Tel: 01527 64252
Asset Management Strategy and investment programme for council housing stock Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022 Council 19 Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Simon Parry, Housing Property Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252
Financial Outturn Report 2021/22 Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022 Council 19 Sep 2022		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Future Plans for Auxerre House Key: No	Executive Not before 6th Sep 2022 Council Not before 19th Sep 2022	This report may contain exempt information which would need to be discussed by the Executive Committee in private session.	Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Simon Parry, Housing Property Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252
Asset Strategy Key: No	Executive Not before 6th Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Tel: 01527 881429
Budget Framework 2023/24 Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Climate Change Strategy Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022 Council 19 Sep 2022		Head of Community and Housing Services and Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Guy Revans, Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services, Judith Willis, Head of Community and Housing Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3292, Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3284
Draft Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24 Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Financial Monitoring Report Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022		Report of the Executive Director, Finance and Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
First Homes Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Amanda Delahunty, Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer Tel: (01527) 881269
Future Maintenance of Former Railway Bridge - Green Lane, Studley Key: Yes	Executive 6 Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Pete Liddington, GIS/Design Officer Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3638

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Housing Policies Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022 Council 19 Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Judith Willis, Head of Community and Housing Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3284
HR and Organisational Development / People Strategy Key: No	Executive Not before 6th Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Business Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Strategy	Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development Tel: 01527 881256
Levelling Up Fund Bid Key: Yes	Executive Not before 6th Sep 2022 Council Not before 19th Sep 2022			Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services Tel: 01527 64252
Matchborough and Winyates Regeneration Proposals Key: Yes	Executive Not before 6th Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services	Ostap Paparega, Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration Tel: 01562 732192

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Parking Enforcement Service Level Agreement Key: Yes	Executive 6 Sep 2022	This report may contain exempt information which would need to be discussed in private session.	Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Kevin Hirons, Environmental Services Manager Tel: 01527 881705
Recommissioning of the County Single Homeless and Childless Couples Service Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Amanda Delahunty, Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer Tel: (01527) 881269
Redditch TIP Library Redevelopment - Business Case Key: Yes	Executive Not before 6th Sep 2022	This report may contain exempt information which would need to be considered in private session.	Report of the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services	Ostap Paparega, Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration Tel: 01562 732192

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Review of Governance Arrangements for Rubicon Leisure Limited Key: No	Executive Not before 6th Sep 2022 Council Not before 19th Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Tel: 01527 881429
Voluntary Bodies Scheme Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Judith Willis, Head of Community and Housing Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3284
Worcestershire Homelessness and Rough Sleeping Strategy Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022 Council 19 Sep 2022		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Amanda Delahunty, Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer Tel: (01527) 881269
Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2040 Key: No	Executive 6 Sep 2022 Council 19 Sep 2022		Report of the Chief Executive	Judith Willis, Head of Community and Housing Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3284

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Environment Act - Changes to Waste Services - Implications Key: No	Executive Not before 25th Oct 2022 Council Not before 14th Nov 2022		Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Guy Revans, Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3292
Financial Monitoring Report Key: No	Executive 25 Oct 2022		Report of the Executive Director Finance & Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Fees and Charges 2023/24 Key: No	Executive 25 Oct 2022 Council 14 Nov 2022		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Leisure Strategy Key: No	Executive 25 Oct 2022 Council 14 Nov 2022		Report of the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services Tel: 01527 64252
Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2025/26 - Update Key: No	Executive 25 Oct 2022		Report of the Head of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Quarterly Risk Update Key: No	Executive 25 Oct 2022		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Financial Monitoring Report Key: No	Executive 6 Dec 2022		Report of the Executive Director Finance & Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Homelessness Prevention Grant 2023/24 Key: Yes	Executive 6 Dec 2022		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Amanda Delahunty, Housing Strategy and Enabling Officer Tel: (01527) 881269
Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2025/26 - Update Key: No	Executive 6 Dec 2022		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Treasury Management Report - Six Month Update Key: No	Executive 6 Dec 2022		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Council Tax Base 2023/24 Key: No	Executive 10 Jan 2023 Council 30 Jan 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Financial Monitoring Report Key: No	Executive 10 Jan 2023		Report of the Executive Director, Finance & Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Final Council Tax Support Scheme 2023/24 Key: No	Executive 10 Jan 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2025/25 - Update Key: No	Executive 10 Jan 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Quarterly Risk Update Key: No	Executive 10 Jan 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
2023/24 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2023/24 to 2025/26 (Including Treasury Management Strategy and Capital Programme) Key: No	Executive 7 Feb 2023 Council 27 Feb 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Decarbonisation of the Council Fleet Key: No	Executive 7 Feb 2023 Council 3 Apr 2023		Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Kevin Hirons, Environmental Services Manager Tel: 01527 881705
Financial Monitoring Report Key: No	Executive 7 Feb 2023		Report of the Executive Director, Finance and Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Pay Policy Statement 2023/24 Key: No	Executive 7 Feb 2023 Council 27 Feb 2023		Report of the Head of Business Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Strategy	Becky Talbot, Human Resources and Development Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3385
Council Tax Resolutions 2023/24 Key: No	Executive 27 Feb 2023 Council 27 Feb 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Financial Monitoring Report Key: No	Executive 21 Mar 2023		Report of the Executive Director Finance & Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252
Quarterly Risk Update Key: No	Executive 21 Mar 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Deputy S151 - Finance Tel: 01527 64252



Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28th June, 2022

MINUTES

Present:

Councillors Nyear Nazir, Karen Ashley, Joanne Beecham, Peter Fleming, Lucy Harrison, Anthony Lovell, Emma Marshall and Craig Warhurst

Also Present:

Councillor Sid Khan

Officers:

Ruth Bamford, Peter Carpenter, Kevin Dicks, Clare Flanagan, Sue Hanley and Helen Mole

Principal Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill Democratic Services

14. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Matthew Dormer.

In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair, Councillor Nyear Nazir, chaired the meeting.

15. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

16. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

In the absence of the Leader, the Deputy Leader advised that there had been a number of supplementary packs issued for the meeting alongside the main agenda pack.

Members were asked to note that, whilst the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had pre-scrutinised the Redditch Town Centre Business Cases and Levelling Up Fund Bid 2 reports at a meeting held on 23rd June 2022, there had been no recommendations made on these items. Therefore, there were no minutes from that meeting for the Executive Committee's consideration at this time.

Chair

17. MINUTES**RESOLVED that**

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 14th June 2022 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

18. REDDITCH TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION BUSINESS CASES (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services presented the Redditch Town Centre Regeneration Business Cases report for the Executive Committee's consideration. In presenting the report, it was highlighted that since the original publication of the report, updated copies of the business cases had been issued in supplementary packs for the meeting.

In 2019, the Government invited over 100 towns across the country, including Redditch, to submit bids for a town's deal. Redditch Borough Council had submitted a bid to the Government in January 2021 and had subsequently been awarded in excess of £15 million to spend on particular regeneration projects in the town centre. Whilst these projects had already been agreed, the business cases that had been developed for the report to the Executive Committee in June 2022 provided more detailed information about the actions proposed. The content of these business cases would inform summary statements to the Government, which were due to be submitted by 29th June 2022.

There were three key schemes in the Redditch Town Deal, which had previously been approved by the Government:

- Development of a Redditch Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre
- Redditch Town Centre Public Realm works
- Redevelopment of the Redditch Library site

In respect of the Redditch Library site, the Government had granted an extension for submission of a detailed business case setting out proposals for the future. This business case would be the subject of a further report to the Executive Committee, which was due to be considered in September 2022.

The business cases that had been submitted for the Executive Committee's consideration had been drafted by external consultants, Mott MacDonald. Based on the company's assessment, Members were advised that it was anticipated that the proposals for the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28th June, 2022

would be over budget by approximately £2 million. Similarly, the estimated costs for the public realm works were likely to be over budget, although there were actions that could be taken to address this, including through use of funding from other sources to cover the total costs.

In line with Government requirements, a Redditch Town's Deal Board, comprising representatives of the public, private and voluntary and community sectors (VCS), had been established to consider proposals in respect of the Town's Deal. The Board had been consulted on the content of the business cases prior to the Executive Committee's consideration.

During consideration of this item, the Interim Section 151 Officer was invited to outline the financial implications of the proposals for Members' consideration. The Committee was advised that, as part of the process, the Section 151 Officer needed to be comfortable with and to approve the business cases in order for the submission to the Government to proceed.

Members were advised that £8 million had originally been allocated to the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre. However, the business case had identified that £10 million would in fact need to be allocated to this project. This estimate included a figure of £1.5 million that had been allocated to contingency costs, including the potential impact of inflation on costs. As construction was not due to take place until 2024, it was not possible to provide an accurate assessment of the likely costs of inflation at that point as it was possible that this would change over the following two years. A similar challenge was likely to impact on Town Deal proposals that were submitted across the country.

All of these points had been taken into account by the Interim Section 151 Officer when assessing the costs. Discussions had been held with representatives of the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP) and, like other members of the LEP, the Council was eligible to bid for up to £1.5 million to help bridge the financial gap in this instance. There was also the potential for the Council to bid for grant funding from other external sources. In this context, the Interim Section 151 Officer was proposing that the Council should submit a bid to the GBSLEP to help fund the difference.

In relation to the projected overspend on the public realm works, it was anticipated that this would be lower than for the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre. The proposals in relation to the public realm works actually comprised five separate business cases and would involve working with partner organisations, such as Worcestershire County Council. The projected overspend

included contingency figures to help cover the costs of areas of risk, including costs arising due to inflation. It was anticipated that the overspend in this instance could be addressed from other sources of funding and in the long-term these works could lead to a reduction in costs for partner organisations.

Reference was made to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's pre-scrutiny of the report at a meeting held on 23rd June 2022. Whilst the Committee had not made any recommendations on the subject, Members thanked Overview and Scrutiny Members for scrutinising the detail contained within the business cases.

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

- The potential for the proposals in respect of the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre and public realm works to have a positive impact on the vibrancy of Redditch town centre.
- The future consultation that would be held with the public and other interested stakeholders in respect of the proposals, including in relation to the plans for the library.
- The opportunities provided by the introduction of a Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre, including to help upgrade aging urban assets and to improve skillsets in the local workforce.
- The need for action to be taken to help attract highly qualified young people to live and work in Redditch, including young people who had grown up in the Borough who had received a university education.
- The timescales for commencing the works proposed in the business cases, subject to Government approval. Members were advised that construction work on the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre could not commence until 2024, when the police were scheduled to have demolished the site. However, prior to that date, other action could be taken, including submission of a planning application for the site.
- The deadline for completion of the works. Members were advised that the proposed works would need to be completed by the end of the 2026 calendar year.
- The potential for new businesses, including restaurants, to be established in Redditch town centre as a result of the public realm works.
- The extent to which the Council could work with the police to provide temporary accommodation once premises at Middlehouse Lane had been vacated. Officers confirmed that conversations were being held with the police in respect of this matter.

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28th June, 2022

- The work that had been delivered by other local authorities that had been awarded funding in the Town's Deal process, including their plans in respect of accommodating rising inflation costs, and the potential for the Council to learn from this. Members were informed that a representative of the Department for Business, Energy and Industrial Strategy (BEIS) attended meetings of the Redditch Town Deal Board and had confirmed that the Council was adopting a similar approach to other local authorities in respect of this matter. The impact of inflation on costs would also need to be taken into account by the Government as part of the process.
- The delays that had been experienced in terms of the issuing of the business cases for the report. Officers apologised for the delays and explained that these business cases had been reissued to ensure that Members had access to the most up to date information prior to submission on 29th June 2022.
- The hard work of officers in preparing the report and liaising with the external contractors over the content of the business cases.

RESOLVED that

the two business cases, in respect of the Digital Manufacturing and Innovation Centre and the Public Realm works are endorsed and used to present summary information for submission to the Department for Levelling Up, Housing and Communities on the 29th June 2022.

19. LEVELLING UP FUND 2 BID (REPORT TO FOLLOW)

The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services presented a report on the subject of an opportunity available for the Council to submit a bid for Levelling Up funding. Members were informed that Levelling Up was a national scheme and the funding that had been made available for bidding purposes formed part of a second round of Levelling Up support available across the country. Councils would be bidding in competition with other local authorities for up to £20 million under this scheme.

The Council would need to ensure that a bid was submitted to the Government by 6th July 2022 for this process. Additional work would be required on the bid prior to that date. Therefore, Officers were requesting delegated authority to continue to work on this matter up to the date of submission.

The Council was required to be able to demonstrate to the Government in the bid process that additional funding from alternative sources would be made available alongside the Levelling Up funding. This needed to represent 10 per cent of the

funds allocated to the Council by the Government under the scheme.

There were different categories of local authority that could bid for funding as part of the Levelling Up process. In this round of Levelling Up, Redditch Borough Council had been allocated a category one applicant and it was hoped that this would increase the likelihood that the bid would be successful for the Borough.

There were three key themes in relation to which bids could be made:

- Transport
- Regeneration and the town centre
- Heritage and culture

Officers were anticipating that the Council was likely to have a greater chance of successfully bidding for Levelling Up funding under the regeneration and town centre theme. However, there were lots of plans for regeneration in the town centre that were already being progressed under the Redditch Town Deal process. Therefore, Officers were suggesting that a bid should be made in relation to regeneration of Matchborough and Winyates District Centres. A lot of preparatory work and research had already been undertaken in respect of researching potential options for the regeneration of these two district centres and this would help to inform the submission to the Government. By contrast, whilst it was recognised that Woodrow District Centre would also benefit from regeneration, there had been less preparatory work undertaken in respect of this location and for that reason, Officers were not proposing that it should be included in the focus of the bid.

Members subsequently discussed the proposals in the report in detail and in doing so welcomed the suggestion that funding should be allocated the regeneration of Matchborough and Winyates District Centres. Reference was made to the regeneration of Church Hill District Centre some years previously and Members concurred that this had been successful and had had a positive impact in the local community. However, Members commented that the regeneration of Matchborough and Winyates District Centres would be more complex to achieve, particularly in Winyates, where there was a mixture of businesses, Council houses and owner-occupied properties in the district centre. Officers acknowledged the complexity of the issues in this instance and confirmed that consultation would need to be undertaken with interested local stakeholders as part of the process.

Questions were raised about the timeframes in which the regeneration work in the district centres could commence and be

Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28th June, 2022

completed, should the bid be successful. Officers explained that, at the date of the meeting, there was some uncertainty about when the Government would make a decision about the bid. However, successful Councils would be required to complete expenditure by the close of 2025, although it was recognised that not all tasks would have been completed by this point. Should the Council's bid be successful, more detailed plans would be presented for Members' consideration on the proposals later in the 2022/23 municipal year.

During consideration of this item, Members commented that the regeneration of Matchborough and Winyates District Centres had the potential to transform the local community in a positive manner. Unfortunately, instances of Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) in the district centres had been reported to Members by the public and Members commented that it was important to address this, including through urban design and management of the local environment. Officers explained that there were various options available to Councils that could be adopted to help design out crime, as well as the fear of crime, and this could be taken into account as part of the regeneration process. Reference was also made to the positive impact that Safer Streets funding had already had in Woodrow District Centre and Members commented on the potential for this to be extended to Matchborough and Winyates District Centres as part of the regeneration plans.

In concluding the discussions, Members thanked Officers for their work preparing the bid for Levelling Up funding in the second phase of the scheme.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Executive Committee endorse this report and give delegated authority to the Executive Director for Resources (S151 Officer) and the Head of NWEDR (Senior Responsible Owner), following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships, to submit a Levelling Up Fund bid, as detailed in the report;**

RECOMMENDED that

- 2) the Executive Committee recommends to Council a match funding contribution of 10% of the total bid value up to £2 million; and**
- 3) should the submitted LUF Bid be successful, that Executive Committee recommends to Council the allocation of 10% of the total bid value in the Capital Programme.**

Executive
Committee

Tuesday, 28th June, 2022

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 7.22 pm