

additional papers 1

Executive Committee

Monday 20th February
2012

7.05pm (or at the
adjournment of the
meeting of the Council)

Council Chamber
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Access to Information - Your Rights

The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 widened the rights of press and public to attend Local Authority meetings and to see certain documents. Recently the Freedom of Information Act 2000, has further broadened these rights, and limited exemptions under the 1985 Act.

Your main rights are set out below:-

- Automatic right to attend all Council and Committee meetings unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Automatic right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect minutes of the Council and its Committees (or summaries of business undertaken in private) for up to six years following a meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect lists of background papers used in the preparation of public reports.
- Access, upon request, to the background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.
- Access to a public register stating the names and addresses and electoral areas of all Councillors with details of the membership of all Committees etc.
- A reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports relating to items to be considered in public must be made available to the public attending meetings of the Council and its Committees etc.
- Access to a list specifying those powers which the Council has delegated to its Officers indicating also the titles of the Officers concerned.
- Access to a summary of the rights of the public to attend meetings of the Council and its Committees etc. and to inspect and copy documents.
- In addition, the public now has a right to be present when the Council determines “Key Decisions” unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Unless otherwise stated, all items of business before the Executive Committee are Key Decisions.
- (Copies of Agenda Lists are published in advance of the meetings on the Council’s Website:
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

If you have any queries on this Agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of the above rights of access to information, please contact

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Minicom: 595528

Welcome to today's meeting.

Guidance for the Public

Agenda Papers

The **Agenda List** at the front of the Agenda summarises the issues to be discussed and is followed by the Officers' full supporting **Reports**.

Chair

The Chair is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting. Generally to one side of the Chair is the Committee Support Officer who gives advice on the proper conduct of the meeting and ensures that the debate and the decisions are properly recorded. On the Chair's other side are the relevant Council Officers. The Councillors ("Members") of the Committee occupy the remaining seats around the table.

Running Order

Items will normally be taken in the order printed but, in particular circumstances, the Chair may agree to vary the order.

Refreshments : tea, coffee and water are normally available at meetings - please serve yourself.

Decisions

Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Councillors** who are the democratically elected representatives. They are advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals and do not have a vote.

Members of the Public

Members of the public may, by prior arrangement, speak at meetings of the Council or its Committees. Specific procedures exist for Appeals Hearings or for meetings involving Licence or Planning Applications. For further information on this point, please speak to the Committee Support Officer.

Special Arrangements

If you have any particular needs, please contact the Committee Support Officer.

Infra-red devices for the hearing impaired are available on request at the meeting. Other facilities may require prior arrangement.

Further Information

If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Support Officer (see foot of page opposite).

Fire/ Emergency instructions

If the alarm is sounded, please leave the building by the nearest available exit – these are clearly indicated within all the Committee Rooms.

If you discover a fire, inform a member of staff or operate the nearest alarm call point (wall mounted red rectangular box). In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately following the fire exit signs. Officers have been appointed with responsibility to ensure that all visitors are escorted from the building.

Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do Not use lifts.

Do Not re-enter the building until told to do so.

The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.

Declaration of Interests: Guidance for Councillors

DO I HAVE A "PERSONAL INTEREST" ?

- Where the item relates or is likely to affect your **registered interests** (what you have declared on the formal Register of Interests)

OR

- Where a decision in relation to the item might reasonably be regarded as affecting **your own** well-being or financial position, or that of your **family**, or your **close associates** more than most other people affected by the issue,

you have a personal interest.

WHAT MUST I DO? **Declare the existence, and nature, of your interest and stay**

- The declaration must relate to specific business being decided - a general scattergun approach is not needed
- **Exception** - where interest arises only because of your membership of another **public body**, there is no need to declare unless you **speak** on the matter.
- You **can vote** on the matter.

IS IT A "PREJUDICIAL INTEREST" ?

In general only if:-

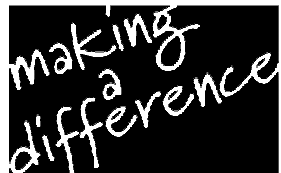
- It is a personal interest **and**
- The item affects your **financial position** (or conveys other benefits), or the position of your **family, close associates** or bodies through which you have a **registered interest** (or relates to the exercise of **regulatory functions** in relation to these groups)

and

- A member of public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably believe the interest was likely to **prejudice** your judgement of the public interest.

WHAT MUST I DO? **Declare and Withdraw**

BUT you may make representations to the meeting before withdrawing, **if** the public have similar rights (such as the right to speak at Planning Committee).



Executive

Committee

20th February 2012

7.05 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

**5. Initial Estimates Report
2012/13, 2012/14 and
2014/15**

(Pages 59 - 60)

Exec Director (Finance and
Corporate Resources)

Additional information from the Overview and Scrutiny
Committee held on 14th February 2012 in respect of the
HRA Initial Estimates.

(Extract from minutes attached)

All Wards;



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 14th February, 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Phil Mould (Chair), Councillor Mark Shurmer (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Peter Anderson, Andrew Brazier, Simon Chalk, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Gay Hopkins and Brenda Quinney

Also present:

A Scarce

Officers:

S Hanley, T Kristunas, S Morgan and S Skinner.

Overview and Scrutiny Support Officers:

J Bayley and M Craggs

EXTRACT FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY MINUTES - MINUTE 168

HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT 2012/13

The Committee received the Housing Revenue Account Initial Estimates for 2012/13. Reference was also made to the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 31st January 2012, which detailed the Committee's recommendations on the subject.

The Housing Revenue Account (HRA) Initial Estimates were designed to set the budget for the HRA for the following year. In previous years the Council had paid £6.8 million to the government due to the local authority being in a negative subsidy position. This housing subsidy process would cease in March 2012 and the Council would no longer need to make these payments.

The process for rent setting had also been reviewed in the report. Local authorities were increasingly being urged to secure rent convergence with the social housing sector by 2015/16. As part of this process similar rents would be charged for similar properties. The rents charged by the Council were due to increase by seven

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Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 14th February, 2012

per cent in line with government guidelines and the average rent would be increasing from £72.82 to £79.90 on a 48 week basis.

There were concerns amongst Members that some tenants would struggle to pay these increased rents. However, Officers advised that significant adjustments would need to be made to the figures if the rents were to be increased at a lower rate.

An assumption had been made that there would be a limited increase in the number of residents who would request to purchase their Council house under the Right to Buy scheme. In recent years the number of properties sold to tenants under Right to Buy had stabilised at an average of five properties per annum. In the current economic environment many tenants were struggling to obtain mortgages and it was anticipated that this would continue to be a problem for the foreseeable future.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the draft 2012/13 Estimates for the Housing Revenue Account, attached to the report at Appendix 1, be approved;**
- 2) the actual average rent increase for 2012/13 be 7 %;**
- 3) £2 million be transferred to a reserve as a Revenue Contribution to Capital to fund the future Capital Programme; and**

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.10 pm