

additional papers 1

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tue 17 Apr
2012
7.00 pm

Committee Room 3
Town Hall
Redditch



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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.

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Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do Not use lifts.

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

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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).



Overview and Scrutiny

Tuesday, 17th April, 2012

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Committee

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs: Phil Mould (Chair) Bill Hartnett
Mark Shurmer (Vice-Chair) Gay Hopkins
Peter Anderson Brenda Quinney
Andrew Brazier Alan Mason
Simon Chalk Luke Stephens
Andrew Fry

<p>3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 10)</p>	<p>To confirm the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a correct record.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>10. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Forward Plan (Pages 11 - 16)</p>	<p>To consider the minutes of the latest meeting(s) of the Executive Committee and also to consider whether any items on the Forward Plan are suitable for scrutiny.</p> <p>(Minutes attached and Forward Plan to follow).</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>14. Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel - Chair's Update (Pages 17 - 18) Councillor Bill Hartnett</p>	<p>To receive a report from the Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel on any further developments in the work of the Panel that may have occurred since the previous meeting of the Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached).</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 2nd April, 2012

MINUTES

Present:

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

Also Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy

Officers:

H Broughton, R Dunne, D Hancox, S Horrobin, A Morris, J Pickering, G Revans, I Roberts

Committee Services Officer:

J Bayley and M Craggs

196. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received from Councillors Luke Stephens and Andy Fry.

197. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

198. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the Committee meeting held on Tuesday 6th March 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 2nd April, 2012

**199. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORT - PORTFOLIO FOR
COMMUNITY LEADERSHIP AND PARTNERSHIP -
COUNCILLOR CAROLE GANDY**

Further to consideration of the Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership's written report at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6th March 2012 and Members' agreed questions that were based on the report, Portfolio Holder Councillor Carole Gandy provided the following responses as part of her annual report.

- 1) As Portfolio Holder, what are you planning to do to help ensure that the Redditch Partnership remains adequately funded in future?

The Committee heard that the Redditch Partnership required an inconsiderable sum of money to help ensure it remained adequately funded. It already held a small amount of money in reserve. Members heard that the Partnership could turn to its partners in the event of needing greater funding, however this scenario was considered unlikely.

Members felt that the most significant issue relating to funding was to ensure that the permanent post of Redditch Partnership Manager continued to be fully funded.

- 2) Are there any plans to widen the successful use of focus group exercises, such as the Budget Jury, to provide direct public feedback to other areas of Council policy?

Members were advised that plans were being developed to hold a number of consultation events in the coming months on specific areas of Council business. This included an event to be held in the town centre in May 2012 to discuss the future of leisure services for young people. Plans were also in place to consult with young people at the Morton Stanley Festival in August.

Questions relating specifically to Redditch were now being included within the *Worcestershire Viewpoint* surveys. This had helped the Council to gather direct feedback regarding its services from residents in every Borough in the town.

Regarding the Budget Jury itself, the Committee was informed that it had successfully engaged more residents during 2011/12 than compared to previous years. The

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Monday, 2nd April, 2012

Council was continuing to invite more residents to become involved in the process. It was hoped that a Budget Jury session would be held to obtain residents' thoughts about the Council's landscaping plans.

- 3) Is there any flexibility for increasing the maximum size of a voluntary sector grant if, in particular instances, this increase could likely benefit a significant number of people?

As part of the *Stronger Communities Grant*, local voluntary and community groups are invited to bid for up to £500 to support local community initiatives. This is administered on a quarterly basis. Members were advised that any organisation / group that submitted a bid in excess of £500 would be informed that their bid did not meet the criteria for the grant.

In this event, the organisation / group could expect to be contacted by Council Officers who would provide a number of options, including an option to re-submit a new bid under the £500 limit. Officers could also either refer them to an alternative pot of funding or grant process at the Council. However, the Council would not be flexible in terms of increasing the £500 limit for applications to the *Stronger Communities Grant*. Members expressed their support for this policy.

The Committee also heard that the Council had received a number of funding applications from residents for holding local street parties to celebrate the Queen's Diamond Jubilee through the *Stronger Communities Grant* process. An article was to be submitted in the local newspapers to help clarify the bidding process.

- 4) Are there any plans to re-introduce the register of activities document which informs residents of what local community activities and events are to be held and whom they can contact to obtain more information?

Members heard that there were no plans to re-introduce this document due to the high costs involved with producing printed publications. Furthermore it was suggested that since production of the booklet was discontinued in the 1990s, a far greater percentage of people now preferred to access documentation online, especially through popular search engines such as *Google*. It was also commented that it is far easier to update information that is electronic.

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It was therefore felt that it was more appropriate for the Council to promote and publicise its activities predominantly via the internet.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked the Portfolio Holder for her report.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

200. APRIL - DECEMBER (QUARTER 3) FINANCE MONITORING REPORT 2011/12

The Committee considered the third quarter finance monitoring report for 2011/12.

Further to the information provided, Members heard the Council was budgeting for a further 21% cut in funding that was expected to be imposed by Government for 2014 – 2016 on top of the current cuts.

The Committee returned a number of comments and requested clarification on certain figures contained within the report. In particular, Members were advised that there were no forecasted under-spends for the final quarter four figures despite a number appearing in some areas for quarter three.

Concern was expressed that the Council's borrowing figures appeared to be too high – especially in the event of interest rate rises. However, Members were reassured that the Council maintained tight control of its borrowing. Officers agreed to provide more detailed information on this matter at the next meeting of the Committee.

Members expressed disappointment that the Kingfisher Shopping Centre had refused to contribute to the Christmas Lights for 2010/11 and 2011/12. Officers were encouraged to request that the centre reconsider its decision.

Finally, it was clarified that the actual spend from April to December 2011 for the Leisure and Cultural Services department should correctly read £2561k as opposed to the figure of £3435k which had been included within the report.

RESOLVED that

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 2nd April, 2012

- 1) the Committee receive a report regarding the Council's financial borrowing position at its next meeting on Tuesday 17th April 2012; and
- 2) the report be noted.

201. CORPORATE PERFORMANCE REPORT (QUARTER 3) PERIOD ENDING 31ST DECEMBER 2011

The Committee considered the third quarter corporate performance report for 2011/12.

Members heard that a reduction in the number of performance indicators enabled Officers to focus on the areas that were most important to the Council. The number of performance indicators had been reduced with the impending transformation process in mind. It was explained that the way in which the Council measured its own performance would change considerably from 2012/13 onwards. It was expected that the introduction of capability charts would enable Officers to react to changes in performance much more quickly.

Of the two main areas of relative concern referred to within the report, Members expressed concern that the recent change in legislation to pay housing benefits directly to the applicant rather than the landlord would create many problems for both parties involved. It was therefore suggested that the Council submit an open letter to the Government to express its concern about these changes. Members felt that the Council must continue to focus on providing assistance to tenants who are in receipt of housing benefits.

Regarding the other area of relative concern, Officers noted the suggestion that it was more important that the Council pay its invoices directly rather than concentrating on paying these within a target of 30 days.

RECOMMENDED that

the Council issue an open letter to the Government expressing its concern with the recent changes to housing benefits, especially concerning its direct payment to the applicant and not the landlord; and

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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202. INCREASING RECYCLING RATES REVIEW - FINAL REPORT

Councillor Gay Hopkins, Chair of the Increasing Rates of Recycling Review, provided the Committee with a presentation which summarised what Members of the Task Group had done during the review, what they had found, and what they proposed by way of their final recommendations.

It was reported to the Committee that through the introduction of the *100% Project* in 2007, many more properties in Redditch now had recycling facilities. Presently only 3.6% of properties in the town did not have a regular recycling collection service. It was also reported that it was costing the Council approximately £93,000 per year to unnecessarily provide residents with new or replacement grey bins. The need to tackle this problem was reflected in recommendation 6(c) of the final report.

Members heard that Councillor Anthony Blagg, Worcestershire County Council Cabinet Member with Responsibility for Environment and Waste Management, had recently accepted the Group's request that the Borough Council be moved up to the top of the waiting list for the recycling of street sweepings. It was expected that this would significantly help to increase the Council's recycling rates.

Councillor Hopkins thanked the Officers who had supported the group during the review and felt that overall it had been a very successful exercise.

The Committee returned a number of comments on the report and recommendations. In terms of reducing the number of new or replacement grey bins being issued to residents, Members queried whether a new bin identification system could be introduced. Officers explained that a number of options were being considered, however the installation of electronic chips in grey bins had previously been problematic.

Members were pleased to hear that the waste collection crews the group had spoken to were very enthusiastic about recycling. It was thought that the operations at the Crossgates Depot had considerably improved during the previous year.

In relation to recommendation 6 (a), it was felt that clarification was required in terms of to whom the waste collection crews should feedback to. It was subsequently suggested that the wording 'to management' be inserted into the recommendation to make this clearer.

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It was also suggested that Officers investigate the percentage of the larger green bins that are actually filled with recyclable waste. This could help establish the optimum number of large green bins that the Council needed to issue to residents.

RECOMMENDED that

further to the wording 'to management' being inserted into recommendation 6(a), all of the final recommendations of the review be approved.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

203. DRAFT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2011/12

The Committee received the draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2010/11 for consideration. The Annual Report was due to be presented at the final full Council meeting of the municipal year on 16th April 2012.

No changes were agreed to the report.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

204. WEST MIDLANDS REGIONAL SCRUTINY NETWORK - UPDATE REPORT

Members received a brief written report which summarised the main points that were made at the West Midlands Regional Scrutiny Network meeting on 8th March 2012.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

205. ACTIONS LIST

There were no updates to report on the outstanding actions.

RESOLVED that

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the report be noted.

206. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE FORWARD PLAN

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 13th March 2012 be noted.

207. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

There were no draft scoping documents for consideration.

208. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee received the following reports in relation to current reviews:

a) Access for Disabled People – Chair, Councillor Alan Mason

Councillor Mason explained that the final report had been approved by group members and was due to be considered by the Committee at its next meeting. The group had considered proposing that a review, currently being undertaken by the Law Commission into licensing legislation, should be considered as part of a final recommendation as the definition of an adapted vehicle remained to be confirmed. However, the review by the Law Commission was focusing more generally on all forms of licensing legislation and it had therefore not been considered relevant to the review though might be of interest to the Licensing Committee in due course.

A letter had been sent to the Chief Executive of the Alexandra Hospital regarding disabled parking arrangements in February. The Chair had recently received a response to this letter which had confirmed that the Acute Hospital's NHS Trust's board was in the process of reviewing the hospital's concession policy to ensure that patients experiencing the greatest financial hardship would receive some support towards the costs.

b) Improving Recycling – Chair, Councillor Gay Hopkins

There was no update as the final report had already been considered by the Committee.

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c) Promoting Sporting Participation – Chair, Councillor Luke Stephens

The group had recently agreed a number of draft recommendations. Members were now focused on obtaining more evidence until the conclusion of the review to support these recommendations.

d) Youth Services Provision – Chair, Councillor Simon Chalk

Members heard that the final report was almost completed and would be considered by the Committee at its next meeting on 17th April 2012.

RESOLVED that

the update reports be noted.

209. HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Quinney provided a verbal update on the recent work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC).

Members heard that the HOSC had recently been focusing on the quality of elderly care across the county. A number of national reports on the subject had been developed, most notably by the Care Quality Commission (CQC), and were available to download.

The role of Health and Wellbeing Boards, which were due to be fully functioning by 2013, was also discussed. A conference was due to be held in London on 23rd April to discuss their ongoing development.

The HOSC was continuing to review the most appropriate location of a new Stroke service for the county and also proposed changes to ambulance services in Worcestershire.

Finally, the HOSC was to receive a presentation on proposed new dental services at its next meeting on 17th April 2012.

Following the update, Members expressed concern that a number of foreign doctors and nurses were struggling to communicate effectively to their patients in English. Members felt that this was a potentially dangerous situation and requested that Councillor Quinney raise this concern at a forthcoming meeting of the HOSC.

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RESOLVED that
the report be noted.

210. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

211. WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that
the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.05 pm



Executive Committee

3rd April 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), Councillor Michael Braley (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Malcolm Hall and Derek Taylor

Also Present:

Councillors Peter Anderson, Andrew Brazier, David Bush, Roger Hill, Gay Hopkins, Brenda Quinney

Officers:

M Craggs, K Dicks, C Flanagan and G Revans

Committee Services Officer:

D Sunman

202. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Debbie Taylor and Jinny Pearce.

203. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

204. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair advised that the following item of business, scheduled on the Forward Plan to be dealt with at this meeting, had been rescheduled to a later meeting of the Committee:

- Concessionary Rents Policy

She also advised that she had accepted the following item as Urgent Business:

- Increasing Rates of Recycling Review – Final Report

(Not on the Forward Plan for this meeting)

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Chair

205. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 13th March 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

206. INCREASING RATES OF RECYCLING REVIEW - FINAL REPORT

The Committee received the final report of the Increasing Rates of Recycling Review Task and Finish Group, The Chair of the group, Councillor Gay Hopkins, gave a presentation on the findings of the review.

In particular, she highlighted how the group gathered information, which included visits to:

- EnviroSort to see how recyclable waste is processed;
- Various sites across the town to see how the Council had made it easier for people to recycle as part of the 100% Project; and
- A number of Bring Bank sites across the town.

The group had also gone out with crews to collect waste from both grey and green bins.

The group's findings included:

- Many people in Redditch are already keen recyclers but were not aware that larger or additional green bins could be provided on request without charge;
- Many residents were uncertain about what could be recycled and more examples should be available to show how recyclable waste is used;
- Identification of areas where the most and least recycling had been collected to target future work to increase recycling;
- The waste collection crews were very enthusiastic about helping to increase recycling;

- The unnecessary cost incurred in providing additional grey bins on request; and
- The increase in street sweepings which had reduced the Council's overall recycling rates.

Members noted that in some areas of Redditch, e.g Smallwood and Mount Pleasant, rates of recycling might be lower because of the type of property and narrowness of roads in those areas.

The Committee thanked the members of the Increasing Rates of Recycling Review Task Group, and the Officers involved its production, for their excellent report.

RESOLVED that

the recommendations of the Increasing Rates of Recycling Review be approved as follows

1. WORKING WITH THE MEDIA

- a) A media strategy be developed to help forge a close working relationship with the local media to publicise what can be recycled, illustrate how recycled waste is eventually reused, and to explain the importance of reducing waste – for example through the *Love Food Hate Waste* campaign;**
- b) Press releases are issued to the local media on a regular basis to remind residents that they can have an extra or larger green bin at no charge; and**
- c) The Council work with the local media to publicise its new approach to collect waste from grey bins from all districts in the Borough one week, and to collect from all green bins the next when this is introduced in 2012/13 as part of the 'route optimisation' work.**

2. GENERAL PUBLICITY

- a) As part of the Council's regular recycling campaign, that images be displayed of items made 100% from recycled products on the Council's fleet of waste collection vehicles to publicise what happens to recycling and to reassure residents that recycling is worthwhile; and**

- b) A new sticker be produced that can be placed on bins with excess recyclables to inform residents that they can have an extra or larger green bin at no charge.

3. CAPTURING AND UTILISING WASTE DATA

- a) Maps which illustrate tonnage levels for grey bin waste and green bin waste collected by individual areas be produced at regular intervals; and
- b) This information be used to target areas with the lowest recycling rates with publicity and awareness raising activities to promote waste minimisation and recycling.

4. ENGAGING WITH MINORITY ETHNIC AND TRANSIENT COMMUNITIES

- a) The Council engages with groups and forums that represent minority ethnic communities in Redditch to help inform more residents from these communities about recycling;
- b) The Council work with the local education authority to further promote the benefits of recycling in schools, especially in those areas identified by the recycling maps as having the lowest rates in Redditch; and
- c) The Council work closely with local landlord groups, representatives and the Council's Tenancy team, to communicate information about recycling and waste minimisation to transient communities within Redditch.

5. RAISING MEMBERS AWARENESS

A Members Information Session be arranged to inform Members of the new 'route optimisation' approach to collecting recyclable and non-recyclable waste in Redditch and Bromsgrove, and at the same time, to receive a general overview of the waste collection service, including information on the EnviroSort facility.

6. OPERATIONAL

- a) The waste collection crews be encouraged to feedback any concerns to management when collecting from the grey or green bins, including

identifying any specific areas that do not appear to be recycling properly, so that improvements quickly can be made;

- b) The waste collection crews be empowered to swiftly resolve recycling/general waste issues for residents where this is possible;
- c) The Council should look to address the problem of residents requesting extra grey bins; and
- d) The Council consider introducing dual purpose litter bins outside retail outlets, especially in public parks and local centres.

**7. IMPLEMENTATING AND MONITORING
RECOMMENDATIONS**

That Officers develop and implementation plan, including financial considerations, to deliver the report's recommendations and update the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on progress made within six months of the report's endorsement.

207. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6th March 2012. It was noted that there were no recommendations to consider.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6th March be received and noted,

208. WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICE JOINT COMMITTEE - MINUTES

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee held on 23rd February 2012.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

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

There were no minutes or referrals to consider under this item.

Executive

Committee

3rd April 2012

210. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members considered and noted the latest version of the report on the activity of the Council's Advisory Panels and similar bodies. It was noted that the last meeting of the Grants Panel.

211. ACTION MONITORING

Members considered and noted the most recent version of the Committee's Action report.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.05 pm

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Chair

**Report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Chair's Report of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel meeting, 11th
April 2012.**

The Panel received apologies from Cllr Anita Clayton, Cllr Sheila Blagg from the West Mercia Police Authority, and Phil Griffiths from the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Fire Service.

The main agenda item was the **Annual Report of the Chair of the Community Safety Partnership**, delivered by Sue Hanley. This was essentially a response to three questions the Panel had submitted to her in advance of the meeting.

The first question concerned the valuable work of Victim Support and asked what the Partnership has done and is doing to raise the awareness of the scheme in Redditch.

The meeting was advised that Victim Support is a national independent charity run by paid staff and volunteers which provides support to victims and witnesses of crime. The Victim Support office in Redditch is now structured locally as part of North Worcestershire Victim Support. We were advised that all victims of personal crime are referred to this service. Victims of the most serious cases are contacted within 48 hours.

Victim Support also operates a witness support service in every criminal court. They support the witnesses by explaining what they can expect during the trial and can arrange pre trial visits to the court, if appropriate, to help put them at greater ease. They also provide support after the trial if this is required.

The Community Safety Partnership works closely with Victim Support on a number of projects, including the Home Security Project which offers support to victims of domestic burglary and attempted burglary. Victim Support is also a key partner in the Joint Hate Incident Partnership, making and receiving referrals from victims of hate crime or incidents.

The Panel was very impressed by this valuable service that Victim Support offers and were reassured that the Community Safety Partnership also value their work.

The second question regarded the Community Payback Scheme (formally known as Community Service). The Panel wanted to know how the Partnership was helping to expand, improve and further publicise this scheme.

It was explained that the scheme is managed by the Probation Trust who are now working towards a cost neutral model which prioritises projects that cover the costs of the supervisor's salary and fuel costs. The average cost is approximately £150 per project but can be met through in-kind contributions and match funding.

A Panel Member explained that a neighbouring local authority makes a contribution towards the £150 costs per placement. The Panel felt that this was a good idea and requested that the Community Safety Partnership consider taking similar action. The Chair of the Partnership agreed to feed this back.

The Panel was advised that between Apr 11 and Feb 12, last financial year 8,716 hours of community payback was carried out in Redditch of which some 923 hours

were carried out on behalf of the Borough Council. 3,724 hours of work was undertaken in a variety of places, including: local charity shops; local schools; sports clubs; and local churches. 57 hours of work were also undertaken at local housing associations.

The third and final question asked the Chair of the Partnership to explain what benefits she expects the Partnership and Redditch in general will accrue after two members of the Community Safety Team were recently trained to become specialist advisors on crime prevention. It was reported that specialist crime prevention advice was now being offered to organisation such as our own depot, Sure Start centres and other community buildings.

The Panel heard that this has resulted in improved expertise within the Borough Council and greater links with development control and planning services, embedding crime reduction and community safety principals from the outset at pre application stage and greater liaison and guidance available to developers. However, it was explained that the Officers cannot be called on as a statutory consultee in planning applications as this remains the function of the Police Architectural Liaison Officer.

The Chair of the Partnership was asked to report back the Panel's view that consideration should be given to opening discussions with West Mercia Police with a view to allowing these two officers to become statutory consultees - even if only on a trial basis - as they are trained, have received the required certification and are clearly very capable. The Chair agreed to take this back to the Partnership.

Other Matters

The Panel considered the Partnership's third quarter performance tables. Generally crime figures were stable or had reduced. However, there had been increases in incidents of domestic burglary, criminal damage, and serious acquisitive crime compared to the third quarter last year. However, the Panel would remind Members that West Mercia is still a low crime area.

For its end of year review, the Panel discussed the work which it had carried out over the past year. It was agreed that we had met our main objective of scrutinising the Partnership. The Panel had also acted as a vehicle for passing information to and from the Partnership and had brought items to the attention of the wider Redditch population through its coverage in the local press. The Panel did not wish to change its method of operation and felt it should continue.

Finally, the Chair of the Partnership commented that the Partnership was very appreciative of the Panel's work.

W. Hartnett
Chair, Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel
11th April 2012