

additional papers 1

Council

Mon 6 Apr
2009
7.00 pm

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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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 the Ringway Car Park.

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).



Council

6 April 2009

7.00 PM

Council Chamber Town Hall

**8. Budget Savings 2009/10 -
2011/12 – Appendix 2**

Chief Executive
(Pages 85 - 134)

Summary of consultation responses.

(Appendix 2 attached)

All Wards

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

STAFF RESPONSES

REF	SUBJECT	SUGGESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE
1.	Firework display	Charge entrance fee	Charging for this event has already been reviewed in recent years and would actually see the cost of the event increase. The need for fencing to ensure everyone pays, install cashiers and pay points, security and audit purposes significantly increase the required budget to run the event. The site is also situated in a park land of 900 acres and so residents could stand outside of the performance space or on the mound and still enjoy the firework show without paying. This was reviewed as part of previous strategies. We have even tried a donation system and the return was extremely minimal. This event is run as a community safety event We will of course examine all avenues with alternative operators
1.	Countryside Centre	Promote facility to generate income	This will be a major consideration as part of the forthcoming review on the Countryside Centre. The centre is advertised within the budget available which is small and the team at site engage as much editorial as possible from the local papers and magazines.
6.	Countryside Centre	Cafe is badly run & could be improved	This will be a major consideration as part of the forthcoming review on the Countryside Centre and Forge Mill.
9.	Arrow Valley Park & Centre	Would be a shame to lose the Centre - best thing about Redditch.	This comment has been noted.

<p>19.</p>	<p>AVCC Duty Manager post</p>	<p>Opposed to proposed dissolution of Duty Managers post. There is a requirement for this job position to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective day to day running of the centre • ensure H&S standards • supervision/development of staff • secure grant funding • marketing/promotion • plan and deliver program of events etc • liaison with partners and park users groups 	<p>Thank you for comments and observations concerning the proposed deletion of the Duty Managers position at the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre, as indicated in the options for the 2009/10 budget strategy.</p> <p>You have made several comments, and I would like to take this opportunity to offer the following response.</p> <p>I can confirm that the existing vacant post of Duty Manager is the post indicated in the proposal for a potential saving in the budget strategy.</p> <p>The rationale for the proposal, is the length of time the service has operated with no permanent appointment to the position and without any detriment to the operation. This will have no impact on existing substantive terms and conditions and the projected saving will be achieved without effecting the current operation significantly.</p> <p>Due to the Budget Strategy there is a need to complete a review of the Countryside Centre during 2009/10 year. The exact timescale of this review have yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>Through conversations with line managers pending the outcome of a review, there is obviously a need for a Duty Manager presence at the site and this will be addressed as part of this review process.</p> <p>I believe that your line Manager, has spoken to you on this matter and has confirmed the following.</p> <p>In the absence of a management presence, he requires you to continue in your acting up role, but to 100% and not the 80% of the duties you that currently undertake. You confirmed that you</p>
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			<p>are happy to continue to 100% of the role and this will be implemented as swiftly as possible.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to feedback on the Budget Strategy proposals, and if you need to make any enquiries in relation to this matter, please contact Line Manager in the first instance.</p>
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2.	Forge Mill/AVC	Need to have a brief from Members on what trying to achieving from a review of these services, e.g. how much want to reduce budget deficit on each service; when review should be completed; when new arrangements should commence; main aims/outputs for each of the sites; are they supportive of both options to retain services in house as well as potential outsourcing	An initial meeting has been held with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder on the scope and ambitions of the review. Staff to be briefed.
6.	Forge Mill	Do more with heritage aspect & Hire out as a venue	<p>The majority of events are run in-house by RBC. The events programme has significantly increased over the last two years, with attendances to the Museum increasing by 50%. 74 events were run through the museum and Countryside Centre</p> <p>We currently hire part of the facility for wakes, 'ghost' walks, wedding photos etc We also hire the facility to external companies who do outdoor productions/plays</p> <p>There are also regular group bookings such as the Women's Institute and group bookings/coach tours from all over the Country throughout the year. To do anything more involved would involve investment into catering facilities/ wedding co-ordinators</p> <p>Included in the Budget Strategy were bids for revenue funding to extend the contract of the Heritage Access Officer. The Museum displays Needles and Fishing items which is what Redditch is renowned for. The Bordesley Abbey site is Redditch's prime Heritage site and we are submitting a Heritage Lottery Bid to carry out an interpretation project on Bordesley Meadows</p>

12	Forge Mill meeting room	<p>Promotion re meeting place after funerals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The lack of an alcohol license- most people even if the main mourner or deceased refrained like to meet at a place where there is a choice of beverages so to celebrate and or lighten the occasion. • The lack of available menu options when requested – one funeral director had requested this information for a pack that is put together for this purpose. I.e. function facilities. • Finally they (inc. countryside centre) are not recognised as being facilities for such an event, and as with most things relating to funerals there is an habit mentality, or facilities are suggested by people who may have a vested interest i.e. partnerships or locally formed agreements within private sector. Therefore additional promotion of the rooms and what’s on offer could provide greater use. Maybe even an open day for funeral directors?? 	<p>We have worked with local undertakers to offer a low key venue for wakes. We are going to expand this to include provision of alcohol and catering. Officers are going to attend a licensee course. When this is in place it will be advertised. However, it will always be low key due to the size of the room and the fact that the facilities cannot compete with hotels/pubs etc.</p>
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1.	Business Rates	Business Rates Supplement Bill to support EDU - can RBC benefit from this & links to 'Enterprise' priority	The supplementary business rate option is only available to upper tier authorities such as county councils.
3.	HRA Savings	Can any savings made in the HRA be used to offset the overall budget shortfall?	The HRA is a ring-fenced account and cannot therefore be used to support the General Fund.
5.	Buy Back Scheme	Renegotiate on price to get a better deal	<p>These buy backs are to replace the units taken from general housing stock to provide temporary accommodation when RBCs hostel at Upper Norgrove.</p> <p>The properties were inspected by our Valuers and by the Housing Service before we made offers to buy them to ensure that the costs of buying the property and bringing it up to a Decent Homes standard were not disproportionate. I understand that all the relevant Officers are satisfied that the properties represent Value for Money.</p> <p>My understanding is also that we have been looking for properties that require a minimum level of work to bring them up to standard so that they can be in use as soon as possible after we have bought them.</p>
17.	Shopmobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should charge for service - including parking ticket. Whether this be a registration fee, per use, paying for parking. To ensure the service is income generating and continues. Hold a Charity Flag day (one was held in early 1980s when service began which council staff helped with). This could be reinstated. 	We still do organise a flag day each year, we are about to undertake a full service / business case review for this service area which will include options for applying a charge for service and in discussion with Kingfisher the options regarding charging for parking.
3.	Shopmobility	£26k cut from Kingfisher Centre - this amount was required to retain service at its current level	Please refer to response at item17 above
6.	Shopmobility	What do other Councils do? Do they need to be such expensive wheelchairs. It shouldn't attract a profit but should be self financing.	Please refer to response at item 17 above.

4 & 15.	Car parking charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why not charge elsewhere ie MSP, Abbey Stadium, FM&BA. Could refund ticket if using the leisure centre or museum. • District Centres - shoppers parking is abused by 'long term stays' which doesn't encourage use of local shops (particularly Evesham Road, Batchley Road and Poplar Road). If not politically acceptable to charge, why not impose restrictions ie "1 max hour" and fine overstayers. Not only will this generate a bit more income but improve viability of dereg parking scheme and make the traffic wardens' profile better. 	<p>A consultant has carried out a feasibility study of car parks around the borough and the potential for charging and identified the prime sites for initial consideration and other sites were considered not to be economically viable. However if the car parking charges scheme is adopted, the intention would be to monitor the success of the scheme and possibly consider further sites.</p> <p><u>Abbey Stadium, Forge Mill & Bordesley Abbey</u> The problem is there would be minimal income as the majority of people parking are users and we would therefore be refunding them anyway.</p> <p><u>Abbey Stadium</u> Only potential income generator is Sunday mornings for the car boot sale which may be difficult to enforce</p>
6.	Dial A Ride	Seems to be an expensive drain on resources. Who actually uses it? Don't they have access to cars/public transport/ taxis? ... mobility benefits are to pay for 'mobility'	We are about to undertake a full service / business case review for this service area.
7.	Dial-a-Ride	Sell 'advertising' space on the back of the buses to local businesses	Please refer to response at item 6 above.
6.	Palace	Sometimes empty mid week - more 2 for 1 offers. Make the Council appear as a 'caring council & thinking of residents in economic climate'	This is something that has been discussed with the team and how to implement into the Point of Sale process and is worth further investigation
8.	Staff pay	Has the council budgeted for any pay increases/ legal challenges re equal pay claims? Has money been budgeted for single status? What is the risk re single status. If none does the council see single status as an opportunity to save monies and if so, how much?	

11.	Emergency Planning	Whilst working for BDC I was involved with Andy Coel & Jayne Burton in emergency resource planning & completed the emergency resource centre management course. I was unable to continue with them when I moved to RBC due to insurance issues but RBC seem not to have a similar policy in force. It would make sense to join forces, particularly as both districts are likely to be affected by most emergency situations, i.e. motorway pile-ups, weather issues etc.	We work in partnership with all Worcestershire district councils and the County Council in the area of emergency planning and continually seek to share resources wherever possible as part of our partnership agreement. We are also working closely with Bromsgrove to explore areas where sharing resources and joint working will benefit both authorities. This issue will be raised as part of those discussions
15	Development site at Oswald Street	Convert land to small car park and install pay and display meter	Please refer to response at item 4.
16.	Property Services	Reduced workload only applies to Right to Buy element of post. Reduce post to part-time, or decreased workload on RTB be covered by 1.5 Property Service Assistants. This allows for a greater saving.	Investigating this as an option
20.	Lifeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a standard installation charge for all new customers as from 1st April 2009. • Introduce an admin charge for all existing customers. 	As part of the current basket there is a requirement for the private sector lifeline to breakeven, therefore the proposals made will need to be introduced to achieve the income.
13.	Leisure facilities	Feels the council has a duty to providing these facilities to the community but do need to ensure they are as cost effective as possible.	The comment has been noted.

10.	Golf Course	Club House could be used for small parties, business meetings, conferences and more (only need a small facelift/refurb)	<p>The club house predominately serves the patrons of the course and has only a limited amount of provision and this has been for the caterer to provide seating space for meals and snacks etc. If other provision was progressed then this would conflict with operating of the base business and interfere with the golfers experience before and after their rounds, as there is no other self contained area to hire.</p> <p>With regards to parties etc this could only take place after the course had closed and then impacts on the local community. The present contract caterer has tried these types of events they led to issues with noise as the pavilion is not set up for this type of event or currently licensed</p>
14	Golf Course	<p>I have a basic knowledge of the golf course and thought with a loss of the golf professional, and assistant the daily bookings could be handled by the catering facility operator on a separate till, thus reducing our basic out goings. I understand this could create some difficulties but with a few minor changes to the building feel a good facility would be saved . On the other side we could invite committee, members of the course to bring in or do themselves some basic lessons to locals, schools, societies for small fees to promote future use of the course.</p>	<p>Members will consider the options. A potential pilot The potential pilot with alternative management arrangements could provide a saving to the Council but will have the potential to raise income through a more targeted approach to marketing. Putting in place a junior academy through the CGP and PGA network and support appropriately.</p> <p>Lessons are required to be carried out by a PGA standard level coach with the updated Criminal Records Bureaux checks in place to be able to work with young people.</p> <p>Without the ability to develop a thriving junior section there is no hope of any long term, sustainability of the course.</p> <p>The current club have committed to support the CGP but are unable to provide the volume of work needed to achieve a long term sustainable solution</p> <p>A review of the catering franchise fees etc will also take place once a final decision on the way forward has been taken</p>
18	Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Very disappointed of proposal to close. Have used this facility and know others use it on a regular basis. 	The comment has been noted.
22	REDI	Pack 'Celebrating 21 years of Delivering Training in the Community'	Noted

IDEAS / SUGGESTIONS BY PUBLIC

REF	SUBJECT	SUGGESTION	RESPONSE
1.	Pitcheroak Golf Club	With the proposed closure of Pitcheroak Golf Club coupled with the stripping out of Pitcheroak Wood I can only conclude that the land is being primed for development. Would you please advise as to how it will be sold, what sized lots and will it be a public or private bidding sale.	The proposal is not to strip out the park, but to return it to public open space. Please be assured that there are no plans to sell the land or develop on the site, and never have been.
2.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	I have been following the developments regarding the municipal golf course on Plymouth Road, Redditch. I thought it might be worth mentioning that if there is any thought of development of the course (though it is doubtful) it should be taken into account that slow worms (<i>Anguis fragilis</i>) are resident in this area.	Please refer to response at item 1.
3.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	The Council owned golf course should be disposed of. There is no reason to keep this since it only caters for a very select proportion of the local population. There is very little evidence to support the argument that the golf course is fully inclusive. If officers say otherwise, then ask them for the proof! You may want to review previous Best Value Review findings and recommendations, since these may help to draw your own conclusions. The Policy Team/Leisure Services should hold these.	The comments have been noted.
4.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	There is no need for a local authority to provide and maintain a golf course, this should be carried out by another body. There are 3 golf courses in a small town, the other 2 are not Council owned and appear to do very well, therefore there is no reason why the other cannot do the same.	The comments have been noted.

5.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	<p>Whilst fully understand the need to save in the current climate, my concern is not that some time in the future the site will be built upon, I would think that if its empty long enough that would eventually be inevitable. My concern is what happens after closure. It's a large open area currently policed by golfers themselves. If the course is closed the whole area effectively becomes a giant park with no vehicular access. Have potential costs of policing this area been taken into account? Not just talking about a few kids messing around noisily at night. Regularly visit AVP and have to negotiate the precautions set up to keep caravans off. How many would fit on to an abandoned golf course? My concern is that we will lose a fantastic local resource. and it will inevitably fall into disrepair unless the council pays for its upkeep and when it is a complete eyesore that is when the decision will be made to sell off the land. I can only think of development as a viable option and as such the houses we are assured will not be built will be built to save us from the terrible eyesore and problem area it has become. Please set my mind at rest and publish details of what will happen to the area if it is closed.</p>	<p>The proposal is not to strip out the park, but to return it to public open space. Please be assured there are no plans to sell the land or develop on the site now or in the future, and never have been.</p>
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<p>6.</p>	<p>Pitcheroak Golf Course</p>	<p>View with deep concern that this facility may close. In a time when world is in financial freefall, its closure may seem a little insignificant. It is a time when the general public will have their minds on other things. Therefore I think it is a time when elected councillors should stand up and be counted. They should protect these facilities from closure, once gone they will never return. The Govt. has I believe helped to the tune of £98k the introduction of free swimming for the elderly in Redditch. Why then can they not help fund another healthy pursuit - golf. I and many others have taken advantage of learning to pay golf at this facility, the young and the old particularly are advantage. It is for them I plead you not to close this course. I am aware the course is loosing £135k, have we by any change, because of concessions forced the course into the "RED"? I understand that there will be an actual saving of only £80k due to the fact that the course would still be maintained as a park area. Surely all the furore over obesity and its inevitable cost should be reason enough to keep this facility open.</p>	<p>Officers have continued to promote the facilities, however, the course has seen an increase in the deficit over the last few years.</p> <p>The Council is considering all options and unfortunately there are no easy decisions to be reached on ensuring a balanced budget.</p> <p>The comments have been noted.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Strongly object to the proposal to close or change the nature of the course in order to expedite savings in RBC's budget. This course is one of the few original remaining Redditch open spaces which defines the character of its neighbourhood and provides a valuable leisure opportunity for a portion of the population who couldn't afford to join a private health club. (Indeed many, in particular young people, would be unlikely to be accepted for membership at such clubs, due to their inability to maintain such things as expensive dress codes).</p>	<p>The Council is considering all options and unfortunately there are no easy decisions to be reached on ensuring a balanced budget.</p> <p>The comments have been noted.</p>

		<p>With increasing levels of unemployment and rising pensioner population, it is vital, in the current climate of the encouragement of healthy exercise, to have an affordable way for everyone who so wishes, to enjoy social/health benefits of golf. Also believe that if the Council were to hand over the running of the course to a private organisation, there would inevitably be a rise in fees which would defeat the arguments outlined above.</p> <p>Re proposal to demolish club house and let the course revert to open public parkland. This would require management to stop area becoming wild and unsafe and has to involve an expense to the Council. At the moment some of these costs must surely be met by the course fees paid by golfers. In addition to the hard work of the Council ground staff, one of the reasons the area is so pleasant is due to the fact that it is a defended area - there is a constant flow of golfers keeping an eye open for anything untoward on the course. Take that away and there is potential for unchecked vandalism and asb. I believe that the Council has a duty to provide affordable leisure facilities such as this course. Look elsewhere to make saving, such as council management infrastructure, where the effects will not be felt at the point of delivery of such facilities to Redditch citizens.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Are the Council aware of how many youngsters use this facility? There are few leisure activities in Redditch as it is and to lose one would mean even less facilities for our kids. The alternative? an increase in unsocial behaviour. Surely the council have some obligation to provide leisure facilities as well as day to day services like bin collection, it can't be an either or. Pitcheroak is a good meeting</p>	<p>See 14 above 1) Yes with a specified coaching level if lessons are to take place. However this can be provided in a different way to at present and is currently under examination with a proposal in place 2) Yes to maintain 45 acres of golf provision, specialist fine turf knowledge is required. The course cannot be managed as standard Public Open Space.</p>

		<p>place to make friends/learn good social skills which will be invaluable in later life. This facility is not just for the kids, all other groups use this facility including the old. It provides affordable golf and should not be confused with local private golf clubs which are out of reach for the working person.</p> <p>Urge the council to explore ways of keeping it open ie</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does it need a full time professional, 2) Does it need a full time grounds man, 3) Does the council have grounds persons in other areas of the council which could be shared with Pitcheroak, 4) Could the course be run by a private concern, hence providing rental income for the council. <p>Not aware of the gross takings from the green fees, however, with the above savings surely this would make the course viable.</p> <p>The council should provide leisure facilities for its residents, why should every area make a profit? Be forward looking, things will not always be this bad. Closing the course will be irreversible and will be looked back as a very bad decision in years to come.</p>	<p>3) This already happens where specialist green keeper knowledge is not required i.e. general mowing and tree maintenance, however at other courses e.g. the Redditch Private course has 4 FTE Green Keepers & 1 Head Green Keeper, where Pitcheroak has only FTE Green Keeper who supplements other areas of Landscape work across the town when required.</p> <p>4) This has been examined in the past and not adopted by the Council. An alternative management arrangements will be considered as part of this current consultation period which could enable an assessment to help make the course more cost effective</p> <p>The closure of the course is only one option for members' consideration. Services that are not statutory will always be inline for potential efficiency savings</p>
9.	Golf Course	<p>Ask the Council not to close the course. This delightful 9 hole course is an ideal municipal pay as you go course which has helped people like myself and my son (from age 9 years) to learn to play and then enjoy the game for many years. I'm sure many others have benefited and hope many more will benefit in future. When enquired for son at other courses which require membership found it very much a "closed shop". You seemed to have to "know someone" and be part of the "in crowd" to</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p>

		<p>be able to be nominated/accepted as a member. The whole atmosphere was “stuffy” and “elitist”. Pitcheroak allows the casual golfer a cheaper and more flexible alternative, whilst still being tough enough for a challenge and it available to everyone.</p> <p>Also the exercise for the oldies.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Fail to understand how you can consider closing this down. It is very popular and much loved facility used by many teenagers and youngsters. It also greatly enhances the surrounding area visually. If you close this down, not only are you depriving the local population of an important resource but what exactly are you going to do with it? If you are going to only continue to provide services which are financially profitable, you may as well shut up shop completely now.</p> <p>Also 3 weeks from this going public to cut off date for comments is quite frankly an insult and yet again smacks of back handedness.</p> <p>No doubt if you decide to turn this into, say, a park, at some point, just like when you closed the schools down, there will be a later, back office decision that perhaps although it was publicly announced that it would never happen, you should sell the land off for building. How profitable then.</p> <p>And I presume that the people in their ivory towers who will no doubt make the decision to close it down, do not live by it and therefore, once it starts to fall into disrepair, and starts to have the same problems as say Morton Stanley, with gangs of youths roaming round, hidden from public gaze, vandalising/drinking, you will be unaffected. Along the whole length of Plymouth Road, the houses that back onto said golf course will be vulnerable</p>	<p>The area is designated public open space.</p>

		<p>to burglars and vandals? Oh but then of course the money you save closing the course, you can spend on providing an extra Community Support Officer to deal with the increase in break ins.</p> <p>I would have expected your website to have easily available links so that you can log on and email regarding this, but you clearly intend to make it as difficult as possible for people to complain.</p>	<p>The home page of the website contains a link to the pages on the consultation and also the link to an email address to send comments.</p>
11.	Golf Course	<p>Lived in Redditch for nearly 38 years and have not visited AVCC, watched the Xmas lights, have been to one bonfire - but have spent many a frustrating day on the golf course. Seems to be a well used amenity which gets lots of older people out and about and gives some people something to do. It seems to me that all the things people want are closed down for savings - surely there must be a different option to closing this golf course. This would seem to be the last municipal course left in Redditch and if it was closed many people would not be able to enjoy this sport - we are constantly being instructed by the Govt etc to be more healthy and by closing this you are taking a real source of exercise away from many people.</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p>
12.	Golf Course	<p>Read with dismay the council decision to consider closing the course, which is over 100 years old and has within it the Redditch Kingfisher Golf Club. The quick win option to close the course is very short sighted. Has the council considered the amount of money needed to decommission the course and the money required to turn the course into a park area? A considerable amount of effort has been put into the course in recent years from both the Redditch Kingfisher Golf Club and the Council. The investment in upgrading a number of tees, health and safety improvements and</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p>

		<p>improved drainage and watering facilities for the greens will all go to waste if the course is closed. Once decision taken to close a facility, it will be virtually impossible to reinstate. A short term decision to save money by closing the course would have long term implications. Concerned that the council is secretly using the proposed closure to add land to its 'green' land bank in the Redditch area. Whilst Pitcheroak is not suitable for housing development, by adding it to the 'open space' land bank this would allow the council to close other 'open space'. When the demand for commercial development returns in the coming years the council would be able to sell off other 'open space' whilst retaining its target for 'open space' in Redditch. The golf course provides a great opportunity for people of all ages and diverse backgrounds to come together and play an ever increasingly accessible sport. Without the provision of a public course in Redditch people would be forced to look outside the Redditch area to play the game and in most instances people would not be able to afford to pay private membership fees. RBC is trying to encourage people to become more active, a decision to close the course would have a detrimental effect on this drive. A significant number of young/old people play golf at the course and removing it would have a terrible impact.</p>	
<p>14.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>As one of many old age pensioners who enjoy a couple of hours exercise each week playing golf with others of the same age group, am very saddened and annoyed that this facility could be taken away from us. If that were to be the case, there is no way that could afford the high fees to</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p>

		<p>join a private golf club. Cannot believe that local council members would deliberately treat Redditch senior citizens in such a way as to deny them the one bit of physical exercise that they can afford. Beg you NOT to close such a fantastic facility</p>	
15.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	<p>Why should we subsidise the comparative few who want to play golf - keep it open but the charges made should reflect actual cost of running it. If they are not prepared to pay then close it. Redditch has plenty of open land nearby already - sell it for housing.</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p> <p>The land, however, is designated as Public Open Space.</p>
16.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	<p>Appalled to have read about proposal to take away and close the long established golf course. This has been part and parcel of Redditch for very many years. It is a part of open green space offering pleasure and exercise for the public. What are they closing it for? Possibly to "sell off" the area for building purposes, to leave it to go to rack and ruin or to get vandalised. What a sight that will be too! It will cost more money to keep it cleared of rubbish and vandalism than to keep it as it is now.</p> <p>Would be a tragedy to lose this space from the centre of Redditch with the facilities it offers. Understand that the Worcs. Golf Charity have made an offer to take on the handling of the course to enable the area to remain an open space and keep it for the pleasure of Redditch people. What is wrong with that scenario? It takes it off your hands.</p>	<p>As part of the consultation, alternative proposals will also be considered.</p>

17.	Golf Course	Based on sparse information provided, disappointed the council is considering withdrawing funding for the course. Subject to removal of funding, will this mean that the course is privatised or potentially face closure? This is the only municipal course in the Borough and feel it is a service that should be maintained.	The current proposal is for closure, however, alternative proposals will also be considered.
18.	Golf Course	A lot of senior citizens play at the club as we cannot afford to play at the other clubs. Where would children be able to play, there is very little for Redditch youngsters to be entertained.	These comments have been noted, however, Redditch Borough Council does provide a range of activities to meet the needs of younger people.
19.	Golf Course	Proposal by company to run golf course (rent or purchase of land and premises).	Officers have met with the consultee and agreed that currently, depending on the decision taken at Full Council, if it is a 12 month trial is considered this would give time to start talking more about alternative proposals for the longer term.
21.	Golf Course	Proposal to close this facility is foolhardy step in light of health advice to be active and fit. This is the only such course in Redditch and would rob many people of the chance to play cost effective golf. Proposal to change its use to parkland seems short sighted. There are a number of parks in the borough giving the community easy access. To create another park out of Pitcheroak would not improve facilities but in the long term cost money for upkeep. At present there is an income from the course albeit insufficient to cover present day costs. It should not cost as much for upkeep as quoted figures. Should the current spending remain would expect a considerable improvement in its condition. Along with this if the condition was improved you would see an increase in its use by golfers from other areas so bringing in revenue which parkland would not do.	These comments have been noted.
23.	Pitcheroak	Signed petition against the closure of the golf	The petition has been noted.

	Golf Course	course.	
24.	Golf Course	Opposed to closure and would like to see it to continue to give Redditch people a place to play and exercise even if it means a slight increase in fees to those playing.	These comments have been noted.
25.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	Object to the inclusion of the closure of the golf course without an undertaking that the area will be retained for open space purposes. The golf course land has been designated as open space on the Local Plan for many years and council should express a commitment to retain it as such	Agreed.
32.	Golf Course	Live by the course and see the wide variety of people that use the facilities. There are many youngsters and never seen any behaviour to be worried about. Offers older people opportunity to keep active and for families to spend time together, all at a reasonable cost without prohibitive fees to belong to a private club.	These comments have been noted.
34.	Golf Course	Taking this facility away will do harm to the less well off/to the kids. We as a society owe it to our children to provide cheap recreation. Thought golf course would be franchised out and didn't realise it still cost this amount but this could be covered by a wage freeze.	These comments have been noted.
35.	Golf Course	Opposed to closure of golf course	This comment has been noted.
36.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request that this be removed from the list. Worcs & Herefordshire County Golf Partnership working with leisure on locally created golf initiatives, but if it remains on the threatened list, formally request representation in any consultative process 	Representations have been made and discussed with the controlling group members.

37.	Golf Course	<p>At present over 60 junior players are coached by the resident professional. It is the only affordable way in which members of the public, especially youngsters, can play golf or start playing at affordable costs. Feel that closure does not make sense when considering the amount of money the council has actually spent on the course during the recent 5 year development plan. If the course closes this would be a criminal waste. There is a lack of advertising. Members report they have never seen any advertising in the local press for the golf course and does not get a mention in local information literature. Suggest postponing the decision for 1 year during which the council and the onsite Kingfisher GC instigates a concerted advertising campaign locally.</p>	<p>These comments have been noted and will be considered as part of the final decisions.</p>
38. & 52.	Golf Course (duplication)	<p>Strongly object to closure or changing the nature of the golf course. One of the few original remaining open spaces in Redditch which defines the character of its neighbourhood and provides a valuable leisure opportunity for a portion of the population who could not afford to join a private golf club. It is vital to encourage healthy exercise and to have an affordable way for everyone who wishes to enjoy the social and health benefits of golf. Re proposal to demolish clubhouse and revert to open public park land - this would require management in order to stop space becoming wild and unsafe which will involve an expense. Some of these costs must be met by the course fees paid by golfers. Constant flow of golfers means that it is a defended area and taking this away will mean there is potential for unchecked vandalism and asb.</p>	

42.	Golf Course	This provided my only chance to get into golf which has given me a great deal of pleasure, kept me physically active and fit and made lots of good friends. Very sad to learn of council plans to close such a popular and worthwhile facility just because it is not profitable. Do public parks have to be profit making?	Public parks do not have to be profit making.
43.	Golf Course	Very upset to learn of possible closure. Understand the Hereford & Worcester Golf Partnership has put forward a plan for the use of the course promoting the game within schools and encouraging new players. This seems ideal opportunity to keep the course open, at the same time providing the facility for local people. once the course is closed it would never reopen. Where else, but a municipal course, can young people and new players try the game?	Please refer to response at item 16.
44.	Golf Course	Closure of the course in the long term will be an event the council will regret. It is a jewel of Redditch town, which its people are proud of, and has overseas visitors. The course is naturally beautiful, so well maintained and cared for and over the last few years reached a peak of excellence, all praise to RBC ground staff.	These comments have been noted.
46.	Golf Course	Members of golf club are 100% behind Hereford & Worcs Golf Partnership and willing to support them in whatever capacity is needed. If you are looking for creative ways of encouraging golf for beginners, with the reddicard contingent already in place, you have a ready made sporty community who would be very willing to try a new sport that is open to them. In my experience a lot of barriers to golf lie around price, time and stuffiness of the game and as soon as these are addressed golf becomes infectious with anyone who plays it. Pitcheroak is ideally positioned to eliminate these barriers as it is very reasonably priced, and the club is run by very approachable and friendly members. These can only be	Please refer to response at item 16.

		<p>assets for the partnership to pro actively work with in order to make Pitcheroak a success. A lot pf private clubs are facing recruitment problems with falling numbers of members renewing their membership. We are already seeing these private golf club members joining Pitcheroak, as it is the cheaper option. Again during these difficult times this is surely another benefit for a professional partner to take advantage of an opportunity to sell the benefits and encourage the facilities that Pitcheroak can offer.</p>	
48.	Closure of Pitcheroak Golf Course	<p>Objection to proposed closure and concerned about short term effects and long term place for the space. Currently golf course offers an affordable service and should be seen as a long term asset, not a short term cost reduction solution. I am interested in the alternative use options for the space if the course is closed and subsequent measures/decisions taken:</p> <p>1) Why was the proposal for takeover by the local golf club rejected?</p> <p>2) What were the actual cots of running the course year on year for the past 5 years (advertising, upkeep, electricity, etc) vs predicted cost savings?</p> <p>3) What will happen to the space if the golf course is closed - short term and long term?</p> <p>4? What plans will be made to make the space secure and ensure asb does not occur (specifically the car park/club house)? The misuse of the land is a real risk. ASB is a major concern for communities, high on the political agenda and is a real threat if the course closes.</p> <p>5) What reassurance can you give the local residents, particularly those whose properties back onto the course that the land will not be sold for building in the future?</p>	<p>1. The proposal for takeover by the local golf club has not been rejected it will form part of the consultation and be considered at Council on the 6th April 2009.</p> <p>2. Over the past 5 years there has been a steady increase in the deficit between the income and expenditure, current predictions for 2009/10 are a deficit of £127,000.</p> <p>3. In both the short and long term if the golf course was to be closed then the area would be left and managed as public open space.</p> <p>4. The council already has experience of managing public open space in relation to the club house, if the course were to be closed this would be demolished.</p> <p>5. The Leader of the Council has publicly confirmed that it is not there intention now or in the future to consider any alternative if the golf course is closed other than to manage the area as public open space.</p>

<p>49.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Councillors might protest that they won't use land freed up by closing the golf course for housing but this is undoubtedly a first step in a possible development process. I have been contacted by possible partners for the Council to continue to provide golf at the course. I urge the Council to look very carefully at the potential that new partners would bring to the golf course and to not shut the course until a suitable future for golf to continue has been secured.</p> <p>There are several good reasons not to shut the golf course but highest amongst them is that the course should provide to young and old the chance to take up a sport that will give them important exercise and social opportunities in the heart of their town.</p> <p>Social implications of cutting leisure opportunities - As well as health implications there are social implications too! Where will young people go if they are priced out of leisure centres? Or if the golf course is closed and players cannot afford to play golf at private clubs? We already have ASB in the cemetery next door to the golf course and in Morton Stanley Park. It makes no sense to close this facility and leave it as open space. One of the best ways of tackling anti social behaviour is to provide good quality and affordable leisure facilities for people to use. Closing them down and increasing charges are steps in the wrong direction.</p>	<p>Please refer to response at item 48.</p>
<p>50.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Object to possible closure. It is an important local amenity and is used by all ages, especially youngsters and adults new to the game. Vital facility where people can learn to play at a reasonable cost. Many of the users couldn't afford to play at local private clubs where fees are in excess of £600 pa. Once this fine course is allowed to be developed into parkland it will never be possible to revert it back to a golf course. Believe the H&W Golf Union have</p>	<p>Please refer to response at item 16.</p>

		<p>offered to run as an academy which seems a sensible option as the academy would encourage the use by local schools. More lessons/coaching clinics would be available for all ages/abilities, thus new golfers produced, and increased usage/revenue.</p> <p>Have costs of turning into parkland been taken into account, eg club house demolition, car parking, security, litter/dog bins, etc. Sub-let to H&W Golf Union or similar.</p>	
52.	Golf Course (duplication - see 38)	Objection to closure	This comment has been noted.
59.	Golf Course	Concerned about possible loss of facility - valuable local amenity.	This comment has been noted.
79.	Golf Course	<p>Protest about closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when government concerned about obesity/fitness • best 9 hole course in country • is park accessible/DDA compliant if it becomes parkland • all traces of clubhouse would have to be removed • it will still need to be maintained. • ASB problems. 	This comment has been noted.

3. & 4.	Greenlands & Rubicon Business Centres	I feel the Council should look to find an alternative provider for the Greenlands & Rubicon Business Centre. Both buildings were intended to support business start ups, but this has not been the case. There are many businesses that have been using these premises for some time. It was originally intended that they would only be in there for a fixed period of time. Unfortunately due to poor management of these premises, the lack of proactive approach to generate more business start ups and vested interest in keeping the status quo, have all contributed to the present situation.	The Business Centres are currently being considered by the Economic Advisory Panel. From an EDU perspective the EDU strategy when it goes to Exec on 1 July will include an action plan that will probably include some activities associated with the centres. The detailed actions are not yet known. A sliding scale of rents may be considered so that the longer tenants are there the more the rent goes up – to encourage them to leave so that they truly are an “incubator” facility for new businesses.
3.	Neighbourhood Offices	The arguments put forward to retain N’hood Offices are bogus. An independent piece of work should be commissioned to test the need for this facility. Based on my own personal experience, very few people use these facilities. If people need to pay bills at a n’hood level then a feasibility study should be carried out to assess whether this can be done at local post offices.	As part of the agreed Customer access strategy the objectives are to consider offering and providing different access channels and ensuring best value. As part of this strategy the One Stop Shop Advisory Panel is considering various options involving to date presentations from external providers and discussions with other agencies. Members are keen to see the impact of the introduction of the swipe card on the usage of the One Stop Shops and will review the outcomes following implementation in April 2009.
4.	Neighbourhood Offices - sell them.	These are not a necessity, people can pay rent through various means, i.e. direct debit and OSS at Town Hall. Free bus passes mean that it is easy for older people to come into town to pay bills etc and it also helps the economy by encouraging people into the town centre.	As part of the agreed Customer access strategy the objectives are to consider offering and providing different access channels and ensuring best value. As part of this strategy the One Stop Shop Advisory Panel is considering various options involving to date presentations from external providers and discussions with other agencies. Members are keen to see the impact of the introduction of the swipe card on the usage of the One Stop Shops and will review the outcomes following implementation in April 2009.

3.	Housing stock	The Council should follow Bromsgrove's example with regards to its housing stock. This should be transferred to an external housing provider. Bromsgrove has gained various accolades for this and more importantly, residents have benefited. There is no reason why this cannot be done in Redditch.	The Government is currently reviewing the Housing Subsidy system and the Council will subsequently be producing a Housing Revenue Account Business Plan this will take account of all of the options for maintaining the housing stock including retention.
4.	Housing stock	Should be run by another body as it is in Bromsgrove very successfully. Co-op Homes provide an excellent housing service and the Council cannot be expected to maintain a high level of housing services indefinitely especially in the present climate.	The Government is currently reviewing the Housing Subsidy system and the Council will subsequently be producing a Housing Revenue Account Business Plan will take account of all of the options for maintaining the housing stock including retention.
20.	Sheltered Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Lights are on very brightly 24/7 inside and out. Fit sensors to limit use and save power and reduce cost. Windows in corridors are opened if it gets hot instead of turning radiators down This could save money if applied to all sheltered accommodation and council buildings 	In this years budget allocation we have £60 000 for energy conservation projects in Sheltered schemes, Asset maintenance have a number of planned projects that include TRV,s , energy efficient lighting and controls . We will also be giving advice to site managers on measures they can adopt to improve energy efficiency.
30.	Roxboro House (and other schemes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Limited parking at Roxboro House, but people with cars bidding for properties and then complain. Should make it known there is limited parking when advertising the property. 	Will include the fact that there is no parking at Roxboro House and limited parking in the area when advertising this scheme.

3.	Shared Working	There should be greater emphasis on shared services. I know you are looking into this but more can be done. For instance there should be a rationalisation of management at all levels and back office functions such as HR, Finance, Policy, etc.	
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3.	Shared Working -	There is a potential case to be made for Council's Benefits staff and Job Centre staff working together - so people only fill out claim forms under one roof. May also reduce benefit fraud	
3.	Recruit staff to Benefits and Economic Dev And retention of REDI Centre	It would be a mistake not to recruit staff in Benefits & Economic Dev teams, especially in present economic climate. Economic dev function of the Council should be strengthened to help develop the area to diversify away from the manufacturing sector where there is no added value. We need to invest in people to reskill them. This means the REDI Centre has a key role to play providing a supportive environment to help people get back into work. It would be a mistake to offload the REDI Centre. It would be beneficial to review its existing remit and tailor it to meet new demands in the present economic climate.	<p>REDI Centre comments have been noted.</p> <p>There is a budget bid associated with more officers in EDU. In addition an EDU Strategy will go to Executive Committee in July.</p>
4.	Economic Dev	It is crucial to protect all jobs within the Council. Most workers live in the town and as the towns manufacturing base is in deep trouble, the Council as an employer is key to providing employment in the area and helping to boost the economy. The close proximity to the town centre means that employees spend their wages in Redditch rather than outside. The Council also provides a useful service to Redditch residents in terms of advice & guidance particularly in difficult times.	
4.	REDI centre	Should be part of the NEW College, as it does not perform a unique service and caters for a small minority. It could be done easily by the college	The proposal for consultation is the transfer of the service to an alternative service provider. It is important that the provider is assessed to ensure that the ethos of Redi is retained and the community needs are met.

27.	REDI	In considering any alternative service provider there needs to be a change to the current management arrangements, ensuring there is one overall manager responsible for the service.	In considering an alternative service provider part of the negotiations will be to ensure the structure is viable.
40.	REDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feels the Centre provides a lifeline to disabled people and allows people to study at their own pace. Staff friendly and helpful. • Concerned the centre will lose its personal touch and people may find class sizes daunting 	<p>The current proposal for the Redi Centre is to explore/negotiate the continuation of the Redi provision by an alternative provider to the Council itself.</p> <p>Should this proposal be agreed by Council, Officers would then look to start the process for making arrangements to procure the service by an alternative provider. Existing courses that users of the service are currently taking will be honoured. The existing staff, under this proposal, would be transferred to the alternative service provider and Members have expressed that the ethos of Redi be maintained wherever possible.</p>
53.	REDI Centre	As a student, appreciate the benefits of the centre with its friendly and professional staff who have invaluable experience and expertise to enable them to deliver both knowledge and direction tailored to individual needs. As a single parent the centre has provided good career prospects. Impartial advice, guidance and skills/ interests assessment is available which for some is the key starting point in returning to work, whether from career gap or simply a change of career. REDI Centre must remain available to the community as it stands. A huge stepping stone for many into employment or higher education and reject any proposals to banish funding for this centre of investment for the people of Worcs.	Please refer to response at item 4.

54.	REDI Centre	Have attended a number of courses at REDI and it has been a lifeline. Suffer from depression and the Centre has helped so much in terms of being on a smaller scale and helping to get back into the outside world mixing with people. All my experiences at the centre have prepared me for getting back into the work environment and giving me confidence. The staff and tutors are helpful, take time to listen to you and very supportive.	These comments have been noted.
49.	REDI	Very impressed with range of training and advice available along with the number of partners they deal with. Redi work with the unemployed and people who may not be ready for college but want to access education & training. The Redi Centre was established to help unemployed people and deal with the shortfall in training in a previous recession and to threaten its future now, during another downturn, would be short-sighted and wrong. The Centre fills an educational need that sits well with NEW College, apprentice and training schemes & our schools in Redditch & it should remain if at all possible.	Please refer to response at item 4.
63-76.	REDI	Letter of support for the REDI Centre, concern about any proposed changes and various accounts of what the centre has done for them	These comments have been noted.

3.	Asset Management Plan	Develop effective AMP including disposal of assets. Council does not have financial means to keep hold of the various community centres	The Council has commissioned the preparation of an up to date Asset Management Strategy which will be presented to the Executive Committee on the 1 st April 2009. This will address all of the council's assets.
4.	Community Centres	These are mainly occupied by Keep Fit activities and creches. They should be taken over by a community organisation ie BSG or sold as revenue	There is an ongoing review of Community Centres, including the option of the Centres being managed by Community Groups.
4.	Forge Mill	Forge Mill Museum is a scheduled ancient monument and heritage site that is dear to the people of the town and should not be lost, however, its usage can be enhanced ie venue for weddings. The surrounding land is ideal for photos and the venue itself is far superior to the dire Easemore Road one. Use to showcase local craftspeople similar to Jinny Ring and provide a venue for courses in craftwork.	<p>The majority of events are run in-house by RBC. The events programme has significantly increased over the last two years, with attendances to the Museum increasing by 50%. 74 events were run through the museum and Countryside Centre</p> <p>We currently hire part of the facility for wakes, 'ghost' walks, wedding photos etc We also hire the facility to external companies who do outdoor productions/plays There are also regular group bookings such as the Women's Institute and group bookings/coach tours from all over the Country throughout the year. To do anything more involved would involve investment into catering facilities/ wedding co-ordinators.</p> <p>Included in the Budget Strategy were bids for revenue funding to extend the contract of the Heritage Access Officer. The Museum displays Needles and Fishing items which is what Redditch is renowned for. The Bordesley Abbey site is Redditch's prime Heritage site and we are submitting a Heritage Lottery Bid to carry out an interpretation project on Bordesley Meadows</p>
24.	Forge Mill	Support of this service	This comment has been noted.

47.	Forge Mill	Hope that the current facilities at this site will not change. Feel in the past year great efforts have been made in bringing more visitors to the venue. Opening the coffee bar in June 2008 meant the facility became a great place for a cross section of people to use. We had many visitors new to the site, saying "we didn't realise how nice it was here".	Comments will be considered as part of the review of Forge Mill.
12.	Car Parking	This makes sense as it would drive people to think of alternative 'green' methods of travelling to the facilities.	This comment has been noted.
13.	Car parking charges And Arrow Valley Park and Centre	We are encouraged to get more exercise and make the most of local facilities. The lake and countryside centre are a superb place to do both with the whole family. Walk round the lake at least once every week with young some, undertaken pram fit classes, used the play areas, fed the ducks, bought food and drink from the café. Couldn't afford to do this if I had to pay for car parking. Majority of users are mums taking kids for a walk, elderly getting a daily dose of exercise and families at weekends - to implement a car parking charge would be to discriminate against children and the elderly and is an utter disgrace. The countryside centre is a valuable and well used resource - it is always busy when we visit - and again its future should be assured not put under constant threat.	Comments regarding parking charges will be considered as part of the final decision by Full Council on the 6 th April. The purpose of a review of the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre is to look at securing the longer term viability of the Centre and how best this can be achieved.
15.	Parking charges at Arrow Valley	Concerned about parking charges - if nominal, people might pay, but if not you will have parking on all the adjacent roads causing danger and congestion and people crossing busy roads to get from a free parking area to the park.	These comments have been noted.
16.	Car Parking	Disagree with this. Yet another green open space	These comments have been noted.

	Charges at AVCC	<p>which is used by many people for walking, jogging, teaching children about wildlife, etc. There is people exercising their dogs, and themselves, fishing, entertaining the children at the Countryside Centre and helping them to make different items and to learn about life outside of towns and using the play areas for exercise. The café would also suffer by loss of trade if less people are using the park.</p> <p>We pay far too much for Council tax etc so the pleasure we have by taking a walk round the lake and park would be marred and more than likely curtailed should a charge to park one's car be implemented.</p>	
15.	Arrow Valley CC	Would be a pity to lose the person from the Countryside Centre - Birmingham has its park rangers and the system works well	These comments have been noted.
24.	Arrow Valley CC	Would like to see this continue at a high standard	This comment has been noted.
26.	Arrow Valley Lake	The lake is a fantastic free/cheap leisure service. To charge parking will make the lake become a no go zone. Especially in current economic climate with families struggling, to go to the park where you can park for free and enjoy the surroundings	These comments have been noted.
28.	Charging for Health Walks in AV Park	Think it is a bad idea to charge people for taking part in health walks given current drive to reduce obesity levels. If charges are introduced, should only relate to expenses directly attributable to the walks, e.g. insurance.	<p>Health walks are becoming a popular activity to reduce obesity, increase physical activity and to create for some people a support network of friends etc that would not be otherwise available.</p> <p>The Council has received funding to provide a health walking co-ordinator via the PCT, sports partnership and also the Community Investment fund from the govt. The grant aid is given so that all barriers to participation are removed and this includes charging. The funding for activities is provided so that sessions are free to encourage attendance. It is not possible to charge. Our costs are covered but we receive no income from the</p>

			activity. Where we have provided walking guides/hosts in the past this has been on a voluntary basis by the leaders who we have covered for insurance purposes.
31.	Car park charging at AV Country Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel this would be unpopular move and will discourage people from visiting the park with a consequential loss of revenue to the visitor centre 	These comments have been noted.
32.	Car Parking Charges at AVP	This would cause more parking on the highways which surround the park - there would also be set up costs for barriers, machines and security risk.	The set up costs have been taken into account when considering the option of introducing car parking charges. If the scheme is introduced, Officers would monitor the impact on surrounding areas.
39.	Arrow Valley Park and C/Centre	Opposed to any cuts in funding to the park and centre. Opposed to the introduction of charges to any of the car parks. All sections of the community, young and old, use the park to take healthy and enjoyable exercise and recreation, and nothing should be done to impede or restrict their access to it.	These comments have been noted.
45.	Parking charges at AVCC	Redditch is supposed to be a 'healthy borough' and cutting back on areas that help people remain healthy is detrimental to us all and against all the Govt guidelines for healthy living. The Govt keep discussing how to help obese people and ye the council is prepared to charge to park at AVCC (the jewel in Redditch's crown) which is used by so many. Walking and enjoying the fresh air and surroundings can be enjoyed by anyone and at present costs nothing. Having to pay to park will put off so many people who use this.	These comments have been noted.
47.	AV CC Café	Use the park many times. We enjoy the centre and the events they hold. We strongly detest the catering facility. Find the food expensive and poor	These comments have been noted.

		quality. Service is below average and standards below par. The café is the hub of the centre and the council are losing many visitors because of how bad it is.	
61	Parking Charges at AV CC	Concern about proposed charges. Suggests that the Council could save money not doing things such as re-lifting paving in town.	These comments have been noted.
80	Parking Charges at AVCC	Concern about impact on Fitness Club - will charging lead to the public using the Club's private car park.	These comments have been noted.

4.	Council refreshments	Cut the amount of money spent on things such as lunch for visitors to Council and staff. The Town Hall is in the town centre and it would be far better to encourage visitors and staff to buy from shops and cafes thus keeping them in business.	
4.	Council magazine	This is a complete waste of money. There are 2 local newspapers that are perfectly adequate for info on the town and the Council's activities. I know of no one who thinks this is a useful production.	
12.	Identify best practice from other authorities	What has the council done to investigate what 'good looks like'? What best practice ideas has the council identified from other councils to avoid making rash decisions to close facilities? Instead of making short term/ill thought decisions they should look at what others do which has lead to sustainable solutions	
13.	Miscellaneous	Travel ban for staff No bonuses/pay rise for staff print both sides of paper ban private phone calls Don't commission 'paintings for mayor'	
15.	Pest Control Officer	Think removal of this post is a very bad move. People won't pay to have rats exterminated, they just won't report it or do anything about it and rats will run riot	
21.	Various	What about reducing the amount of street lighting? Are you sure that all Town Hall posts are required?	
29.	Various	1. Query re budget page of proposals - is it in £'000 or % points? 2. For Council staff to only take 1% or 1½% of their 3% pay increase	1. Figures quoted are all %. Due to rise in energy prices since the Council last went out to tender on energy. we are assuming a 100% rise in Gas & 70% rise in electricity prices compared to the budgeted amounts for these in 2007/08.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Reduce 'balances' from £750,000 to £500,000 4. Half external advice (what's essential compared to nice to have) 5. Turn lights off (in Council building and library). 6. Instigate an in town penalty of £100 per night for any building (retail and office) who leave lights on after 11pm - could raise money to fund Christmas lights 7. Spend money on getting new businesses here - to create employment and get people off benefits 	<p>2. All our terms and conditions are governed by the National Joint Council, which is a national body, of which the pay award forms part of this. If we did not implement the figure that was agreed nationally we would be in breach of contract for all our employees. This could result in a higher cost to the council due to litigation claims. However in 2008/09 negotiations Employers put forward 2%, however after industrial action and arbitration we were instructed to award 2.75% by the arbitrators. Failure to implement this could again result in litigation. The negotiations for 2009/10 are likely to reflect what you are suggesting.</p> <p>3. In Feb 03 CIPFA published a guidance document on LA Reserves & Balances. The guidance does not prescribe the minimum level of balances to be held but recommends that consideration is given to the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the authority. During the consultation on this document it was suggested that the recommended minimum should be 5% of net expenditure. 5% for Redditch would mean maintaining balances at or around £650k. However just a 1% variation in gross income and gross expenditure is equivalent to £746k which would result in a significant reduction in balances. Taking into account all the increased pressures on limited resources, it is considered that a general fund revenue balance of £750k is a prudent minimum level.</p> <p>4. Spend on Advice & Guidance Services (BVPI 226a) is made up of various grants RBC has given to local charities to provide advice & guidance to local people - CAB £90k; WREC £8.5k; MECA/RICA £19k; Community Commonwealth £27k and All Womens House £16k (75% of their total grant for the period). The grants are allocated by Councillors.</p>
41.	Various	1. Redditch Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy Brochure - quality higher than needs	1. The Sustainable Community Strategy produced by Redditch Partnership is not a Council owned document. The funding for

		<p>to be. Should keep printing costs to a reasonable level on all Council information</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Disabled free parking and Shopmobility - not unreasonable for some charge to be made, particularly for car parking 3. Free bus passes - suggestion of £5 p.a. but are free passes a national right 4. AVP parking charges - feel this is reasonable if charges are reasonable but may mean people will park on roads local to park or industrial estate 5. Pitcheroak Golf Course - feel private golf course should make some contribution to maintaining Pitcheroak as should county or even national golf associations 6. Neighbourhood Groups - feel these have improved, have more content of feeding information to residents 	<p>the printing of this strategy came via NEW College and West Mercia Police as partners on the Local Strategic Partnership and not funded by Redditch Borough Council.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Officers have explored the possibility of charging but, due to the additional adjustments and costs that would be involved, it would prove to be uneconomical to introduce. Also, in line with similar schemes in other authorities, disabled parking remains a free service. 3. The English National Bus Pass Scheme does not allow us to make a charge for the pass when it is first issued or an annual charge. However, if a pass is lost then we make a charge of £5 for a replacement pass, which is approximately the cost to us. 4. The Council is aware of the potential impact of introducing charges and has therefore looked at keeping the fees as low as possible. If the scheme is implemented, Officers will be monitoring any potential 'overspill' effects into other areas. 5. Officers are in discussion with the Golf Society and National Associations.
45.	Various	<p>What a sad day for Redditch if concessions removed from swimming, if the golf club closes, and with Dial A Ride being threatened. Many rely on this service to get them into town. Enclosure of letter in the paper (A Pyatt) which gives suggestions</p>	
51.	Various	<p>Objection to proposals to close the golf course, cut Christmas lights and stopping the annual firework display. Enclosed a petition of those wishing to keep the golf course open</p>	<p>The petition has been noted.</p>

<p>4.</p>	<p>Palace Theatre</p>	<p>Why does the Council maintain it? This is an asset to the town but it would be far better run by another body. Its productions are very limited and do not cater for vast majority of residents. There is nothing for young people and yet we are told that Redditch has very high numbers of under 25s. It has potential but needs to be run by professionals not the LA. If shared services are to be continued, there is also potential to provide a transport service to the Artrix which provides a much better repertoire and is known throughout the region as an excellent venue..</p>	<p>A major review took place prior to the refurbishment. The current budget with a building larger than previous has been maintained with the same small team. The youth theatre has increased its numbers and grants are successfully submitted to enhance the theatre operation and audience development for young people. We do try to cater for a wide range of productions and young people and the amateur societies do feature in the programme. However we need to increase the income where possible. We have undertaken a soft market test for outsourcing and although there are some companies that could be invited to negotiate within a tender specification it is apparent that they are only interested in commercial operation and not an operation that allows the community to be supported in their access to the facility. The building now sees 117,000+ attds through the building compared to 32,000 before the refurbishment. The Artrix is a very different operation and this is also heavily subsidised by Bromsgrove DC. The potential for linkage will be explored during the shared services agenda in the near future</p>
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12.	Bonfire/Fireworks	Amazed to see such a large event being provided without any charge. Even a minimal £1 per adult, 50p per child would have generated in excess of £1015k which would have covered the cost of the event. It would not be unusual to charge for such an event.	Charging for this event has already been reviewed in recent years and would actually see the cost of the event increase. The need for fencing to ensure everyone pays, install cashiers and pay points, security and audit purposes significantly increase the required budget to run the event. The site is also situated in a park land of 900 acres and so residents could stand outside of the performance space or on the mound and still enjoy the firework show without paying. This was reviewed during previous budget strategies. We have even tried a donation system and the return was extremely minimal. This event is run as a community safety event We will of course examine all avenues with alternative operators
13.	Bonfire/Fireworks	A small entrance fee should be charged of £1-£2 if necessary and remainder of the money required covered by advertising which you could sell. Need to start thinking more like a commercial enterprise.	Advertising and sponsorship has been tried in the past but due to the nature of the event and the minimal timespan it covers (2hrs at night) the return on investment by partners has been so minimal, if non existent, that we have not enjoyed repeat partnerships. The radio stations are paid to attend for the roadshow. Please refer to response at item 12.
15.	Fireworks	Would be a pity to scrap this and am sure people would pay to see them - they do for others. They attract a lot of people and deter people from having their own fireworks with inherent danger.	Please refer to response at item 12.
16.	Cancellation of Annual Bonfire	It would be a shame to stop this especially for the youngsters. Our children take our grandchildren to the bonfire night entertainment and they thoroughly enjoy themselves.	These comments have been noted.
24.	Bonfire/Christmas Lights	This could be a one off cutback with promises to reinstate as soon as economic situation improves and funding should be sought from local businesses	These comments have been noted.

26.	Fireworks/Xmas lights	Disagree with proposals to cancel Xmas lights, Firework display, closure of golf course. Christmas lights may the town look fabulous. Lot of people attend the fireworks and is a friendly atmosphere which all ages enjoy	These comments have been noted.
32.	Firework	Think the Council could justifiably not spend our money on the firework display there are so many other venues available.	These comments have been noted.
45.	Fireworks/Xmas lights	Families enjoy the fireworks held at AVP and what a poor town without the christmas lights.	These comments have been noted.
49.	Fireworks	The annual firework display is the most well attended event that the Council provide for residents. It is enjoyable, valued and a safe way for people to celebrate bonfire night as a community. It will be a great shame to see it scrapped and I would have thought that sponsorship of the event could provide at least some income to offset the costs of this excellent service. I cannot believe that the local fire brigade will be happy to see an increase in amateur, back garden fireworks emerge as the professional display is cut!	Please refer to response at item 13.
12.	Christmas lights	Ask local shops to contribute or pay in full for the provision of lights.	In November 2008 wrote to all Town Centre shops & businesses for contribution and received only two responses / contributions (less than £500). Unlikely to generate any income during current economic climate.
15.	Xmas lights	Seems a petty thing to cut - all towns have their Xmas decorations and for Redditch to have none is not entering into the spirit of Christmas - would traders in the area where the lights go contribute? Consider cutting back on where they do go	These comments have been noted.
16.	Christmas lights	The axing of the lights from the town centre gets another No Thank You. It is once a year for about 6 weeks which brings so much pleasure to	These comments have been noted.

		the public. It brightens peoples outlook and helps them keep looking on the bright side at, what is, such a stressful time of year.	
32.	Christmas Lights	Lack of lights would deter visitors from the town which will soon develop a neglected atmosphere	These comments have been noted.
49.	Christmas Lights	Finally, scrapping the Christmas lights. During this festive time of year local people want to enjoy their town centre whether it is for shopping or entertainment. Christmas lights are part of this, we do not want to encourage local people to go elsewhere and we should be encouraging outsiders into the town. Redditch should be proudly celebrating Christmas - not penny pinching and failing to support our local retailers. The Council's proposals are an assault on front line services and, to the shame of local Conservative Councillors, many will fall most heavily on those who have lost their jobs. I intend to fight these mean proposals tooth and nail. I urge the Council to reconsider and instead look at better ways of working in back office operations and being at the forefront of taking up government and other support instead of lagging behind.	These comments have been noted.
78.	Christmas Lights	If we keep the trimmings can they be another colour - not purple.	These comments have been noted.

17.	Leisure Services	Should look to rationalise services where there is a duplication. Duplication of services at Abbey Stadium, Arrow Vale, Kingsley, Hewell Road. These services could be rationalised to save money (rather than closing golf course).	Each site is complimentary in its programme to the other sites and are running at high percentage usage levels. The management team review the programme on a monthly basis. Where there is duplication in the programme it is due to customer demand or due to a complementary business need. The demand for time is always very high and the usage is much higher than the golf course covering many demographic groups across residents within the Town. Rationalisation will be taken into account with future delivery of new facilities if funding allows progression.
17.	Hewell Road	High maintenance costs of such an old building. It is one of 3 swimming pools in town, although servicing different local communities. On going maintenance issues and costs associated with the facility - considered as viable alternative to save money to golf course closure.	It is understood that Hewell Rd pool is time limited and will be minimally maintained until an alternative scheme is put before members in the coming months. There is a high usage of the site through key stage delivery of the schools swimming curriculum and swimming lessons and is the home to the Redditch Swimming club. The site currently sees 160,000+ attds as opposed to 14,000 at POGC. A new replacement facility at the Abbey Std site (if approved) will be more efficient in operation and maintenance and with increased income projected
17.	Reddicard	Should this discount scheme be maintained. Should we now consider removing the 'discount' to ensure a range of services are maintained.	The Reddicard has undergone a major review for fees and charges and the concessionary element of the scheme has been reduced from 50% to a 25% discount to aid the current budget strategy. All fees & charges are reviewed annually.
22.	Fees & Charges	After some searching found the full fees and charges 2009/10. Would like to know why it is not easily available via a simple link from the proposal overview. Daughter's swimming lessons will cost almost £10 more and it seems many of the childrens activities are subject to similar price hikes. At a time when children are less active a low cost activity is	A review has been completed of the fees and charges set for 2009/10 including comparisons with other authorities and consideration of concessions via the use of the Reddicard.

		wonderful, especially for those on low income, increasing prices for those who are least able to afford it is not the answer. Feel the extra charge will simply stop people going, meaning less revenue to ourselves. Please reconsider such high price hikes	
50.	Increase in fees & charges	Disappointing that the council no longer are prepared to fund concession rates at their present rates as this will affect usage at all sporting facilities. Leader in Advertiser states it is not fair for other tax payers to pay for services not used. Do not begrudge paying for services not used. Will we have a choice to pay for what services we use and have reduced Council Tax bill?	
49.	Fees & Charge	I disagree with the enormous increases in charges for leisure with some charges doubling or tripling. This will affect all users but those who currently benefit from concessions, like those who have lost their jobs, will get hit by far the hardest. At a time when people are losing their jobs and worrying about money the Council should be providing more affordable services not cutting them. New charges for parking at AVP and the precedent it sets for possible parking charges at other parks are a further attack on exercise and activity in Redditch? We are all more concerned about problems with inactivity and obesity and all these proposals cut back the opportunity of individuals to do something about it. I am also concerned that price increases of 75% and more will inevitably see fewer people accessing leisure facilities. I am therefore concerned these price rises could lead to the closure of some of our leisure centres.	Please refer to response for item 22.
35.	Free	From April offering free swimming for over	Yes, the costs will be covered by Government Funding.

	Swimming	60s/under 16s for the two public swimming pools in Redditch. Will the cost of this be totally covered by Govt funding and if not why do this in the present economic climate?	
24.	Dial A Ride	This is a service that should continue to benefit Redditch people	
33.	Dial A Ride	Ask that you save this services which helps so many older people to lead a better life. Because don't drive because of age, have taken great advantage of it and would miss it immensely. The office staff are so pleasant and helpful and the drivers are all first class and eager to do all they can to help people like me who are now 'not so good on their legs'.	
49.	Dial A Ride	Last time the Conservatives were in power they took free bus passes off older people and those with disabilities - now I understand they are considering taking money away from Dial a Ride. The Council should not be targeting services for the vulnerable in this way.	
62.	Shopmobility	Petition against the Cuts from approx 375 people	

55.	Grants to voluntary organisations	<p>Concerned about giving of grants to various organisations, e.g. Caribbean Roots, which like several other groups is representative of only a small section of the community. Cannot understand why the council is asked to finance it in park or whole. It is even more important that tax payers money is spent on essentials to benefit the majority, not on desirables, no matter how worthy they may be. At a time when elderly people are worrying about being able to afford to eat/keep warm, and many young people in danger of losing their homes because of job losses, I don't see how giving tax payers money to enable people to discover their roots can be justified. Also the Asian Womens house in West Avenue has been the recipient of many thousands of pounds of tax payers money over the years. Don't understand why these people are not expected to raise money to finance their own interests as so many others do. Fairest thing for both councils to do, is publish a list of grants etc in the local papers and give residents opportunity to say whether they consider this money to be wisely spent or if they would prefer for example roads and pavements to be kept in good repair and gritted in bad weather and for giving of charitable donations to be left to the discretion of the individual then perhaps council tax might not rise each year while services fall.</p>	
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55.	Contractors	<p>Another saving is where contractors do work which is left in an unsatisfactory state. Tax payers are having to foot the bill for poor work either by council contractors or by outside contractors, e.g. drainage works carried out by Severn Trent.</p> <p>Work done by tree surgeons - have driven off the grass leaving large ruts which are not reinstated by contractor.</p>	
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COMMUNITY FORUM RESPONSES

SUBJECT	SUGGESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE
Pitcheroak Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for alternative provider • Suggestion that Officers contact other golf clubs in the area to look at contribution towards young people accessing Pitcher Oak 	Comments noted. (Refer to other comments)
Fire works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider alternative venue to reduce costs and potential charging • Consensus from the Forum was that this is an important event and can be seen to effect community safety issues by reducing people having their own firework display 	Comments noted. (Refer to other comments)
Neighbourhood Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be amalgamated with PACT process 	Comments noted. (Refer to other comments)
Shopmobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach Kingfisher Centre and look into charging car parking for disabled users to support the Shopmobility scheme (recognition that this has been suggested previously) • Officers to look at Voluntary Organisations to run the scheme as they have the ability to access alternative funding 	Will be considered as part of review.
Car Parking Charging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group highly concerned about charging at AVCC as it could result in a decrease in football and exclude certain clients. • Suggestion to provide a bus service to the park 	Comments noted. (Refer to other comments)

TRADE UNION RESPONSES (SUMMARY)

SUBJECT	SUGGESTION/COMMENT
Pay award	Savings made on current pay award & potential to save more
Vacant posts	Need to be closely monitored via Executive & transfer resources
Honoraria/ secondments	These should be rationalised / reported regularly to Executive
Sickness	Re-allocate staff where possible
Golf Course	Concern about loss of amenity to the town. Will affect more than just two council employed staff ie voluntary workers and cafe
REDI	Concern about long period of uncertainty for centre and staff over number of years. Detailed options appraisal and staffing structure required as part of a business case.
Community Centres	Only small number of staff affected - so why not retain.
Neighbourhood Groups	Review and see if required/affective
LABGI	Pleased to learn money forthcoming
Future Reviews	Request timetable for AVCC, FMM, Shopmobility, DAR
Consultants/ Agency	Review use and see if in house resources can be deployed.
Subsequent changes	Request that changes resulting from consultation are reported to TUs/Staff with full background and rationale.

