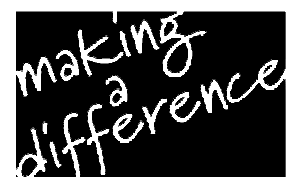


Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 11th
December, 2012
7.00 pm

Committee Room Two
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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- 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:
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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

**Jess Bayley and Michael Craggs
Democratic Services Officers**

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michael.craggs@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk**

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

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Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do Not use lifts.

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

The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.



Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

Tuesday, 11th December, 2012

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs: Juliet Brunner Andrew Fry
 (Chair) Pattie Hill
 Simon Chalk (Vice- Gay Hopkins
 Chair) Pat Witherspoon
 Andrew Brazier
 David Bush
 John Fisher

<p>1. Apologies and named substitutes</p>	<p>To receive apologies for absence and details of any Councillor (or co-optee substitute) nominated to attend this meeting in place of a member of this Committee.</p>
<p>2. Declarations of interest and of Party Whip</p>	<p>To invite Councillors to declare any interest they may have in items on the Agenda and any Party Whip.</p>
<p>3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 24)</p>	<p>To confirm the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a correct record.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>4. Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report - Quarter 2 - July - September 2012 (Pages 25 - 32) T Kristunas, Head of Resources</p>	<p>To receive and consider the quarterly budget report for the second quarter of 2012/13.</p> <p>(Report attached).</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>5. Concessionary Rents - Pre-Scrutiny Short, Sharp Review (Pages 33 - 42) A Heighway, Head of Community Services, T Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources and Councillors Andrew Brazier and Juliet Brunner</p>	<p>To consider the final report from the Concessionary Rent Pre-Scrutiny Short, Sharp Review Group and to determine whether to endorse the group's recommendations.</p> <p>(Pre- Scrutiny report attached, Officers' report to follow).</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>

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<p>6. Overview and Scrutiny - Six Month Review of the Committee Function</p> <p>(Pages 43 - 50)</p> <p>C Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</p>	<p>To consider a review of the Overview and Scrutiny function at the Council and to determine what actions, if any, could be taken to improve the process.</p> <p>(Report attached).</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>7. Portfolio Holder Annual Report - Written Report - Leisure and Tourism</p> <p>(Pages 51 - 64)</p> <p>J Godwin, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services</p>	<p>To receive and consider a report outlining the performance of services within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism.</p> <p>(Report attached).</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>8. Actions List</p> <p>(Pages 65 - 66)</p>	<p>To note the contents of the Overview and Scrutiny Actions List.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>9. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Work Programme</p> <p>(Pages 67 - 80)</p>	<p>To consider the minutes of the latest meeting(s) of the Executive Committee and also to consider whether any items on the Executive Work Programme are suitable for scrutiny.</p> <p>(Minutes attached).</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>10. Task & Finish Reviews - Draft Scoping Documents</p>	<p>To consider any scoping documents provided for possible Overview and Scrutiny review.</p> <p>(No reports attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>

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<p>11. Task and Finish Groups - Progress Reports</p> <p>Councillor Andrew Brazier, Councillor Juliet Brunner, Councillor Gay Hopkins</p>	<p>To consider progress to date on the current reviews against the terms set by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The current reviews in progress are:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">a) Arts and Culture Centre – Chair, Councillor Gay Hopkins;b) Concessionary Rents – Councillors Andrew Brazier and Juliet Brunner; andc) Redditch Market – Chair, Councillor Andrew Brazier. <p>(Oral reports)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>12. Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Councillor Pat Witherspoon</p>	<p>To receive a verbal update on the recent work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>(Verbal report)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>13. Referrals</p>	<p>To consider any referrals to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee direct, or arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Executive Committee or full Council• Other sources. <p>(No separate report).</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>
<p>14. Work Programme</p> <p>(Pages 81 - 86)</p>	<p>To consider the Committee's current Work Programme, and potential items for addition to the list arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Forward Plan / Committee agendas• External publications• Other sources. <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance);</p>

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15. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Borough Director, during the course of the meeting to consider excluding the public from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:

“That, under S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (to be specified) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act”.

These paragraphs are as follows:

Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to:

- Para 1 – any individual;
- Para 2 – the identity of any individual;
- Para 3 – financial or business affairs;
- Para 4 – labour relations matters;
- Para 5 – legal professional privilege;
- Para 6 – a notice, order or direction;
- Para 7 – the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime;

and may need to be considered as ‘exempt’.

(No Specific Ward Relevance);



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MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Simon Chalk (Vice Chair in the Chair), and Councillors David Bush, John Fisher, Andrew Fry, Roger Hill Gay Hopkins, Yvonne Smith and Pat Witherspoon.

Also Present:

Councillor Debbie Taylor

Ms T Buckley and Mr R Colebrook (Co-opted Members, Unison).

Officers:

T Beech, H Broughton, C Felton, D Poole, G Revans, I Roberts, J Staniland, M Stanley and J Willis

Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley and M Craggs

91. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Brunner, Brazier and P Hill.

Councillors R Hill and Smith were confirmed as substituting for Councillors Brunner and P Hill respectively.

92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

93. MINUTES

The Committee considered the minutes of the previous meeting, held on Tuesday 9th October 2012.

Concerns were expressed by some Members that minute 78 did not reflect the full detail of the responses that had been provided during

.....
Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 6th November, 2012

the annual report for the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport, in response to a number of subsidiary questions that had been proposed by Members. It was suggested that additional information should be added for this item, particularly on the subject of the Eastern Gateway, and more detailed minutes should be produced for future meetings.

However, other Members commented that a detailed account had been provided in the minutes, both through the attachment of a written version of the answers provided by the Portfolio Holder as an appendix, and in the rest of the minutes. Concerns were also expressed that if additional detail was added the minutes would become too lengthy.

It was noted that Officers did not produce a verbatim record of proceedings but rather summarised points raised during a meeting. The minutes reflected the hand written record taken by Officers during the meeting, and it was suggested that this record should be reviewed to identify whether any additional content could be added to the minutes.

RESOLVED that

subject to the content of minute 78 being reviewed, the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9th October 2012 be approved as a correct record of the meeting and signed by the Chair.

94. PROPOSED REVISED ARRANGEMENTS FOR PERFORMANCE REPORTING

The Committee received a presentation on the future of performance reporting at Redditch Borough Council.

Members were advised that performance monitoring arrangements had been reviewed as part of the ongoing transformation process. The performance framework would differ in many respects from the previous quarterly reporting system. The focus would no longer be on meeting performance targets. Instead, the aim would be to use the data provided in the reports to improve the performance of services.

The Council was currently in a transitional period for the transformation of services. A number of teams had been involved in the transformation process for some time, though other teams had only recently started to become involved in transformation.

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Through transformation residents were consulted directly, their demands were identified and services were then adapted to meet their needs accordingly.

The needs of residents identified through consultation had formed the basis of the Council's key strategic purposes. Nine strategic purposes had been identified and would be used to measure the performance of Council services. These measures would not remain static. Instead, the strategic purposes would continue to be reviewed as the transformation process progressed to ensure that Council services could adapt to meet changing needs and circumstances.

The performance monitoring reports would be presented in a new format using graphs and charts, which would enable Members and Officers to interpret performance data. In the long-term the performance reports would be made available for all Members and staff to view on the Council's intranet.

The Council's process for managing complaints about service performance was discussed by the Committee. Officers advised that many of the complaints received by the Council related to practices that had not been in place prior to transformation and it was anticipated that transformation would help to resolve some of the problems identified by customers. However, the Council took all complaints seriously and liaised with residents in order to try to resolve the issues that caused the complaints.

Concerns were expressed that some residents might be reluctant to make complaints about service performance. In particular, Members commented that some residents might feel anxious about the potential impact that a complaint about a service might have on the quality of the services they received from the Council in future. Further information was therefore requested about how the Council reassured residents in these circumstances.

The Committee was informed that the new reporting framework was not due to be introduced until spring 2013. Prior to this date Officers would be delivering member development sessions focusing on the new reporting framework.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

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95. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORT - ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH - COUNCILLOR DEBBIE TAYLOR

Further to consideration of the Portfolio Holder for Environment and Health's written report at the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 9th October 2012 Councillor Taylor provided a response to Members' questions as detailed in Appendix 1. Additional information was provided in relation to the following subjects:

a) Allotments

The Committee was advised that there was 98 per cent occupancy of the Council's allotments. The exact number of allotments available within the town, the number of vacant allotments and the distribution of allotments across the Borough could not be confirmed at the date of the meeting. However, Members discussed the potential value of introducing more allotments within the Borough. Some Members suggested that more allotments could be provided to meet increasing demand. On Other Members expressed concerns that the high occupancy rates reflected the need for residents to grow their own food in difficult economic circumstances and there was a risk that these levels would not necessarily be sustained once the economy recovered.

b) Footpaths

There were a number of footpaths in the town. Whilst some of the footpaths were the responsibility of Redditch Borough Council other footpaths were the responsibility of Worcestershire County Council. The Council's GIS system was used to maintain an accurate record of the footpaths that were the property of Redditch Borough Council.

c) Renewable Energy

Members were advised that there had been an under spend of approximately £90,000 on the budget that had been allocated to the installation of solar panels. The remaining budget would need to be allocated to renewable energy projects involving the Council's Housing stock as the funds had been derived from the Council's Housing Revenue Account (HRA). There were a number of options that could be explored for the use of this budget including the installation of biomass boilers in some properties, though a variety of options were currently in the process of being reviewed.

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d) Landscaping

There was the potential for transformation to contribute to improvements to the landscaping services provided by the Council. As part of this process the timescales that the Council had traditionally followed when maintaining hedgerows and cutting grass on Council land would be reviewed to ensure that the works were completed in a timely fashion that minimised disruption to residents and businesses.

e) Trees

Each year a number of trees were felled for a variety of reasons. The Council's policy was to replace the trees that were felled. Increasingly, Officers were ensuring that the trees planted in a particular location were suitable for the environment in which they would grow.

The potential for Ash Dieback Tree Fungal Disease to impact on trees situated in the Borough was discussed in detail. By the date of the meeting no confirmed cases of the disease had been identified in trees located in the Borough. However, the Council was aware of the potential risks, particularly due to the large number of trees and woodland areas in the Borough.

There was the potential that lessons could be learned from the way that local authorities had responded to outbreaks of Dutch Elm Disease. There was also the possibility that a number of trees would develop resistance to the disease. To ensure that the Council responded appropriately to any outbreaks Officers were continuing to monitor the situation.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

96. REDDITCH SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY

The Committee was advised that the report contained the six month review of the progress that had been made in meeting the key priorities for the Borough outlined in the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy.

The strategy had been developed by the Redditch Partnership, the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) in the Borough. The core work of the partnership was co-ordinated by a central partnership board,

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comprising representatives from the public sector, private sector, voluntary and community sector. The LSP was not a statutory body. However, the local authority had a legal requirement to produce a Sustainable Community Strategy, which reflected the needs and priorities of the local community.

There were four key priorities in the strategy: health inequalities; education attainment; employment; and areas of deprivation. Sub-Groups had been established to address two of these priorities: the Health and Well Being Group and the Education Sub-Group. Action Plans had been provided for three of the priority areas for Members' consideration.

The Redditch and Bromsgrove Commissioning Group had awarded Redditch and Bromsgrove approximately £250,000 for health projects in both areas. The Health and Well Being Action Plan provided further information about these projects and the expenditure required. Officers were anticipating that additional funding would be secured in 2013/14, though the amount of funding that would be provided remained to be confirmed.

The Education Action Plan was designed to focus on early intervention. However, Worcestershire County Council was in the process of restructuring their early intervention and children's centre teams, a process which would not be completed until April 2013. At that stage the Education Action Plan would be reviewed and updated.

An Action Plan had also been produced for the "Winning Winyates" Area of Highest Needs Project. The project was designed to address the needs of residents living and working in Winyates, one of the areas of deprivation in the Borough. A variety of actions had been taken or were in the process of being delivered as part of this project including: the installation of a secure access system for the flats in Winyates district centre; healthy eating initiatives; and a traders group project.

Members commented that a limited number of the projects were targeted at elderly residents. This had occurred because traditionally Redditch had had a youthful population. However, the census in 2011 had demonstrated that the number of older residents had increased. This demographic data would be considered as part of any future reviews of the Sustainable Community Strategy.

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RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

97. INCREASING RATES OF RECYCLING - MONITORING REPORT UPDATE

A monitoring update report on the implementation of recommendations that had been made by the Increasing Rates of Recycling Review Group in March 2012 was presented for the Committee's consideration. Additional information was provided in relation to the following matters:

a) Grey bins

The Council's priority was to promote recycling and reuse of resources to residents. Extra grey bins were only provided to residents as a last resort. Media campaigns were increasingly being used to raise awareness of the benefits of recycling in order to discourage requests for grey bins.

b) Transformation

A Transformation Project Team had been established in Environmental Services. Two service operatives were involved in the project and they were helping the team to identify improvements that could be made in the delivery of collection services. The team had already concluded that improvements could be made to the way bins were returned to residents on collection days.

c) 100 per cent Project

Progress had been made in extending recycling services to properties that had not previously been in receipt of the service. However, a number of areas, such as Winyates district centre, were not yet in receipt of the service. Officers were working to address the barriers, which varied between areas, to extending recycling services across the Borough.

d) Envirosort Visit

New Members were invited to participate in a visit to the Envirosort facility in Norton. The scrutiny group had visited the centre as part of their review and this visit had contributed to their understanding of the subject.

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e) Member Training

The Environmental Services Team were in the process of producing a route optimisation plan. Officers were aiming to deliver Member Briefings on the subject of this plan in 2013. During the briefing information would also be provided about the numbers of grey and green bins in the Borough.

f) Recycling Rates

Some concerns were expressed about the extent to which recycling rates had increased over the previous six months. However, Members were advised that whilst there had only been a relatively small increase in recycling rates in that period it was anticipated that the levels of recycling would improve further over the following 12 months. In particular, specific parts of the Borough where low recycling rates had been identified were being targeted through active media campaigns.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

98. CONCESSIONARY RENTS PRE-SCRUTINY SHORT, SHARP REVIEW

The Committee agreed that, due to the absence of the two Members who had undertaken the review, the item should be deferred for consideration at the following meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th December 2012.

RESOLVED that

the item be deferred for consideration at the following meeting of the Committee on 11th December 2012.

99. SICKNESS POLICY PRE-SCRUTINY SHORT, SHARP REVIEW

The Committee received the final report of the Sickness Policy Pre-Scrutiny Short, Sharp Review Group, which was presented by the members of the group; Councillors Fisher and Witherspoon.

The Committee was advised that the group had not been permitted to access the new Sickness Absence Policy proposed by Officers during their review. The Councillors had been prevented from

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scrutinising the report because, in accordance with the Council's constitution, Overview and Scrutiny Members were not entitled to access reports in a draft form. Members were advised that the report from Officers was not due to be finalised until Monday 12th November.

During the course of the review the group had, however, received evidence from a wide range of sources. An overview had been provided about the changes that Officers were proposing to the Council's Sickness Absence Policy. The content of the Council's existing Sickness Absence Policy had also been considered alongside policies adopted by other local authorities. A number of expert witnesses had been interviewed during the review including: representatives of the Council's Finance department; representatives of Human Resources; the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, Councillor Mould; and union representatives from UCATT and Unison.

The Committee's co-opted members, from the union Unison, welcomed the review and noted that the group's recommendations reflected a common sense approach to managing staff absences due to sickness. Members were advised that Redditch Borough Council had a good track record in managing sickness absences. However, the review was considered to be timely, following the introduction of service transformation and shared services. In particular, it was suggested that the review would help managers to support staff absent due to stress related illnesses.

During the course of the group's interviews with union representatives the subject of a staff survey had been discussed. Members had recognised the potential value of the survey. However, the group had concluded that further work needed to be undertaken to review the potential uses of a survey.

The content of the proposed A5 laminated guide to the Sickness Absence Policy was discussed in detail. The group explained that the aim of this recommendation would be to ensure that employees were provided with simple guidance notes that could be referred to in the event of unexpected sickness. A simple guide was considered to be of more practical assistance to staff in these circumstances than reference to a lengthier policy document. To reassure staff that the guide was intended to be a practical tool it was suggested that consideration should be given as to the most appropriate method to use to communicate the introduction of the guide to staff.

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RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the Council's Sickness Absence Policy should be updated and reduced in length, in order to clarify the structure and process for managing both short-term and long-term sickness absences;**
- 2) **the terminology used in the policy be sensitive to the needs of staff experiencing sickness;**
- 3) **an A5 laminated guide to the Council's Sickness Absence Policy should be provided for the use of managers and staff;**
- 4) **all changes to the Council's Sickness Absence Policy should be communicated to managers and staff;**
- 5) **the Sickness Absence Policy should be included in the induction process for new staff and managers employed by the Council;**
 - a) **staff and managers should also receive regular refresher training;**
- 6) **the Sickness Absence Policy should be applied consistently to staff across all service areas, but managers should be encouraged, recognising individual circumstances and different working environments to apply the policy appropriately;**
- 7) **the occupational health service available to staff experiencing sickness should be reviewed;**
- 8) **communication should form an integral part of the transformation process to ensure that staff understand the reasons for changes made to services as part of the transformation process and how transformation may impact on them; and**

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

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100. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORT - WRITTEN REPORT - COMMUNITY SAFETY & REGULATORY SERVICES

The Committee received a written report outlining the performance of services within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services, Councillor Blake. Members noted that they were due to propose questions for the consideration of the Portfolio Holder, and to invite her to address these questions at the following meeting of the Committee.

However, Members expressed concerns about retaining the annual report on the agenda for the December meeting of the Committee. The annual reports had been taking a significant amount of time to address during recent meetings of the Committee. As a consequence, Members commented that they were unable to dedicate appropriate time to consider other items on the agenda nor did the Committee have sufficient time to reflect on the information that had already been provided by Portfolio Holders.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the annual report from the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety and Regulatory Services be cancelled; and**
- 2) **the Portfolio Holder be advised of these arrangements accordingly.**

101. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE - SIX MONTH REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE FUNCTION

The Committee agreed that, due to the absence of the Chair of the Committee, the item should be deferred for consideration at the following meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th December 2012.

RESOLVED that

the item be deferred for consideration at the following meeting of the Committee on 11th December 2012.

102. ACTIONS LIST

Members noted that information about the Education Business Partnership, requested at a meeting of the Committee in June, had now been circulated for Members' consideration. In addition, following publication of the agenda pack Officers had provided further information about the Redditch Development Model.

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RESOLVED that

the Committee's Actions List be noted.

103. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the minutes from the meeting of the Executive committee held on 16th October 2012. Members noted that all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on the subject of the Dial a Ride Extended Service Feasibility study had been approved during that meeting.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the Executive Committee meeting held on 16th October 2012 be noted; and**
- 2) the Executive Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

104. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

There were no draft scoping documents.

105. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

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

- a) Arts and Culture Centre – Chair, Councillor Gay Hopkins

Councillor Hopkins reported that the review was progressing rapidly. Members had visited arts centres in other parts of the country and had interviewed a number of expert witnesses. At forthcoming meetings Members were due to learn more about the sources of funding available to support the arts and current arts provision within the Borough.

- b) Redditch Market – Chair, Councillor Andrew Brazier

Members were advised that the group had recently interviewed the new manager of the Kingfisher Shopping Centre about the potential for joint working. The group had also consulted with local market traders and customers in order to obtain further information about how the market could be improved.

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The group were due to undertake a significant amount of consultation work in December and January. To ensure that the information provided during this consultation could help to inform the group's final recommendations the group were requesting that the deadline for the review be extended by a month.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the deadline for completion of the Redditch Market review be extended to Tuesday 5th February 2013; and**
- 2) **the update reports be noted.**

106. HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Councillor Witherspoon advised Members that the latest meeting of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) had taken place on Tuesday 6th November 2012.

Representatives of the Joint Services Review (JSR) had attended the meeting to discuss latest progress with the review. Three preferred models had been identified and further information would be provided about each option in December. Further public consultation on the subject was subsequently due to take place in January – March 2013. Financial sustainability of future service delivery had also been discussed. Members of HOSC had been advised that savings of £15 million would need to be made over the following two years.

During the HOSC meeting it had been reported that some of the highest performing GPs in the country worked in Worcestershire. In addition, figures recorded for Worcestershire demonstrated some of the lowest admission rates to hospitals in the country.

Members expressed concerns that the Alexandra Hospital had recently been penalised for admitting too many patients. This had not been discussed at the latest meeting of HOSC. However, members of HOSC had previously been reassured about the outcomes of this issue.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

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107. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

108. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee's Work Programme was considered and the following subjects were raised for further discussion:

a) Overview and Scrutiny Budget Briefing

Members were advised that a special briefing on the subject of the Council's budget in 2013-14 would be delivered on Thursday 29th November 2012.

b) Call-in Briefing

The Committee noted that a briefing for all Members would take place at 6.30 immediately prior to the following meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 11th December 2012.

c) CfPS Parliamentary Seminar Series

Officers reported that the latest round of Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS) Parliamentary Seminar Series would be taking place on 12th December 2012, 6th February and 6th March 2013 in London. Participation in this training would cost £40 per member and attendance would be subject to the approval of group leaders.

d) West Midlands Regional Scrutiny Network

The Committee noted that the following meeting of the West Midlands Regional Scrutiny Network was due to take place during the day on Thursday 6th December 2012 at Birmingham Council House. Members were invited to advise Officers in advance if they were intending to attend the meeting.

RESOLVED that

the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 6th November, 2012

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.10 pm

Overview & Scrutiny Committee

No Direct Ward Relevance

6th November 2012

APPENDIX 1

PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORTS: QUESTIONS AND SUBJECTS FOR DISCUSSION WITH COUNCILLOR DEBBIE TAYLOR, PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

The following questions have been suggested by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. These questions will be posed to Councillor Debbie Taylor, Portfolio Holder for Local Environment and Health at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on Tuesday 6th November 2012.

1) Please could you outline what you consider to be:

a) The successes within the remit of your Portfolio?

The following areas have been successes:

- i) Joint procurement of two new refuse vehicles with Bromsgrove District Council.
- ii) Achieving gold in the 2012 Britain in Bloom competition. Staff worked hard to deliver a successful display despite the poor weather conditions.
- iii) Green flag awards for the parks in Redditch.
- iv) Progress had been made in relation to addressing climate change.
- v) Allotment occupancy rates have increased. Allotments provide people with an affordable source of food at a time when food is expensive.

b) Areas of concern within the remit of your Portfolio?

Funding cuts

As all Members will be aware over the last two years Redditch BC has seen a reduction in its Central Govt grant funding. So far these cuts have been absorbed and the public have seen no reduction in the services that directly impact on them e.g. Waste, Landscape, Street Cleansing, Parks, etc. However, the economic situation nationally is still not good and it is very likely that the government will impose further cuts to council funding and therefore authority will have to make further cuts.

Whilst we anticipate that the transformation process will help us deal with the known reductions in funding to maintain services by looking at more efficient and effective methods of service delivery, the unknown nature regarding size and scale of any other cuts that may be required are a real worry with regard to how they might impact on service delivery.

Green Deal

Will the Green Deal deliver what is needed with regard to improving energy efficiency and contribute to reductions in climate change impacts?

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The Government has launched the Green Deal. However, information is coming out slowly from government regarding the details, which means that we still have a limited understanding of how this will impact on the Council, partners and our residents.

How this will actually work in terms of how the Council and its partners will be involved in delivery, funding, etc. is being worked up in partnership with the County Council and other district Councils. The key unknown and risk is what the take up will be from residents for what effectively will be a loan to improve the energy efficiency of homes (that will be attached to a property rather than an individual) and paid back via the fuel bill, is a major unknown.

The Hospital remains an area of concern with the possible downgrading of the Alexandra Hospital. The campaign has been good at raising awareness. The options remain to be announced. Once they have been announced a response will be provided.

(Within your answer please could you refer to the impact of recent budget cuts on resurfacing of footpaths in the Borough).

Answer:

- a) The majority of footpaths in Redditch are maintained by Worcestershire County Council.
- b) There are no immediate areas of concern relating to the footpaths in MSP, as Officers have focussed on the main two areas and resolved the issues that lead to the budget bid being submitted. Officers will continue to monitor the situation and should any future issues present themselves, this will be addressed through the normal Council procedures/policies.

2) **Why has there been an under spend on the budget for the Solar PV project? What will the surplus funds remaining be spent on?**

Answer:

Although we are still negotiating the final invoices, subject to the successful completion of the final installation in October 2012, there will be an underspend of the total £275,000 HRA budget allocated for installation of solar PV panels on sheltered housing sites of around **£90,000**. The reason for the underspend was that a number of prospective housing sites were simply unsuitable for the installation of PV panels, for example having north facing roofs, or being heavily shaded by oak trees, e.g. at the Evesham Road site. A full report on the outcomes of the PV panels including which sites were included will come through to the Climate Change Advisory Panel in due course and monitoring of payback times and performance will also be included on the agenda on a regular basis.

Officers advise that the surplus funds would ideally be used on other renewable systems, although a full investigation into this has yet to begin. Mainly the hold up is due to a delay in the Government's announcement of the new Renewable Heat Incentive (similar to the feed in tariff scheme for electricity, but for heating). Once this is announced, we will be able to work

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out whether or not there is a sensible business case to invest in renewable heating on our housing sites e.g. to supplement the costs of install a biomass boiler at one of the larger sheltered housing sites when it's communal gas boiler is due for replacement.

- 3) **The written report for your portfolio stated that “progress has been made on the transfer of assets under Section 106 agreement at Brockhill. The initial transfer of two areas that contain the majority of POS and drainage features will lead to the ‘unlocking’ of other transfer funds How long will it take to transfer these assets?**

Answer:

Last week the Council completed the transfer of Area 1 (the main area of open space at Brockhill)) from Persimmon. This means we can now liaise with the County Council as the Highway authority and Severn Trent Water to get the associated roads and sewers adopted by them.

We will then concentrate on the remaining but smaller areas of open space on the development to resolve outstanding issues which include drainage problems and encroachment by local residents, so that those areas can be adopted. Some roads and sewers will remain unadopted until this is achieved.

We appreciate that residents and Members believe that progress has been slow, but unfortunately, for a variety of reasons this has proved to be a complex process which takes time to resolve.

- 4) **What progress has been made on transformation of the services within your remit and what impact are you anticipating transformation will have on those services?**

Answer:

Originally, a cross section of officers and operatives from the waste collection crews at both Council's were brought together to form a team to look at transformation. The intention for the transformation team was to focus on the Waste Management side of Environmental Services. It was planned that the route optimisation project would be included in the transformation programme in order to rationalise and improve the efficiency of the waste collection rounds in both Redditch and Bromsgrove. However, very quickly it became clear to the team that the waste services being provided by the department were only a small part of many intrinsically linked jobs and services that impact on the community. This led to the realisation that the scope of the transformation team needed to be expanded to include Street Cleansing and Landscape/Grounds Maintenance in order to look at and understand the 'bigger picture'. The team now intends to transform all Environmental Services together – with Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance joining the team in the near future.

The team has also adopted broader 'strategic' purposes rather than developing the operational purposes identified at the beginning of scoping. In doing so the team now have a much wider outlook on the services provided and the environments they manage. More importantly it has provided them with a broader outlook as to how they could interact with

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other services provided by the authorities and partners. To this end officers from Leisure Services, Housing and from the County Council and other partner organisations will be either asked to join the transformation team or be pulled in when their input is required.

The team have been looking at the types, frequencies and sources of demand; gathering and cleansing data to reflect true demand, identifying current service standards, identifying system conditions and good and bad practices. They have also been looking at reactive demand, value and failure demand, identifying proactive work types and synergies within services.

Route optimisation has been identified as the first priority and therefore the transformation team is being split to allow delivery of this key project that will realise efficiencies in the collection of waste across the Borough the other part of the team will concentrate the wider transformation of Environmental Services, including customer interaction and data capture.

At this stage it is not possible to say exactly how transformation will change the way that service are delivered but I would hope that they are more consistent, customer focused and efficient

5) How many trees is Redditch Borough Council due to plant in the next twelve months – two years?

Answer:

422 ordered by the in-house team;
420 confirmed to be donated by the Woodland Trust.

6) As Redditch Borough Council's representative on the Health and Wellbeing Board how do you report back to Council?

Answer:

I am a member of the Redditch Health and Well Being Group, which is a sub-group of the Redditch Partnership. The Chair of this Group, Hilary Sharpe (Public Health), who chairs the H&W Group meeting, reports back up to the Partnership Board which Councillors Bill Hartnett, Greg Chance and Carole Gandy all sit on so they would know what is happening through this mechanism. The minutes of each Partnership Board meeting are published on the RBC webpage (under the Partnership section) so Members can see updates on health that way. Councillor Hartnett as Chair of the Partnership also gives a yearly round up of Redditch Partnership activities at full Council so that all Councillors have some awareness of the Partnership's activities. In addition, the Council's Partnership Manager, Helen Broughton, attends this Committee every six months to provide an update on partnership activities, including the Health and Well Being Action Plan.

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- 7) **Which organisations have been identified to deliver healthy eating and cookery sessions?**

Answer:

Cooking skills, cooking facilities and the ability and confidence to prepare healthier foods are all barriers to healthy eating, particularly for those on low incomes. Through Clinical Commissioning Group funding a healthy Cookery project is being established. A programme of healthy eating and cooking training sessions are planned to train up local organisations across the Borough to deliver these sessions locally. This will include the Redditch Children's Centres, the Health Trainers, the Winning Winyates Project and voluntary organisations.

- 8) **LED lighting was introduced at the Palace Theatre relatively recently. What plans, if any, are there to extend the provision of LED lighting to other Council properties in order to reduce the Council's carbon footprint?**

Answer:

As it happens, the Council is about to install further LED lighting within the auditorium of the Palace Theatre, as the bulbs are now much more affordable and also have dimming versions, which were not available when the bar and corridor areas of the Palace were upgraded. The payback of the auditorium light bulbs is less than 2 years.

There is scope to undertake further works, for example in balcony and stairwell lights at some of our housing sites. However, a full piece of work needs to be undertaken on the existing projects to identify which forms of lighting upgrades are the most efficient/profitable to evidence further investments. All of the 'low hanging fruit' options have already been completed and paybacks are due to finish in September 2014. At this point, the revolving spend to save fund will be able to pay for further works without affecting existing budgets.

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NB Note draft revision /Update – Page 2. S

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL GUIDE TO / FOR PORTFOLIO HOLDERS

Portfolio Holders are appointed annually by the Council (separate sheet refers) and between them cover all areas of the Council's work and responsibility.

"Portfolio" indicates a specified area of responsibility allotted by formal resolution, for the purposes listed below.

"Portfolio Holder" indicates a member of the Council's Executive Committee who, within the allotted area of responsibility,

CAN	1.	Monitor Council performance informed by documents such as: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Community Strategy • Corporate Plan • Service Plans • Budgets • E.Government statements • BVPI's / Local PI's (separate document available) • Forward Plan 	*
	2.	Monitor the implementation of Council policy and decisions informed, in addition to the above, by <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council reports and Minutes • Personal contact with Officers 	*
	3.	Act as consultee for Members and Officers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Formally, in accordance with approved delegations of authority to Officers • Informally for general reference. 	*
	4.	Act as "Spokesperson" for the Council in relation to Press / Media / outside the Council, but not exclusively (other Members may also have this shared role)	

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		<i>(Council decision – 11th October ??)</i>	
	5.	<p>Act as “Rapporteur”</p> <p>a) to report annually to Overview & Scrutiny on the Services for which the Portfolio Holder has responsibility; and</p> <p>b) to act as a channel for feedback from representatives of outside bodies which fall within the remit of the Portfolio Holder.</p> <p><i>(Council Annual Meeting 22nd May 2006)</i></p>	
	6.	<p><i>the role of Portfolio Holders be expanded to include a higher level of involvement with the Local Strategic Partnership, and, more specifically, with relevant Sub-Groups of the Redditch Partnership, as and when formed.</i></p> <p><i>(Exec January 2007 / Council ...)</i></p>	
CANNOT		Act with delegated authority in any personal capacity (PFHs cannot therefore commit resources – financial / staffing, without further authority – Exec., Council, or Officer authority)	
			*
MAY	1.	Represent and “sponsor” their allotted Portfolio(s) at meetings of the Executive and the Council, and, <i>where appropriate</i> , at other Council meetings, e.g. O&S.	
	2.	Develop closer working relationship with relevant lead Directors and, via Directors, other relevant Officers.	
	3.	<p>Attend relevant meetings, e.g. relevant O&S meetings, beyond those to which formally appointed by the Council</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • As an approved duty where invited to the meeting • Also as an approved duty when present on own initiative. <p style="text-align: right;">in accordance with current approved constitutional requirements.</p>	
	4.	<p>Seek to trigger reports to</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Executive or Council, via normal report / agenda preparation processes • Regulatory Committees, via normal report / 	

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		<p>agenda preparation processes</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview and Scrutiny Committee <p>in accordance with current approved constitutional requirements.</p>	

G:M&C/Members/Portfolio Holder Guide
& Constitution / Const.documents/revised sms/8.7.6/16.7.7

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APRIL - SEPTEMBER (QUARTER 2) - FINANCE MONITORING REPORT 2012/13

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Phil Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management.
Portfolio Holder Consulted	
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	
Non Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report details the Council's financial position for the period April to September 2012 (Quarter 2 - 2012/13).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to RESOLVE that the current financial position on Revenue and Capital be noted, as detailed in the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 This report provides details of the financial information across the Council. The aim is to ensure Officers and Members can make informed and considered judgement of the overall position of the Council.

Financial Implications

- 3.2 The Council set a balanced budget in February 2012 for the financial year 2012/13. Within the budget were included savings of £654K which were not fully identified. These included savings relating to Shared Services, Transformation, and general vacancies within the Council.

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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 2 (April – September) 2012/13 –
Overall Council**

- 3.3 The current financial position for services delivered within the Borough is detailed in the table below.
- 3.4 Internal recharges have not been included in these figures to allow comparison for each service area.

Service Head	Budget 2012/13 £'000	Budget April - September £'000	Actual spend April - September £'000	Variance to date April - September £'000	Projected Outturn £'000	Projected Variance Full Year £'000
Environmental Services	3,642	1,994	1,999	5	3,637	-5
Community Services	2,182	1,042	1,037	-5	2,169	-13
Regulatory Services	573	293	284	-9	563	-10
Leisure & Cultural Services	3,915	1,986	2,012	26	3,944	29
Planning & Regeneration	1,694	756	782	26	1,778	84
Customer Services	793	393	358	-35	727	-66
Finance & Resources	5,418	2,951	3,042	91	5,508	90
Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	1,153	602	606	4	1,114	-39
Business Transformation	1,086	597	597	0	1,086	-
Head of Housing Services	924	462	451	-11	913	-11
Corporate Services	1,190	772	781	9	1,179	-11
SERVICE TOTAL	22,570	11,848	11,949	101	22,618	48

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Financial Commentary

3.5 Environmental Services

- a) There is an assumption that S106 income will be received during the year for maintenance of adopted land, and cleansing. If this money is not received there would be an unavoidable pressure up to the value of 112k.
- b) On street parking enforcement income is projecting a shortfall of 35k.
- c) Bereavement Services income has projected a shortfall of 14k due to the closure while capital works were being completed.
- d) Savings have been made within waste management of 30k.

3.6 Leisure & Cultural Services

- a) The Learn Direct service is projecting a shortfall of income due to a change in the funding stream and a lower than expected number of users. The shortfall is expected to be £20K.
- b) Salary costs are higher than expected for 4th Tier Managers due to additional responsibilities following the shared service. This is estimated at £23K.
- c) The Community Centres have not made the savings expected of £20K. As 2 sites were due to be closed, this has not yet been achieved and work is ongoing.
- d) There is additional income forecasted elsewhere within the Service which is projected to partially off-set the overspends identified above.

3.7 Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services

The legal underspend is largely due to maternity leave and the fact that posts were not filled until part way through the financial year as a result of the shared service restructure. In addition half a post remains vacant in the legal team to support the transformational work that has been done in housing, revenues and benefits which has revealed compelling evidence to support the need for additional debt management and income maximisation support to be made available to our customers. The Head of Service has undertaken some work to identify costs historically allocated to debt recovery and realigned the same in a trial exercise to support the provision of income

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maximisation and debt advice to customers. Whilst there is an underspend currently identified in the area it is likely that this will reduce before the end of the financial year as the support for this trial continues.

3.8 Planning & Regeneration

- a) There is an overspend on Building Control of £28K; this is due to redundancy costs following the shared service.
- b) There are a number of vacant units at the in the Business Centres, resulting in lower than expected rents on this service. This service is expected to cost an additional £48K.
- c) The salaries for the 4th tier Managers within the service have been regarded due to the additional responsibility relating to managing a shared service. £9K

3.9 Customer Services

The underspend within the customer services department is due to a number of vacancies that exist within the department and spending has been reduced to a minimum.

3.10 Finance and Resources

- a) Benefit Services have made savings of 28k due to services being shared with Bromsgrove District Council, however the variance to date and outturn will show an overspend due to increased payments in benefits due to the economic downturn. HRA 45K, homelessness 10k (additional B&B costs), rent allowance 20k.
- b) Investment Properties forecast an overspend due to increased NNDR on some of the properties and also underachieved rent of 43k.

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3.11 Capital Budget summary Quarter 12 (April - September) 2012/13 – Overall Council

Department	Budget 2012/13 £'000	Actual spend April – September £'000	Remaining Balance 2012/13 £'000
Business Transformation	115	31	84
Environmental Services	3,817	2,116	1,701
Regulatory Services	100	0	100
Community Services	952	234	718
Leisure & Cultural Services	150	29	121
Finance & Resources	745	250	495
Housing Services (inc HRA)	8,597	4,913	3,684
Total	14,476	7,573	6,903

Financial Commentary:

- The Capital expenditure is on track to be spent during this financial year.
- The Budget for Regulatory Services will be spent during the latter half of the year.
- There is an underspend on Community Services due to a lower take up of grants available to the public such as DFG's
- Financial Services is awaiting invoices from WCC who manage the building on our behalf.

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Treasury Management

- 3.12 The Council's Treasury Management Strategy has been developed in accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance prudential indicators and is used to manage risks arising from financial instruments. Additionally treasury management practices are followed on a day to day basis.

Credit Risk

- 3.13 Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the Council's customers. Credit risk is minimised by use of a specified list of investment counterparty criteria and by limiting the amount invested with each institution.
- 3.14 At 30th September 2012, short-term investments comprise:

	30th September 2012 £000
Deposits with Banks/Building Societies	4,500

Income from investments

- 3.15 An investment income target of £79k has been set for 2012/13 using a projected rate of return of 0.75% - 1.50%. During the past financial year, bank base rates have remained at 0.50% and current indications are projecting minimal upward movement for the short-term.
- 3.16 In the 6 months to 30th September, the Council earned income from investments of £45k. The Council is on track to achieve the budget on investments for 2012.
- 3.17 The Council's Treasury Management Strategy has been developed in accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance prudential indicators and is used to manage risks arising from financial instruments. Additionally treasury management practices are followed on a day to day basis.

General Fund Balances

- 3.18 The General Fund Balance as at the 31st March 2012 is £1,289K; the budget set in February 2012, amended on 23rd July 2012 included an estimated use of balance of £192K.

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- 3.19 Any overspend on Revenue Budgets would have to be funded from Balances, thus affecting future year budgeted use of balances.

Legal Implications

- 3.20 No Legal implications have been identified.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.21 Sound performance management and data quality are keys to achieving improved scores in the Use of Resources judgement. This performance report supports that aim.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.22 Performance Improvement is a Council Objective.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk considerations are covered within the report.

5. APPENDICES

None.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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**CONCESSIONARY RENTS – PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY, SHORT, SHARP
REVIEW – FINAL REPORT**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Phil Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management.
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No, the Portfolio Holder was not interviewed by the group.
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources.
Ward(s) Affected	No specific ward relevance.
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report presents the findings of the Concessionary Rents Pre-Scrutiny Short Sharp Review Group. The report should be considered alongside the Concessionary Rents Policy produced by Officers for the consideration of Members.
- 1.2 The Group was not permitted to view the content of the Concessionary Rents Policy prior to the time of writing, although they did receive an overview outlining the proposals that were due to be made by Officers on the subject.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that:

- 1) That any Council policy on concessionary rents ensure that a consistent, fair and transparent approach is applied to dealing with applications from third sector organisations;
- 2) That any third sector organisation looking to obtain a concessionary rent from the Council be required to submit a detailed business case outlining their plans for a particular property;
- 3) That Officers facilitate a series of workshops to advertise and promote the new policy to the third sector in Redditch;

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- 4) That the Council work with the local media and utilise social networks and its own website to publicise the new policy to the third sector in Redditch;
- 5) That each approved concessionary rent agreement be for a minimum five year duration, include a three year break clause, and be monitored on an annual basis;
- 6) That the Council undertake a review of the approved policy twenty-four months after its inception;
- 7) That the Council refers all third sector organisations in Redditch looking to obtain a concessionary rent for a Council owned commercial property to the Ethical Property Foundation for independent advice on renting and managing properties; and
- 8) That the Council provide greater clarity on all concessions available to the third sector.

RESOLVE that

the report be noted.

3. KEY ISSUES

Background

- 3.1 The review of Concessionary Rents in Redditch was launched in July 2012. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee appointed Councillors Andrew Brazier and Juliet Brunner to carry out the review.
- 3.2 The Committee requested at its meeting on 17th July 2012 that the exercise be completed as a short, sharp review for pre-decision and be considered alongside the proposed new policy for concessionary rents in Redditch. A pre-decision scrutiny exercise involves members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee looking at an area that is due to be the subject of a report to be considered by the decision making Executive Committee.
- 3.3 The review was undertaken to assess the rationale behind the proposed introduction of the new Council policy for offering concessionary rents to third sector organisations on Council owned commercial properties. This would involve consulting with relevant Council Officers who had been

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tasked with drafting the new policy and with representatives from the third sector in Redditch. It would also involve reviewing the effectiveness of concessionary rents policies that had been implemented by other local authorities.

RECOMMENDATIONS

- 3.4 Further information about each of the Concessionary Rents Short, Sharp Review Group's recommendations is provided below:

Recommendation One: We RECOMMEND that any Council policy on concessionary rents ensure that a consistent, fair and transparent approach is applied to dealing with applications from third sector organisations

- 3.5 During their investigations, the Group heard that there is currently no policy or process in place at the Council for dealing with applications from third sector organisations (TSOs) for concessionary rents. Existing applications from TSOs for concessionary rents in Redditch are therefore dealt with on an ad-hoc basis and assessed entirely on the information submitted by the TSO. It was explained to the Group that having a clear written policy for offering concessionary rents to TSOs in Redditch would provide much needed clarity and transparency on the issue.
- 3.6 Having consulted Bristol City Council about the introduction of their *Community Asset Transfer Policy* (2010), Members were informed that the policy had been successful in ensuring that a consistent approach was applied by the Council to dealing with applications for concessionary rents from local TSOs. The Group was also informed by a prominent third sector representative in Redditch that a clear and transparent policy would likely lead to the Council adopting a fairer approach on this issue.
- 3.7 The Group therefore very much supports the Officers intention that the Council's proposed new policy will provide a consistent, fair, and transparent approach to dealing with applications from TSOs for concessionary rents. The Group asserts that any new policy built upon these principles would tie in very closely with the Council's values of working in partnership with local partners, including the voluntary sector, to deliver its priorities; and promote greater fairness through equal treatment for all affected in the Borough.

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Recommendation Two: We RECOMMEND that any third sector organisations looking to obtain a concessionary rent from the Council be required to submit a detailed business case outlining their plans for a particular property

- 3.8 Through their consultation with Bristol City Council, the Group heard that the Council requires all TSOs to submit a well-prepared business case outlining their detailed plans for renting a particular property. All business cases need to explain in writing how the TSO intends manage and develop the property and provide detailed evidence of how the TSO is able to finance its concessionary rent for the duration of the agreement. It also requires information on the benefits that the agreement is expected to produce both for the TSO/s and Council and how these would be measured, and details of contingency arrangements should the agreement provide unsustainable. Consideration of the business plan is a fundamental element of the Council's assessment process for all applications for community asset transfers, including concessionary rents.
- 3.9 The Group feels that having something in writing in Redditch would be beneficial to both the voluntary sector and Borough Council as it would enable Officers to undertake a thorough assessment of the TSO/s intentions and its ability to deliver on any agreement. Importantly, this would require the TSO/s to be realistic about its ability to pay rent on a Council owned property. This could therefore prevent some TSO/s from forging ahead with an unrealistic application. It would also give the TSO/s the opportunity to explain what added-value in terms of benefits to the community a lease could bring, especially if this was proposed by a consortium of TSOs acting together.
- 3.10 The Group therefore recommends that the submission of a detailed business case from any TSO looking to obtain a concessionary rent to manage a Council owned property for any period of time should become a fundamental feature of how the process would be managed by the Council.

Recommendation Three: We RECOMMEND that Officers facilitate a series of workshops to advertise and promote the new policy to the third sector in Redditch

- 3.11 During its investigations of how concessionary rents policies at other local authorities had been promoted following their introduction, Members were informed by Bristol City Council that they had facilitated a series of workshops to explain why the policy had been established. This enabled the Council to successfully engage with the local voluntary sector as it gave

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local stakeholders the opportunity to quiz Council representatives about the policy and to gain an understanding of how its introduction could be of benefit to them.

- 3.12 The Group feels that it would therefore be prudent for the Borough Council to hold its own workshop/s in the local community setting to help engage the local voluntary sector on this new policy. Members suggest that holding these workshops at various locations across the town where voluntary sector organisations operate or are likely to congregate would be more effective than holding a single event at the Town Hall.

Recommendation Four: We RECOMMEND that the Council work with the local media and utilise social networks and its own website to publicise the new policy to the third sector in Redditch

- 3.13 During its brief investigation into the proposed introduction of concessionary rents in Redditch, the Group was informed that it can be often be difficult for the local authorities to engage comprehensively with all third sector organisations in the particular area, often not least due to their sheer number and diversity. Members therefore feel it is imperative that the new policy is communicated effectively to ensure buy-in from the voluntary sector in Redditch.
- 3.14 The Group suggests that the Council's own website is an obvious facility for communicating this information to the voluntary sector in Redditch. Elsewhere, the Group proposes that the Council draw upon the increasing popularity of social networks as a free and effective means of informing TSOs in Redditch about the policy and how it might be of benefit to them. The Group suggests that relevant Officers work with representatives from the voluntary sector in Redditch regarding how social networks could be utilised most effectively. Finally, the Group proposes that Officers and, potentially, the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, Councillor Phil Mould, work with the local media to more widely publicise the new policy if eventually approved.

Recommendation Five: We RECOMMEND that each approved concessionary rent agreement be for a minimum five year duration, include a three year break clause, and be monitored on an annual basis

- 3.15 During its consultation with Bristol City Council, the Group was informed that a service level agreement is drawn up upon the completion of each community asset transfer to set out the terms of agreement between the

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TSO and Council. Each agreement runs for five years and is monitored on an annual basis.

- 3.16 Having also consulted with a representative from the local voluntary sector, the Group was informed that, for a number of TSOs, the length of the agreement would likely need to be for at least five years to make this a viable proposition for either an individual or consortium of TSOs. This would be especially applicable if they were looking to rent a Council owned property and possessed any significant plans during its occupation, including for possible redevelopment, or if the TSO/s was in the process of bidding for a Council grant and required a longer term lease to make this practicable.
- 3.17 The Group is aware that shorter-term leases, e.g. for a maximum three year period, could appear more suitable for the Council as it would prevent the Council from being tied into a long term period with a TSO unable to satisfy the terms of the agreement. In light of this, the Group recommends that a three year break clause be included in all five year lease agreements as an insurance measure to legally enable the Council to end a lease in the event of this becoming necessary.
- 3.18 The Group feel that this arrangement would therefore provide legal security for the Council in the form of the three-year break clause, and an incentive for a TSO/s to rent a Council owned property for at least a five year period if it acted in accordance with its original agreement with the Council.

Recommendation Six: We RECOMMEND that the Council undertake a review of the approved policy twenty-four months after its inception

- 3.19 The Group was informed that Bristol City Council was about to undertake its first comprehensive review of the Community Asset Transfer Policy it introduced in 2010. It was thought the undertaking of a review after a two year period was timely as it would enable the Council to accurately assess what had worked well and what had not worked so well since the policy's implementation. The Council should therefore be in a position to make changes to the policy accordingly to both its own benefit and that of the local voluntary sector.
- 3.20 The Group recommends that the Borough Council also undertakes a thorough review of its own policy twenty-four months after its inception should it eventually be approved. The Group feels that this would be a suitable point to evaluate how the policy has worked in practice as it would

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provide sufficient opportunity for trends to emerge that could be identified and addressed by relevant Officers.

Recommendation Seven: We RECOMMEND that the Council refers all third sector organisations in Redditch looking to obtain a concessionary rent for a Council owned commercial property to the Ethical Property Foundation for independent advice on renting and managing properties.

- 3.21 The Group was made aware during its investigations that Bristol City Council had worked in partnership with the Ethical Property Foundation when promoting its Community Asset Transfer Policy in 2010 following its introduction. The Foundation, a registered charity, provides comprehensive advice to TSOs on property issues. This includes the provision of expert guidance to enable the TSO to fulfil their property objectives. According to its own website, the consultation falls into six main areas, covering: a feasibility study to assess the viability of owning or renting properties; financial advice; improving premises; making best use of a property; operational management advice; and developing premises. Since 2005, the Foundation has supported over 1,000 TSOs to rent, buy, let, or manage a property.
- 3.22 It is understood that the Foundation is in the process of launching its full property advice service nationally to provide assistance to many more TSOs. It has so far only been able to provide this full service to TSOs based in London or the South West.
- 3.23 Therefore, the Group feels that the expertise held by the Foundation could be extremely beneficial to TSOs in Redditch who are looking to rent a Council owned commercial property, yet require some assistance at any stage of the process. This might involve drawing upon the Foundation's expertise when developing a detailed business case outlining their plans for a particular property, as already recommended by the Group. Furthermore, the Group suggests that this arrangement would ultimately be of benefit to the Council as it would likely strengthen the proposals from each TSO for renting a Council owned property and give the TSO/s a much greater appreciation of how this should be managed in the event of a successful application. Ultimately, this could strengthen the overall concessionary rents process.

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Recommendation Eight: We RECOMMEND that the Council provide greater clarity on all concessions available to the third sector in Redditch

- 3.24 On a related matter, the Group feels that the introduction of the proposed policy for offering concessionary rents for TSOs in Redditch represents an ideal opportunity for the Council to provide greater clarity on what concessions are available to the local voluntary sector.
- 3.25 The Group was informed that the Council currently offers free use of the Civic Suite at the Town Hall to certain TSOs. It is understood that any new organisation requesting this privilege must apply in writing to the Council's Democratic Services Manager for permission, in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, Councillor Phil Mould. Concessionary use is usually reserved for business meetings and does not extend to fund raising activities. These bookings may be cancelled by the Council at short notice if it is in urgent need for the meeting room space.
- 3.26 During its conversation with a third sector representative in Redditch, the Group was advised that this was another example of a concessionary rate offered by the Council which needed to be transparent and clear for all applicable organisations. The representative was not of the understanding that all TSOs in Redditch were aware of this particular concession.
- 3.27 The Group therefore recommends that the Council should provide much greater clarity on this and all concessions available to the third sector in Redditch. The Borough Council's own website is an obvious facility for communicating this information more widely.

Financial Implications

- 3.28 It is possible that a small amount of funding would be required to finance the operation of a series of workshops to advertise the new policy. However, it is expected that these costs would be minimal, especially if these were held in a local community centre as suggested.

Legal Implications

- 3.29 There are no specific legal implications.

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Service / Operational Implications

- 3.30 The review was launched as a pre-decision scrutiny exercise following a decision by Officers to create a new policy for offering concessionary rents to third sector organisations for Council owned commercial properties in Redditch. The Group's final recommendations are intended to compliment and enhance this proposed new policy.
- 3.31 There are no other specific implications.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.32 It is expected that the new policy will create a fairer, open and transparent process for third sector organisations to apply for concessionary rents for Council owned properties in Redditch. It is therefore hoped that this will improve the level of service that the Council provides for the local voluntary sector.
- 3.33 There are no other specific implications.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

No specific risks have been identified.

5. APPENDICES

No appendices

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Bristol City Council, Community Asset Transfer Policy (2010)
Hull City Council, Community Premises Pack (2010)

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE – SIX MONTH REVIEW OF THE COMMITTEE FUNCTION

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Phil Mould, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management.
Portfolio Holder Consulted	N/A
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Ward(s) Affected	No specific ward relevance.
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report reviews the operation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for the first six months of 2012/13. The report is designed to give members of the committee the opportunity to review and reflect on achievements to date and to consider the direction of the committee for the remainder of the municipal year.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- 1) **the suggestions detailed within the report be considered and appropriate actions, if any, be identified to develop the Overview and Scrutiny process in Redditch; and**
- 2) **the report be noted.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Background

- 3.1 All Committees at Redditch Borough Council, including the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, are required to review the operation of the Committee on an annual basis. Traditionally this review has taken place at the end of the municipal year. The timing of the review has not always been suitable for the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as it has tended to coincide with the finalisation of the Committee's Annual Report and therefore has often been regarded as duplication.
- 3.2 However, it is important to review the operation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on a regular basis, separately to recording the achievements of the Committee during the year. Regular monitoring of the Committee function can contribute to continuous improvement in Overview and Scrutiny, enables the Committee to make best use of resources and ensures that the work of the Committee reflects the needs and priorities of residents.

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- 3.3 A review of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is also timely in a context of change at both the local authority and within local government in general. In recent years, the introduction of shared services, with Bromsgrove and other District Councils and service transformation has resulted in significant changes to service delivery. Redditch Borough Council, like many local authorities in the country, also has to make key choices about service delivery and budgetary expenditure at a time when the local government grant has been reduced. An effective Overview and Scrutiny process needs to be able to both respond to these circumstances and help to manage further developments to the benefit of local people.

Current Operation

- 3.4 There are a number of elements in the current operation of the Overview and Scrutiny process in Redditch which reflect best practice including:
- Non-Executive Members in Redditch have traditionally been supportive and enthusiastic champions of Overview and Scrutiny. They have determined which subjects to review as befits a Member-led process.
 - Overview and Scrutiny Members have completed a number of detailed policy reviews in recent years. The quality of this review work was recognised by the Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS), the national co-ordinating body for Overview and Scrutiny, in 2010 when Members were awarded a commendation in the national good scrutiny awards for a review of the former Neighbourhood Groups.
 - Policy reviews tend to involve representatives of all political parties on the Council and have traditionally been undertaken in an apolitical manner in accordance with national best practice.
 - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has developed a constructive working relationship with members of the Executive Committee. In 2011/12 this was reflected in the Executive Committee's response to scrutiny reports when 47 / 54 recommendations were approved.
 - The Council's constitution requires that the Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be members of the opposition party, in accordance with national best practice.
 - The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a positive working relationship with representatives of the local press who regularly attend meetings of the Committee and help to communicate scrutiny work to the public. In 2011/12 31 articles were published in the local press on scrutiny subjects.
 - In accordance with national best practice information about the Overview and Scrutiny process is provided on dedicated web pages on the Council's website.
 - In line with national best practice the Council has emphasised its commitment to Overview and Scrutiny by retaining the support of two Officers with lead

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responsibility for Overview and Scrutiny in the new Democratic shared service.

Development Opportunities

Portfolio Holder Annual Reports

- 3.5 Each year the Portfolio Holders at the Council attend a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to present a Portfolio Holder Annual Report. The Portfolio Holder Annual Report process was introduced in 2007/08 and was intended to enable the Committee to hold individual Portfolio Holders to account. In the first few years the process provided the Committee with an opportunity to learn about the remit of each Portfolio Holder. In recent years the Committee has received a written report outlining the performance of services within the remit of each Portfolio Holder, on the basis of which a number of questions have been asked of the Portfolio Holder.
- 3.6 As with any established practice the Portfolio Holder Annual Report has evolved over the years and now exists in a question and answer format that in many regards is forming the primary focus of each Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting. Members are asked to consider the elements of the report listed below and the extent to which these are effectively meeting their purpose;
- The written report takes a significant amount of time and resources to complete, including input from relatively senior Officers.
 - The Portfolio Holder Annual Reports most frequently have been received for noting by the Committee rather than resulting in any constructive action.
 - Only 6 recommendations have been made following receipt of Portfolio Holder Annual Reports in the five years that the process has been in operation.
 - Due to the number of questions and the length of responses the Portfolio Holder Annual Report frequently requires up to an hour for consideration during a Committee meeting. This lengthens the duration of Committee meetings significantly.
 - The majority of Portfolio Holders are accompanied by relatively senior Officers when they attend meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to present their Annual Reports. This involvement of senior Officers in the process could be considered an expensive use of resources.
 - Portfolio Holders in Redditch do not have any decision making powers as decisions are made collectively by the Executive Committee. Consequently, the extent to which this process involves holding executive decision makers to account is debatable.
- 3.7 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee will understandably be keen to hold the Executive Committee to account for decisions that are taken; indeed this was one of the main reasons for the original report process. There are different ways in which the Executive Committee could be held to account including:

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- Portfolio Holders attending specific meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to help present reports concerning services within their remit as and when appropriate. This is standard practice at a number of other local authorities.
 - Inviting Portfolio Holders to attend meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to account for any problems identified in service delivery and performance. This would typically occur following a period of detailed scrutiny work into a subject.
 - Engaging the Portfolio Holders in scrutiny of the Council's budget through detailed discussions of budget proposals. This could involve interviewing Portfolio Holders at a special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, alongside relevant Officers, prior to the Council's budget being set to ensure that proposals are robust.
 - Interviewing the Portfolio Holders when scrutinising shared services and service transformation. It is likely that Portfolio holders would not be invited to participate in the full exercise but, rather, to submit evidence as a single part of an ongoing review.
 - Involving the Portfolio Holders as expert witnesses in policy review work.
- 3.8 It is unlikely that if changes are made to the process each measure will be adopted at every meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and, indeed, for many items it may not be appropriate to request evidence from Portfolio Holders. Instead Scrutiny Members will need to assess the most appropriate method to use to hold the Executive Committee and / or Portfolio Holders to account on a case by case basis.
- 3.9 Current procedure rules, outlined in the Council's constitution, would permit the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to utilise the methods listed above, where appropriate. However, these procedures will need to be refined and carefully followed as Portfolio Holders should only be required to get involved in scrutiny work when it is considered to be a reasonable request in relation to the subject of a scrutiny review. In addition, as a responsible body the Overview and Scrutiny Committee needs to ensure that Portfolio Holders are only invited to provide evidence a reasonable number of times, as and when necessary.
- 3.10 In each case consideration should be given as to how to ensure that contributions from Portfolio Holders, as well as accompanying Officers, represent an efficient use of resources. Reasonable notice and a clear explanation of the reasons for inviting the Portfolio Holders and Officers should also be provided.
- 3.11 In this context, Members are asked to consider the value of the Portfolio Holder Annual Reports in line with the current operation of the Council and whether, given the current focus on Shared Services and Transformation, an alternative approach might be considered.

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Policy Review Work

- 3.12 Policy review work has been a positive element of the Overview and Scrutiny process in Redditch for many years. Currently two reviews are taking place: the Redditch Market review and the Arts and Culture Centre review. There is capacity at member level for additional reviews to be undertaken as twenty non-executive Councillors are available to participate in reviews supported by the Democratic Services Officers.
- 3.13 Any Councillor (including Executive Committee members), Officer or local resident can suggest a subject for a policy review. Overview and Scrutiny reviews can focus on any issue impacting on the local community, including services that are not provided by Redditch Borough Council. This element of Overview and Scrutiny has been promoted by recent legislation and is an important power, given the shifting governance arrangements for many services. To ensure best use of resources the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may want to focus in the long-term on prioritising key strategic purposes. These strategic purposes are currently being considered in a draft form and include:
- Keep my place safe and looking good;
 - Provide good things for me to do, see and visit;
 - Help me to find somewhere to live in my locality;
 - Enable good implementable development;
 - Do sensible things to improve my locality;
 - Help me run a successful business;
 - Help me back to financial independence (including skills and education);
 - Help me live my life independently (including health and activity); and
 - Enable others to work, or do what they need to do, to meet their purpose.

Pre-Decision Scrutiny:

- 3.14 Pre-decision scrutiny is a standard part of Overview and Scrutiny nationally. Through pre-decision scrutiny Members can make a constructive contribution to the decision making process by:
- using expert scrutiny skills to investigate the subject, and the implications of any proposals for service delivery, in detail;
 - consulting with local residents and / or service users about the subject;
 - gathering evidence from representatives of equivalent service providers in other parts of the country; and
 - providing a fresh perspective on an issue separate from the Officers presenting the report.
- 3.15 The pre-decision scrutiny process has evolved over the past few years, from a relatively minor element of the process to an active component. A key barrier to effective pre-decision scrutiny has been access to reports. The Council's

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constitution does not permit Overview and Scrutiny Members to access reports that are in a draft form prior to a meeting of the Executive. In the early years of the Leader and Cabinet model of local democracy, Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings took place prior to the finalisation of reports. In these circumstances, the Committee received presentations on the subject, a situation which resulted in some concerns amongst scrutiny Members that they could not make recommendations based on all the evidence available.

- 3.16 To address this concern in recent years Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings have been scheduled to take place after reports for the Executive have been finalised. However, at the moment meetings take place only one day after the publication of the reports providing Members with only 24 hours to consider the content of the report.
- 3.17 Due to concerns about the relatively limited time available to Members to gather evidence and make considered recommendations the Committee recently launched two short, sharp reviews of items scheduled for the consideration of the Executive Committee. Whilst these reviews managed to gather more information from a greater variety of sources than might otherwise have occurred some concerns have been expressed about these reviews including:
- The review outcomes reflected the conclusions of a minority of Members as only two Members of the main Committee were appointed to each Short, Sharp Review. For practical reasons, non-executive Members who had not been appointed to the Committee were effectively excluded. (This occurred because each review was originally scheduled to have a maximum of one month to complete its work which was not adequate time to co-ordinate a larger review group).
 - Due to the restricted length of the reviews, predicated on the deadlines for the Executive Committee's consideration of the core reports, each review was only able to undertake a limited number of meetings to gather evidence: the Sickness Policy Scrutiny review held seven meetings and interviewed six expert witnesses and the Concessionary Rents review held three reviews and interviewed three expert witnesses.
- 3.18 Pre-decision scrutiny has the potential to develop further in line with best practice in order to address concerns about the Short, Sharp Review process. In particular Members may want to consider selecting items from the Executive Committee Work Programme (which recently replaced the Forward Plan) a number of months in advance of the item's presentation to the Executive Committee. This would enable a larger number of non-executive members to be appointed to participate in the review if appropriate and would also provide a group with the time necessary to undertake all relevant work needed to enhance the value of scrutiny recommendations. The arrangement would also represent a more appropriate use of Officer resources as greater flexibility could be applied with regard to the timing of interviews with expert witnesses.

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3.19 However, for this development to occur improvements would need to be made to the Executive Work Programme. Over the past two years items have tended to be added to the Work Programme, formerly the Forward Plan, at relatively short notice. Few items have been listed on the plan for consideration four months or more in advance of the item's presentation before the Executive Committee. This curtails the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's ability to plan pre-decision scrutiny exercises in advance.

3.20 It is hoped that by focusing Overview and Scrutiny in this way Members will be able to make best use of the time available at Committee meetings and work to include as many other non scrutiny members as can be accommodated across the Council.

Legal Implications

3.21 There are no specific legal implications.

Service / Operational Implications

3.22 This review of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee may enable Members to identify actions that could be taken to improve the operation of the process.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.23 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 There is a risk that if the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is not reviewed on a regular basis the work of the Committee will not relate to key strategic changes at the local authority nor meet the changing needs of local residents.

4.2 There is a risk that some non-executive Councillors will feel disengaged from Overview and Scrutiny and marginalised in the local democratic process if only limited opportunities are provided to engage in Task Group (policy review) work.

5. APPENDICES

There are no appendices to this report.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

How to Kill Overview and Scrutiny, adapted from "An Overview of Scrutiny: A Triumph of Context over Structure, (2004), R Ashworth and S Snape.

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AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Portfolio Holder Annual Report

Portfolio: Leisure and Tourism

Portfolio Holder, Councillor Luke Stephens

Year: 2012/13

1. Executive Summary

- 1.1. Please provide a summary of services /areas covered within the remit of the Portfolio.

2. Performance

- 2.1. Please detail areas of good performance over the past year.

Cultural Services

Palace Theatre

- Increased the management's capacity to concentrate more time on improvements to the customer service by implementing a central management system. This is a bespoke software script that automatically updates the show contracts to the technical, payment and booking system which were all done manually before.
- Improved partnership working with performers agents, to develop new areas of working, diversifying the performances at the Theatre and strengthening contracting arrangements?
- Revised the pricing structure to make it more flexible and responsive to customer needs thus allowing fledgling organisations access to a professional arena at an affordable cost. This increased the number of performances on site and the total number of hours the site was open.
- Improved marketing displays around the building and improved signage in the box office areas are assisting people finding their way around the building more efficiently and takes advantage of current markets of upcoming events.
- The team has increased the number of hirer performances which are contributing to financial savings that we have signed up to as part of the budget 2012/13 round.

Arts Development

- AVCC Public Art Project was completed and installed alongside the footpath of Arrow Valley.

Events

- There were a total of **32** Borough led events delivered across the town which supported international, and local agendas e.g. The Olympic Torch Relay and the Community Forum's Bandstand event. The events aimed to provide a series of free diversionary cultural experiences across the Borough. A total of 68,000 people attended the events programme.

Community Centres

- Increased bookings across all Community Centres. Working with Voluntary Groups to deliver key initiatives including:
 - Facilitation of the "Rethink" mental health project. The sessions provided 12 mental health suffers with occupational therapy sessions.
 - Facilitated the Chronic Obstructive Pulmonary Disorder Workshops which delivers specialist physiotherapy and management of the disease workshops.

Forge Mill Museum & Boardsley Abbey Visitor Centre

- The Museum has introduced a cover for the cloister area with sponsorship money from the Choose How You Move 2 initiative (**£6K**). The new cover enables the venue to provide evening performances and offers the venue greater flexibility by effectively increasing the venues visitor capacity
- Promotion as a wedding venue has been successfully undertaken with 2 weddings taking place this calendar year and further promotions planned it is hoped that there will be expansion of this area of operation.
- The restoration of the Boardsley Abbey ruins was completed through a **£148K** funding grant from Natural England. This has stabilised the scheduled ancient monument and significantly reduced the cost burden to the Council for the next 10 years.

Positive Activities

- RBC led a consortia funding application made up from third sector agencies to provide a series of Positive Activity Youth Session across the Borough to commence in January 2013 (**£120K** funding from WCC)

Sports Services

Sports Development and Physical Activity

- Delivered a successful Community Sports Day at the Abbey Stadium, attended by in excess of 2000 people and supporting clubs to attract more members.
- Worked in partnership with NEW College to develop an apprenticeship scheme, and support BRAVO volunteer development. Three apprentice roles will be employed in December.
- Introduced the Sports Makers scheme which will offer residents the opportunity to volunteer in sport, in return for work experience and coaching qualifications. This is supported by the County Sports Partnership coaching bursary scheme. Currently there are over 100 Sports Makers registered.
- Increased adult participation in Sport (NI8) in Redditch, through more targeted community programmes, effective partnership working and delivery of the Abbey Stadium project.
- Through short breaks funding delivered a successful six week project where a group of disabled young people took part in a variety of outdoor activities including bell boating, canoeing, archery, rock climbing and team building activities. After some positive feedback from parents we will look to make use of year 2 funding with a similar project
- Held the 2012 Sports Awards, a successful evening held at The Palace Theatre where approximately 250 people from a wide spectrum of sports clubs attended the event. Mettis Aerospace were the main sponsors of the event with some of the eventual winners being nominated for the County Sports Awards
- Delivered a range of targeted programmes focusing on health intervention and prevention. These relate to residents with health related illnesses and include activities such as falls prevention, mobility classes, sports and exercise to music classes.
- Submitted a joint proposal with Redditch Borough Council and Age UK to support older residents to become more independent and make lifestyles choices which will support them to become more fit and active as well as supporting mental health issues.

Sports Centres

- Re-introduced Free Swimming for under 16's and over 60's. Over 2000 people had registered by the end of October.

- Invested £72k into Arrow Vale and £180k at Kingsley, opening the new Springs Value Gym at Arrow Vale and new Sports Hall Floor and refurbishment of the Gymnasium at Kingsley
- Achieved Quest accreditation at Abbey Stadium, a significant achievement in view of the centre only being open since February.
- Provided £40k Investment into Pitcheroak Golf Course which has improved standards and has resulted in a new caterer running the catering service.
- Provide four open days at Abbey Stadium to promote facilities. The events were attended by over 4,000 people in total. This has helped to support the achievement of the membership targets.
- 2200 regular gym memberships and over 800 children attending swimming lessons on a weekly basis
- Extended and enhanced the exercise to music programme, and now provide 65 classes for a variety of ages and abilities.
- Staff achieved leisure related NVQ's which has helped to support service delivery improvement

Parks and Green Spaces

The majority of the Parks and Green Spaces achievements for the year 2012/13 have formed part of the Environmental Services Portfolio Report.

The following achievements have a predominantly physical activity remit and support our leisure services in achieving wider targets.

Physical Activity

- The Parks and Green Spaces team developed a 'Park Run' event at Arrow Valley Country Park that has in excess of 120 participants. Park Run is a national event, run every Saturday morning, participants run 5k in a park setting, each with their own barcode and personal time keeping and record targets. The weekly event is supported by Parks officers with the support of a growing volunteer base.
- The Parks and Green Spaces team have made great progress with the formalising of external fitness classes within our parks and open spaces alongside developing a fees and charges framework. A notable success is in Morton Stanley Park with both fitness classes and charitable events supported by the team.

- The team have supported local sports clubs and organisations with the development of additional events and activities; these include cycling, cyclo cross and orienteering.

Events and Activities

- Support has been provided to the Events team with the many events that have happened this year; Olympics, Jubilee and sporting themes. Officers have also supported the booking and administration of external events within parks and green spaces.

Play

- The team have undertaken several play projects throughout the year and completed safety inspections to all sites. Two play areas in Marfields Park and Rowan Crescent have been resurfaced. The play area in Glover Street has seen both improvement to the landscape and redesign of the ball court to reduce neighbour conflict.

Business Development

Sponsorship

- The policy for Roundabout Sponsorship has been produced and agreed by elected Members and the officers have commenced work in this area. There are seven sites that have received advertising approval and that are available for sponsorship. Full details will be available soon on the RBC web site.

Website Development

- The Leisure and Cultural Services (L&CS) team were one of the first services to launch a new improved Leisure Website. After receiving customer's feedback regarding the webpages, Leisure commenced work with support from the website development team to create a brand new look website. This provided up-to-date information, pictures and links for a more interactive experience and brand new user friendly layout. It is still early days but a positive outcome has already been identified through a decrease in the number of 1 star ratings.

Room Bookings and Caretaking Provision

- Caretaking and Room Booking provision has been transferred, and now sits within the L&CS Business Development Team. A seamless experience has been met with all involved. Officers will review the service over the next 12 months.

2.2 Please detail any areas of concerning performance in the year.

Cultural Services

Palace Theatre

- The inconsistent performance of the online booking system has caused the team to instigate an improvement plan for the upcoming season.

Arts Development

- Due to the volume of the events catered for in an exceptional year and the leaning curve for the new shared service Arts Development team was not as proactive as would have ideally been planned. The team will look to address this over the next financial year working in a strategic framework.

Events

- Due to the demand on the team in this exceptional year of events the team were only able to devote a limited time to the production of an events tool kit, published on the web-site to inform and educate the public on organising a public event.

Forge Mill Museum & Bordesley Abbey Visitor Centre

- The new catering provider was procured halfway through the season which affected the offer for April and May of this year, however since then the new service has been a complete success.

Parks and Green Spaces

- No real concerns have been identified. The year in general has been difficult with unseasonal weather throughout the summer months however a new team has achieved significant success and implemented many new systems that ensure continued service improvements.
- The volume of events combined with the unseasonal weather has caused some pressure.

Sports Services

Sports Development and Physical Activity

- Due to the difficulty in engaging with young people there have been a lower number of participants than expected on some of the Sportivate programmes, intended for young people aged 14-25 years. This has now been recognised for the latter part of the year and numbers booked onto forthcoming courses have improved due to improved engagement with clubs and NEW college and use of alternative marketing techniques.

Golf Course

- Due to one of the wettest years on record the usage of the course during spring has been lower than expected as the course has been closed and participants are inclined to stop using the course thus getting out of the habit of playing. This can impact on usage across other periods of the year such as summer and autumn. However, Officers are planning to carry out maintenance on the course to improve conditions for the forthcoming year as well as marketing the facility more effectively.

Abbey Stadium

- The team have experienced problems meeting customer demand and expectations due to the limited capacity of the telephone communication system. This is based on contractual problems between service providers.

Business Development

Marketing Schedules and Service promotions

- Aligning marketing schedules across the services has been difficult with the new teams merging in the first few months of this year and the diversity of the service. This has now much improved with stability and an understanding of new roles and responsibilities and the need to work the service as a whole.

Room Bookings

- Although taking on the room bookings has been a relatively seamless experience to the customer, there have been issues behind the scenes with the amount of people in the past that have been involved in its process. This has now been improved and simplified but there is still a need to review the process further.

3. The Year Ahead

3.1 Please detail the Portfolio Holder's main areas of focus in 2013/14

Cultural Services

Palace Theatre

- To sustain and embed the significant operation changes undertaken in 2012 and continue to grow the services audiences.
- To launch the improved web based "on-line" booking system and to build on the social marketing element to improve access to information and increase sales.

Palace Youth Theatre (PYT)

- Explore ways to implement the recommendations highlighted in the internal review of the service to widen the service appeal and increase through put.

Forge Mill Museum & Bordesley Abbey Visitor Centre

- The team will look to expand the learning and education offer at the site and re- launch the Abbey Ruins as the key historical heart for the Borough.

Positive Activities

- Deliver on the outcomes committed to in the funding application and the subsequent commissioned works.

Arts Development

- Springs Public Art Project that was developed with NEW College students has been completed and installed in the Church Green area.

Sports Services

Sports Centres

- **Free Swimming:** Continuation of the free swimming scheme including a review of performance against target. Monthly Project meetings will be continued to monitor performance and suggest corrective action should KPIs not been met. Where possible Officers will link free swimming into targeted health programmes to improve awareness and participation.
- **Health and Fitness:** Continue to increase and retain health and fitness Members at both sites to include improving access for all community groups. Implementation of a marketing plan and sales / retention plan. Where possible use the facilities as an entry and exit route for targeted health programmes to improve awareness of the facility and increase participation.

- **Quest Accreditation:** At Abbey Stadium using the report recommendations to identify areas for improvement to help support continuous improvement. Develop a Service Improvement Plan which is sourced from a variety of reports including Quest Assessments.
- **Abbey Stadium:** Review Abbey Stadium's first year of operation across a range of indicators including income, usage, satisfaction, energy usage etc. Develop an appropriate suite of KPI's which are underpinned by a range of monitoring measures. Ensure outstanding snags/ defects, particularly priority defects, are completed by the contractor prior to the 12 month defect period expiring. Action: Continue with defect reporting, monthly meetings and provide an annual review to establish progress and outstanding defects.
- **Dual Use:** Review of the Dual Use (DU) Agreements. Benchmark against other DU Agreements, draft report and implement consultation plan.
- **Dual Use:** Review activity programmes, establish new activity programmes to increase revenue, participation and supported targeted health programmes.

Sports Development and Physical Activity

- **Disability Sport:** Work in partnership to develop a range of opportunities to increase participation across disabled residents. This will be underpinned through grant funding submissions e.g - Sport England (if successful). This will include a mixture of physical improvements in buildings, training and awareness for staff but more importantly activity programmes for disabled groups. Establish a range of contacts and set up a disability network group to co-ordinate programmes/funding submissions.
- **Area of Highest Need:** Work with the Winyates Alliance to offer programmes to tackle known health and social issues in the Area of Highest Need. Set up a sub group to focus on a health and well being project in the locality with a strong emphasis on Sport and Physical Activity.
- **Volunteering:** Implement the Sports Makers and BRAVO schemes in services. BRAVO co-ordinator employed and with a targeted work programme. Sports Makers scheme promoted / implemented across the Town.
- **Strategy:** Complete the Sports and Physical Activity Strategy including consultation with members and key partners, and influenced through research.
- **Older People:** Develop a range of activities for Older People, tying in with the Ageing Well Strategy and Funding Stream. Submit a funding proposal through WCC with draft implementation plan.

Playing Pitches

- **Delivery Plan:** Complete the delivery plan to support the Playing Pitch Strategy and to provide evidence to support funding applications.
- Complete draft strategy, consult with key stakeholders, and meet with FA to support stakeholders.
- **Pitch Sizes:** Review pitch capacity against demands for the 2013/14 season related to new FA pitch size guidelines. Consult with clubs and leagues and gain support from the governing body to achieve the desired outcomes.
- **Maintenance:** Work with leagues / clubs to ensure a suitable post/pre-season maintenance programme is carried out on pitches. This should improve carrying capacity as well as helping to improve the long term sustainability of the pitch stock.
- **Funding:** Investigate external funding opportunities to invest into changing facilities, pitch drainage and ancillary facilities. These will support the recommendations from the Playing Pitch delivery plan.
- **Participation:** Work with FA (NGB) and Sports Development team to look at introducing programmes to improve participation and reduce drop off rates. These programmes should provide sustainable exit and entry routes into and out of existing programmes.

Contracts Monitoring - Golf Course / BMX

- **Performance:** Develop a robust contracts monitoring system to include meetings, KPIs and corrective action plans agreed by partners.
- **Development:** Support partners to complete new development plans to achieve club mark, improve participation, club membership and enhance quality standards of provision.
- **Landscape Plan:** Review existing golf course maintenance programme including ad hoc works requirements and course enhancements.

Parks and Green Spaces

The majority of the Parks and Green Spaces main areas of focus features within the report to the Environmental Services portfolio. In addition the team will focus on:

- **Physical Activity:** Further develop opportunities for both formal and informal recreation within parks and open spaces, with a focus on 'Park Run', Orienteering and Play/Sport opportunities.

- **Play Opportunities:** Progress evaluation of play provision within the Borough, seeking opportunities for investment to improve the quality of local facilities.

Business Development

- **Sponsorship:** With a budget target set for Leisure and Cultural services we are looking to gain sponsorship for seven roundabouts which have been approved. 'Advertise Here' signs will be installed and companies who have shown interest will be approached. Once prices have been agreed Officers will roll the Sponsorship scheme out in November/December. A webpage linked to Leisure and Cultural Services or Business pages will be produced to help with the marketing and promotion. Officers will monitor the success and progress of the scheme and if successful expand with another selection of roundabouts in the Borough.
- **Website:** Now with regular meetings in place we hope to develop and enhance the website still further. The service web group will identify best practice and work on continuous improvements to ensure the site does not fall back into decline. This will be done by internal service page reviews and critiques. As part of the group we will also review social media, such as Twitter and Facebook and work with the Communications Team to promote our services to develop future activities and events.
- **Room Bookings and Caretaking Provision:** Service reviews will be carried out on Room Bookings and Caretaking provision as mentioned above to identify service improvements and potential additional income. Promoting the Civic Suite as an external venue for hire is part of the promotional plans Officers will be looking at.
- **Performance Reports:** L&CS are currently looking into potential performance measures to use at a service level in addition to those already reported corporately. These indicators will assist the Head of Service with robust service reports and information.
- **Contract Management Systems:** The Business Development team is currently working on the production of a L&CS management contract system working with the Procurement team to deliver this. These will contain the important details of our business relationships with partners, suppliers, customers, and employees, such as prices, service levels, terms and conditions and supplier relationships. A contract management system will also provide the framework for how Officers work with people and organisations and provide the rules and guidelines for obligations so that everyone is clear of what is expected of them from the start. When managed properly, contracts will help to reduce costs and improve profitability, as well, of course, as mitigating risk.

- **Christmas Lights Procurement** –The Christmas Lights procurement in Redditch is in its final year, therefore a review and new specification needs to be written in line with new service budgets over the coming years. Officers have been working to set up the infrastructure in advance so Christmas lights can be more sustainable over the next 2/3 years.

Actions requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date Action Requested	Action to be Taken	Response
11th September 2012 1	Officers were asked to provide further clarification regarding arrangements for PAT testing PCs issued to Councillors as well as details about the process for monitoring the implementation of PAT testing.	The information remains to be provided. Lead Officer, Head of Finance and Resources, estimated completion date, unspecified. TO BE COMPLETED.
9th October 2012 2	Officers were asked to clarify the number of businesses that were considering introducing apprenticeship positions in Redditch where these opportunities had not previously been available.	The information remains to be provided. Lead Officer, North Worcestershire Regeneration Manager, estimated completion date not specified. TO BE COMPLETED.
6th November 2012 3	The Committee requested further information about the reassurances, if any, provided to customers making complaints.	Officers circulated a response to this query by email on 14th November 2012. COMPLETED.
6th November 2012 4	The Committee requested the following information about allotments: a) the number of allotments situated in the town; b) the number of allotments that are not currently let in the town, including comparison figures for a number of preceding years; and c) a breakdown of how vacant allotments are distributed across the town.	The information remains to be provided. Lead Officer, Head of Environmental Services, estimated completion date, not specified. TO BE COMPLETED.

<p>6th November 2012</p> <p>5</p>	<p>Members requested further information about the 100% project for recycling collection services.</p>	<p>An update has been circulated with the minutes from this meeting.</p> <p>COMPLETED.</p>
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Executive Committee

20th November 2012

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Rebecca Blake, Michael Braley, Phil Mould, Mark Shurmer, Luke Stephens and Debbie Taylor

Officers:

K Dicks, C Flanagan, S Jones, J Pickering and M Stanley

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

92. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Carole Gandy.

93. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

94. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader advised that the following item of business, scheduled on the Executive Work Programme to be dealt with at this meeting, had been rescheduled to a later meeting of the Committee:

- Concessionary Rents Policy.

95. MINUTES

It was noted that answers to the questions requested in respect of the Concessionary Fares Item (Minute 84) had now been circulated to members of the Committee.

RESOLVED that

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Chair

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 16th October 2012 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

96. SICKNESS ABSENCE POLICY AND DISCIPLINARY POLICY - REVIEW

The Committee received a report which proposed revisions to the Sickness Absence Policy and the Disciplinary Policy. Members' attention was also drawn to the report and recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in this regard. The Sickness Absence Policy was designed to support staff and be effective as a management tool. One aspect of the Policy to be reviewed was the process for the management of long-term sickness absence and the Disciplinary Policy had been amended as a consequence to ensure the two Policies were consistent with each other. Following some consideration it was proposed that Members retain their involvement in the Appeals process that was open to Officers who were aggrieved at a decision taken under either of these Policies that they be dismissed.

The Committee welcomed and supported the report and the proposed Policies. The Committee also thanked the Sickness Policy Pre-Scrutiny Short Sharp Review Group for its report. Members were content to support the recommendations made by that Group in the report which had been submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 6th November as detailed below.

In response to an enquiry from Members, it was reported that the concept of 'duvet days', or 'network days' which were apparently available in some employment sectors, was known to Officers, but Officers were not convinced that any additional time off for staff was warranted, given the relatively generous leave entitlement already offered. Members were keen that the point made at Paragraph 3.8 g) in the report be extended to cover conditions that were as similarly life-threatening as cancer.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the revisions to the Sickness Absence Policy and Disciplinary Policy attached to the report at Appendix 1 and 2, and detailed at 3.7 and 3.9 be approved and adopted;**
- 2) the additional procedural guidance proposed for inclusion in the Sickness Absence Policy as detailed in the report at 3.8 be noted, subject to the extension of the description in Paragraph 3.8 g) to include conditions "such as" cancer;**

- 3) authority be delegated to the Head of Legal & Democratic Services to make the necessary changes to the scheme of delegations required to implement the proposed changes; and

RESOLVED that

- 4) the Council's Sickness Absence Policy be updated and reduced in length, in order to clarify the structure and process for managing both short-term and long-term sickness absences;
- 5) the terminology used in the policy be sensitive to the needs of staff experiencing sickness;
- 6) an A5 laminated guide to the Council's Sickness Absence Policy be provided for the use of managers and staff;
- 7) all changes to the Council's Sickness Absence Policy be communicated to managers and staff;
- 8) the Sickness Absence Policy be included in the induction process for new staff and managers employed by the Council;
- 9) staff and managers receive regular refresher training;
- 10) the Sickness Absence Policy be applied consistently to staff across all service areas, and managers be encouraged, recognising individual circumstances and different working environments to apply the policy appropriately;
- 11) the occupational health service available to staff experiencing sickness be reviewed; and
- 12) communication form an integral part of the transformation process to ensure that staff understand the reasons for changes made to services as part of the transformation process and how transformation may impact on them.

97. ACCESS TO INFORMATION RULES - REVIEW

A report was considered which detailed a number of changes that had recently come about as a result of Regulations issued under the Localism Act 2011. The more obvious changes were with respect to the Council's obligations in connection with what had

formerly been called the Forward Plan of Key Decisions to be taken by the Executive Committee.

Officers proposed that measures be adopted in such a way that the change to current practices would not be too significant whilst still doing enough to comply with the Regulations. Members generally supported the approach that was being taken by Officers and were content that there were not reported to be any direct financial implications arising from the proposals.

RECOMMENDED that

the revised Access to Information Rules be approved for inclusion in the Council's constitution.

98. QUARTERLY CUSTOMER SERVICE MONITORING - QUARTER 2 - JULY TO NOVEMBER 2012

The Committee received a report that provided Members with details of customer feedback data for the second quarter of 2012/13.

The Committee was very pleased with the report, noting that the numbers of both compliments and complaints had increased compared to both the same quarter the previous year and the previous quarter this current year. Members were very much of the opinion that complaints were a useful tool for driving improvements and noted the positive measures that had taken place in Housing Repairs and Maintenance as a result of Transformation.

In response to a Member query as to the proportion of payments detailed in the table on page 68 of the report which had been received electronically, Officers undertook to report back to the Committee in due course with that information.

RESOLVED that

the update for the period 1st July – 30th September be noted.

99. QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 2 - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2012

The Committee received the report on the previous quarter's Budget position. Officers highlighted the fact that this was the first occasion on which Members were being presented with a projected year-end position. Current indications were that there was expected to be a shortfall of £48,000 by the end of the current year. Heads of Service were tasked with identifying means of addressing this

shortfall prior to the year-end. Capital spending was reported to be in line with projections.

Members were updated on the spend on the Disabled Facilities Grants. It was noted that there was going to be a significant underspend on this budget although this did not reflect a fall-off in the numbers of applications for Grants but rather a drop in the value of the Grants being sought.

RESOLVED that

the current financial position on Revenue and Capital be noted, as detailed in the report.

100. QUARTERLY MONITORING - WRITE OFF OF DEBTS - QUARTER 2 - JULY TO SEPTEMBER 2012

Members considered the quarterly report detailing the action taken in relation to the write off of debts and the collection of outstanding debt.

The Committee was heartened to see that the level of debt from previous years was falling consistently quarter by quarter. There was some concern that the introduction of Universal Credits would have an adverse impact on these figures and Members questioned whether there was a contingency in place. Officers confirmed that no such contingency existed at the present time but that Members would be required to make a judgement on the level of bad debt provision in due course. In addition, a report was due to be submitted to the January meeting outlining plans for providing crisis loans to local residents.

It was stated that the Citizen's Advice Bureau had not yet made any approaches to the Council for additional grant funding for an increased workload. It was hoped that Council Officers might be equipped with the necessary skills to pick up some of the expected burden.

RESOLVED that

the contents of the report be noted.

101. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 9th October 2012. It was noted that there were two outstanding recommendations.

The Chair of the Economic Advisory Panel undertook to ensure that meetings of this body be recommenced after a short break as proposed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. In this respect it was noted that the Manager of the shared Economic Development team had been head-hunted by another local authority and the three Councils that made up the shared service were currently in the process of appointing a successor.

It was suggested that the recommendation in respect of the Choose How You Move project be strengthened to reflect concern that money should be targeted to the most appropriate activities.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **Redditch Borough Council Officers ensure that the most effective use be made of Choose How You Move monies in Redditch; and**
- 2) **the Economic Advisory Panel meet more frequently, the scope of the Panel be expanded and more active participation of elected Members at meetings of the Panel be promoted.**

102. SHARED SERVICES BOARD

The Committee received the Minutes arising from the most recent of the Shared Services Board.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 11th October 2012 be noted.

103. WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

The Committee received the Minutes arising from the most recent of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee held on 27th September 2012 be noted.

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

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

105. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received the most recent report on the activity of the Council's Advisory panels and similar bodies.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

106. ACTION MONITORING

The Committee received the latest Action Monitoring report.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.12 pm

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Chair

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME

1 December 2012 to 31st March 2013
(published as at 20th November 2012)

This Plan gives details of items on which key decisions are likely to be taken in the coming four months by the Borough Council's Executive Committee.

(NB: There may be occasions when the Executive Committee may make recommendations to Council for a final decision. e.g. to approve a new policy or variation to the approved budget.)

Whilst the majority of the Executive Committee's business at the meetings listed in this Work Programme will be open to the public and media organisations to attend, there will inevitably be some business to be considered that contains confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information. This is called exempt information. Members of the public and media may be asked to leave the meeting when such information is discussed.

If an item is likely to contain exempt information we show this on the Work Programme. You can make representations to us if you consider an item or any of the documents listed should be open to the public.



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

“Key Decisions” are ones which are likely to:

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

The Work Programme is available for inspection free of charge at the Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH from 9am to 5pm Mondays to Fridays; or on the Council's website (www.redditchbc.gov.uk).

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

The Executive Committee's meetings are normally held every four weeks at 7pm on Tuesday evenings at the Town Hall. They are open to the public, except when confidential information is being discussed. If you wish to attend for a particular matter, it is advisable to check with the Democratic Services Team on (01527) 64252, ext: 3269 to make sure it is going ahead as planned. If you have any other queries, Democratic Services Officers will be happy to advise you.

The full Council meets in accordance with the Council's Calendar of Meetings. Meetings commence at 7.00pm.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Bill Hartnett	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership & Partnership
Councillor G Chance	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development, Public Transport
Councillor Phil Mould	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Councillor Rebecca Blake	Portfolio Holder for Community Safety & Regulatory Services
Councillor Mark Shurmer	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Debbie Taylor	Portfolio Holder for Local Environment & Health
Councillor Luke Stephens	Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Tourism
Councillor Michael Braley	
Councillor Carole Gandy	

Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Concessionary Rents Policy	Executive Committee	18 December 2012	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources, 01527 64252 ext 3295
Town Centre Landscape Improvements (including Church Green)	Executive Committee	18 December 2012	Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Lyndsey Hadley, Planning Officer, 01527 64252 ext 3401 Carl Walker, Environmental Services Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3421
Tenancy Strategy and Policy 2012-2014	Executive Committee <i>Recommendation to be made to Council</i>	18 December 2012 7 January 2013	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director (Leisure, Environmental & Community Services)	Matthew Bough, Housing Policy Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3120
Council Tax Support Scheme	Executive Committee <i>Recommendation to be made to Council</i>	18 December 2012 7 January 2013	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer 01527 881207
Quarterly Sickness Monitoring – Quarter 2 – July to September 2012	Executive Committee	18 December 2012	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Mark Stanley, Acting Human Resources and Development Manager, 01527 881673
Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy	Executive Committee	18 December 2012	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director (Leisure, Environmental & Community Services)	Matthew Bough, Housing Policy Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3120

Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Street Naming and Numbering – Review of Policy	Executive Committee	18 December 2013	Report of the Head of Transformation	Celeste Dixon Geographical Information Systems Support Officer 01527 881684
Medium Term Financial Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16	Executive Committee	18 December 2012	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer 01527 881207
Council Tax Base 2013/14	Executive Committee	15 January 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3790
Medium Term Financial Plan 2013/14 – 2015/16	Executive Committee	15 January 2013	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer 01527 881207
Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA)	Executive Committee	15 January 2013	Report of the Head of Environmental Services	Ceridwen John, Climate Change Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3046
Fees and Charges 2013/14	Executive Committee	12 February 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3790

Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Initial Estimates 2013/14 – 2015/16	Executive Committee <i>Recommendation to be made to Council</i>	12 February 2013 18 February 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3790
Quarterly Customer Services Monitoring – Quarter 3 – October to December 2012	Executive Committee	12 February 2013	Report of the Head of Customer Services	Amanda de Warr, Head of Customer Services, 1527 881241
Quarterly Budget Monitoring – Quarter 3 – October to December 2012	Executive Committee	12 February 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3790
Quarterly Monitoring – Write Off of Debts – Quarter 3 – October to December 2012	Executive Committee	12 February 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources, 01527 64252 ext 3295
Assistive Technology Partnership with Worcestershire Telecare	Executive Committee <i>Recommendation to be made to Council</i> NB: <i>Possible need to consider matter in private session by virtue of paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972</i>	12 February 2013 25 March 2013	Report of the Acting Head of Community Services	J Willis Acting Head of Community Services 01527 534149 ext 3348

Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Council Tax Setting 2013/14	Executive Committee <i>Recommendation to be made to Council</i>	18 February 2013 18 February 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3790
Plymouth Road Cemetery	Executive Committee	12 March 2013	Report of the Head of Environmental Services	Sue Horrobin, Environmental Services Manager 01527 64252 ext 3706
Quarterly Sickness Monitoring – Quarter 3 – October to December 2013	Executive Committee	12 March 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Mark Stanley, Acting Human Resources & Development Manager, 01527 881673
Highway Impact & Accessibility Modelling Report – Worcestershire County Council (Halcrow) May 2011	Executive Committee	Date to be identified	Report of the Head of Planning & Regeneration	Emma Baker, Acting Development Plans Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3376
Housing Allocations Policy – Review	Executive Committee	Date to be identified	Report of the Head of Housing	Liz Tompkin, Head of Housing, 01527 64252 ext 3304



Overview and Scrutiny

No Direct Ward Relevance

Committee

11th December 2012

WORK PROGRAMME

(Report of the Chief Executive)

Date of Meeting	Subject Matter	Officer(s) Responsible for report
ALL MEETINGS	REGULAR ITEMS	(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)
	Minutes of previous meeting Consideration of the Forward Plan Consideration of Executive Committee key decisions Call-ins (if any) Pre-scrutiny (if any) Consideration of Overview and Scrutiny Actions List Referrals from Council or Executive Committee, etc. (if any) Task Groups / Short, Sharp Review Groups - feedback Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive
	REGULAR ITEMS Quarterly Performance Report Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report Annual Update on the Implementation of the Civil Parking Enforcement Scheme	Chief Executive Chief Executive Relevant Lead Heads of Service

Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

11th December 2012

	<p>REGULAR ITEMS</p> <p>Update on fly tipping and progress with the Worth It campaign</p> <p>Update on the work of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel.</p> <p>Updates on the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Bi-Annual Recommendation Tracker Reports – Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Bi-Annual Monitoring Report – Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy</p>	<p>Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service</p> <p>Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel</p> <p>Redditch Borough Council representative on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service</p> <p>Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service</p>
OTHER ITEMS - DATE FIXED		
11th Dec 2012	Concessionary Rents – Pre-Decision Scrutiny and Short-Sharp Review Outcomes	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
11th Dec 2012	Overview and Scrutiny Six Month Review Report	Councillor Brunner
11th Dec 2012	Portfolio Holder Annual Report – Written Report – Leisure and Tourism	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
11th Dec 2012	Quarterly Budget Report – Quarter Two – July – September 2012	Relevant Lead Head of Service

Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

11th December 2012

8th Jan 2013	Fees and Charges 2013/14 – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
8th Jan 2013	Monitoring Update Report – Promoting Redditch Task and Finish Group	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
8th Jan 2013	Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker – Mid-Year Report	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
8th Jan 2013	Portfolio Holder Annual Report – Leisure and Tourism	Councillor Stephens
8th Jan 2013	Portfolio Holder Annual Report – Written Report – Housing	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
5th Feb 2013	Market Scrutiny Task Group – Final Report	Councillor Brazier
5th Feb 2013	Access for Disabled People Task Group – Monitoring Update Report	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
5th Feb 2013	Disabled Access Group – Update Report on Support	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
5th Feb 2013	Portfolio Holder Annual Report – Housing	Councillor Shurmer
5th Feb 2013	Portfolio Holder Annual Report – Written Report – Community Leadership and Partnership	Relevant Lead Heads of Service

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5th March 2013	Arts and Culture Centre Task Group - Final Report	Councillor Hopkins
5th March 2013	Portfolio Holder Annual Report – Community Leadership and Partnership	Councillor Hartnett
5th March 2013	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report	Councillor Brunner
21st March 2013	West Midlands Regional Scrutiny Network	
2nd April 2013	Youth Services Provision Task Group – Monitoring Update Report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
May 2013	Promoting Sporting Participation – Monitoring Update Report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
July 2013	Anti-Social Behaviour Task and Finish Group - Monitoring Update Report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED		
	Disabled Parking in the Former Covered Market Area – Outcomes of the Review	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
	Equalities and Diversity – Submission of a Scoping Document	Councillor Fry

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	Housing Allocations Policy Review – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head of Service
	Landscaping Works in Private Car Parks – Outcomes of the Review	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
	RNIB React system – Outcomes of the Review	Relevant Lead Heads of Service
	Regeneration in the Town - Submission of a Scoping Document	Councillor Bush
	Shopmobility Ramp Cover – Outcomes of the Review	Relevant Lead Head of Service
	Tree Maintenance – Submission of a Scoping Document	Councillor Fisher

