

Executive Committee

Tuesday 9th July
2013
7.00 pm

Committee Room 2
Town Hall
Redditch



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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
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Welcome to today's meeting.

Guidance for the Public

Agenda Papers

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

Chair

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

Running Order

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

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

Decisions

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

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Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.

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The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.



Executive

9th July 2013

7.00 pm

Committee

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Bill Hartnett (Chair)	John Fisher
	Greg Chance (Vice-Chair)	Phil Mould
	Rebecca Blake	Mark Shurmer
	Juliet Brunner	Debbie Taylor
	Brandon Clayton	

<p>1. Declarations of Interest</p>	<p>To invite Councillors to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda.</p>
<p>2. Apologies</p>	<p>To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend this meeting.</p>
<p>3. Leader's Announcements</p>	<p>1. To give notice of any items for future meetings or for the Executive Committee Work Programme, including any scheduled for this meeting, but now carried forward or deleted; and</p> <p>2. any other relevant announcements.</p> <p>(Oral report)</p>
<p>4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 10) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th June 2013.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p>
<p>5. Housing Density Targets Task Review - Final Report (Pages 11 - 22)</p>	<p>To receive the final report of the Housing Density Targets Task Review.</p> <p>(Report attached –the attached report is subject to amendment at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting on 2nd July 2013)</p> <p>(All Wards)</p>
<p>6. Council Plan Head of Business Transformation</p>	<p>To consider the draft Council Plan.</p> <p>(Report to follow)</p> <p>(All Wards)</p>

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<p>7. Council Tax Support Scheme (Pages 23 - 28) Head of Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To enable Members to consider proposals to reduce the financial impact to the Borough and other precepting bodies in relation to the Government changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme. (Report attached) (All Wards)</p>
<p>8. Review of Policy for Leases of Council Land and Property at a Concessionary Rent (Pages 29 - 34) Head of Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To consider a number of amendments to the policy for the granting of rent relief/concessionary rents to voluntary sector organisations and subsequent approval of the amended policy. (Report attached) (All Wards)</p>
<p>9. Selection of Registered Provider for Development of Hewell Road swimming bath site. (Pages 35 - 38) M Bough, Housing Policy and Performance Manager</p>	<p>To consider a Member panel's recommendation for the selection of a Registered Provider to deliver affordable housing on the Hewell Road swimming baths site. (Report attached) (Batchley & Brockhill Ward)</p>
<p>10. Lease of the Anchorage Head of Housing</p>	<p>To consider a proposal to lease The Anchorage for the purpose of employment training. (Report to follow)</p>
<p>11. Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 39 - 54) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 4th June 2013. There are recommendations to consider. (Minutes attached)</p>
<p>12. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc. Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.</p>

<p>13. Advisory Panels - update report (Pages 55 - 58) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels and similar bodies, which report via the Executive Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>
<p>14. Action Monitoring (Pages 59 - 60) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider an update on the actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>
<p>15. Exclusion of the Public</p>	<p>Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, to consider excluding the public from the meeting in relation to any items of business on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:</p> <p>“that, under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, 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 (<i>to be specified</i>) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.”</p> <p>These paragraphs are as follows:</p> <p>Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Para 1 – <u>any individual</u>;• Para 2 – the <u>identity of any individual</u>;• Para 3 – <u>financial or business affairs</u>;• Para 4 – <u>labour relations matters</u>;• Para 5 – <u>legal professional privilege</u>;• Para 6 – <u>a notice, order or direction</u>;• Para 7 – the <u>prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</u>; <p>may need to be considered as ‘exempt’.</p>

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**16. Confidential Minutes /
Referrals (if any)**

To consider confidential matters not dealt with earlier in the evening and not separately listed below (if any).



Executive Committee

11th June 2013

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Rebecca Blake, Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton, John Fisher, Phil Mould, Mark Shurmer and Debbie Taylor

Also Present:

Councillor Andy Fry

Officers:

G Barton, J Bayley, M Bough, R Dunne, C Flanagan, S Hanley, C John, Lynn Jones, K Manning, J Pickering, G Revans, A de Warr, T Beech and N Godwin

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

1. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

3. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no announcements from the Leader.

4. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 9th April 2013 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

.....
Chair

5. CORPORATE DASHBOARD - PILOT

Officers introduced the Committee to the new Corporate Dashboard which was to be rolled out as part of a pilot later in the year. The Dashboard would allow Officers and Members to view data on a range of Council services and determine whether the Council was effectively meeting its Corporate Purposes. The benefit of the new system would be the availability of live, useable data.

It was anticipated that this system would provide the Council with a bigger picture and allow Officers and to identify correlations. Data which was gathered on an annual basis would be used to compile a context document which would sit behind the live data.

Officers explained that it would be possible to interrogate the data on a Ward by Ward basis and it was hoped that, over time, this could be refined to allow interrogation by locality. The Committee was informed that the exercise relied in part on external agencies providing the Council with the relevant data and Officers were presently discussing with various partner organisations our requirements and, more importantly, the longer term benefits for them from the effective use of this data.

Members welcomed this development. They were keen to seek assurances on a number of points. The Committee expressed its hope that the data gathered would be of real use and was not to be gathered simply because it could be, that this would not result in Officers being distracted from other activities to bring this about and that the data would assist the Council in avoiding service failures in future. Officers were able to assure the Committee that the system would be largely automated and that the data gathered would be changed over time, where necessary, according to the experiences of the Services using it.

The Council was ahead of partner organisations in its thinking on this system and so they were largely involved in data provision alone at present, but it was anticipated that the data would be shared between partners in due course and available to members as well. Potential public availability was an area which had not been discussed to date.

RESOLVED that

the presentation be noted.

6. FINANCIAL RESERVES STATEMENT 2012/13

Members received a report which advised them of the earmarked reserves for the year ending 31st March 2013 and sought approval for various movements in reserves as specified in the report.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the movement in reserves as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved;**
- 2) additional General Fund Reserves of £1,084K be approved;**
- 3) the use of General Fund Reserves of £435K be approved;**
- 4) additional HRA Reserves of £27K be approved; and**
- 5) the use of HRA Reserves of £15K be approved; and**
- 6) movement in Capital Reserves of £72K be approved.**

(Councillors Juliet Brunner and Brandon Clayton requested that it be recorded that they abstained on this item)

7. THE GREEN DEAL

The Committee considered a report on the preferred option for participating in the Green Deal and Energy Company Obligation (ECO) as the Council's main delivery mechanism for its Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) aims.

Officers had explored the available options in some depth and were recommending that the Council engage in the Birmingham Energy Savers procurement option. This option presented the Council with no up-front costs. Officers had also identified that the funding for a number of existing schemes could more usefully be exploited in supporting this new initiative and it was therefore proposed that the existing schemes be ceased with immediate effect.

In response to members' queries, it was clarified that Officers could not guarantee that specific scheme or areas would benefit from this initiative, there was scope for the Council to shape the work that was carried out on its behalf by Carillion, the service provider under the Birmingham Energy Savers contract.

Members welcomed the report and initiative, recognising that it presented the Borough with opportunities to provide economic and environmental benefits.

RESOLVED that

- 1) working with Carillion in partnership with Bromsgrove District Council via the Birmingham Energy Savers procurement route, and formalisation of this arrangement by entering into a contract with Carillion, be agreed;**
- 2) authority be delegated to the Head of Environmental Services and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to negotiate the contract and to finalise the contract documents and any other associated legal documents;**
- 3) it be noted that discussions are on-going between Carillion and the other Worcestershire authorities. In pursuing the negotiations for the contract Officers will in the first instance be aiming to secure an agreement with Carillion that is County-wide. In the event that this does not prove possible, that Members authorise Officers to enter into a contract with Carillion on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils;**
- 4) all historic/existing energy efficiency and conservation schemes currently available through the Council's capital budget be formally suspended to avoid conflict with the incoming Green Deal initiative and the remaining funding is redeployed to support the Affordable Warmth initiatives, Green Deal incentives and general Energy Efficiency initiatives; and**
- 5) the Council record its thanks to the Climate Change Manager, Ceridwen John, on the occasion of her departure from the Council, for the excellent work that she had carried out on behalf of the Council during the previous 10 years.**

8. REDI CENTRE

Members considered a report which enabled them to consider the proposal to declare REDI Centre as a surplus asset. It was noted that the business had ceased operation in 2010 and Members were disappointed that it had taken so long to bring matters to this stage. It was hoped that, in future, plans could be developed in a more timely fashion to determine what to do with surplus property.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the REDI Centre be declared as a surplus asset; and**
- 2) **Officers be instructed to review the opportunities available for the centre in conjunction with Property Services and to report back to Members with options by September 2013.**

9. MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT - QUARTERLY CUSTOMER SERVICE REPORT - QUARTER 4 2012/13

Members considered the latest Customer Services monitoring report for the final quarter of 2012/13. A number of the headlines were reported to the Committee, such as an improvement in response times in responding to queries and the reduction in complaints that could be evidenced following the introduction of transformed methods of working. The trend in increasing numbers of payments being made online was continuing.

The Committee was also informed that the Head of Customer Services and Leader of the Council had recently met with the officers responsible for the Hub and the Highways Team at the County Council to outline the Council's concerns and it was hoped that positive measures would flow from this. A request was made for members to be made aware of the Report It function on the Council website and Officers undertook to provide this following the meeting.

RESOLVED that

the update for the period 1st January – 31st March 2013 be noted.

10. ACCESS FOR DISABLED PEOPLE TASK GROUP MONITORING UPDATE - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE REFERRAL

Councillor Andy Fry presented a report on behalf of the Access for Disabled People Task Group and Overview and Scrutiny Committee in respect of a referral concerning the erection of a canopy over the entrance ramp access to Shopmobility. It was noted that there was sufficient money available through the Shopmobility Donation Reserves to more than adequately fund this and members were happy to support the proposal. The referral was therefore agreed on the basis that the money be made available from the Shopmobility Donation Reserves rather than being released from balances.

RECOMMENDED that

funding of £5,000 be released from the Shopmobility Donation reserves to meet the costs associated with the installation of a canopy over the access ramp to Shopmobility.

11. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The minutes of a recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were received by the Committee.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd April 2013 be received and noted; and**

Access for Disabled People Task Group – Monitoring Update Report

- 2) disability awareness training be delivered as part of the overall Member induction process at Redditch Borough Council.**

12. SHARED SERVICES BOARD

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 15th April 2013.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board on 15th April 2013 be received and noted.

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

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

14. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

The latest report on the activity of the Committee's Advisory Panels and similar bodies was considered.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

15. ACTION MONITORING

The Committee received the latest Action Monitoring report and were informed that the protocol for the provision of accommodation for homeless people was nearing completion.

16. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2, 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended:

Minute 17 – Compulsory Purchase Order – 11 Clent Avenue, Redditch; and

Minute 18 – Restructure – Enabling Heads of Service.

17. COMPULSORY PURCHASE ORDER - 11 CLENT AVENUE, REDDITCH

The Committee received an update report on the possible Compulsory Purchase of 11 Clent Avenue, Redditch following recent developments in the case. Since the previous report, the Council had confirmed the identity of the individual who had legal title to the property and proposals were considered for proceeding with the acquisition of this property.

[During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed which would identify an individual or relate to the financial or business affairs of a particular person (including the authority holding that information).]

18. RESTRUCTURE ENABLING HEADS OF SERVICE

The Committee considered a report which set out proposals for a restructuring of the management arrangements for the enabling services of the Council.

[During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the

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grounds that information would be revealed which would identify an individual or relate to any consultations or negotiations, or contemplated consultations or negotiations, in connection with labour relations matters.]

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.05 pm

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Chair

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3, 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted

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HOUSING DENSITY TARGETS TASK REVIEW – FINAL REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Greg Chance, Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport.
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning and Regeneration.
Ward(s) Affected	No specific ward relevance.
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report contains the final proposals of the Housing Density Targets Task Group. The group is proposing one overall recommendation, split into three distinct parts, which is designed to help encourage wider housing provision in the Borough and form part of the Council's emerging policy on housing as part of the Local Plan.

2. RECOMMENDATION

Policy 5 of the emerging Draft Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 be revised as per Appendix 1 to incorporate the following headline points:

- i. All new housing developments within the Borough on sites less than 0.16 hectares should be exempt from the Council's housing density requirements;**
- ii. All new self-build housing developments on sites larger than 0.16 hectares within the Borough should meet a minimum housing density requirement of 15 dwellings per hectare; and that**
- iii. All new bungalow developments within the Borough on sites larger than 0.16 hectares should meet a minimum density requirement of 15 dwellings per hectare.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Background

- 3.1 The Housing Density Targets Task Group was established in February 2013 to review the impact of the Council's existing housing density requirements on the range of housing provision in the Borough, especially around whether the Council should retain its current minimum density requirements. It was intended that the findings of the review would then be included as part of the Council's consultation into Local Plan No 4 which would be running concurrently.

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- 3.2 Three members were initially appointed to the review: Councillors David Bush, Brandon Clayton, and Roger Bennett. Councillor Bush was appointed to chair the review. However, Councillor Clayton was required to resign from the group during the review following his appointment onto the Council's Executive Committee. Councillor Carole Gandy was subsequently nominated as his replacement.
- 3.3 Following Government changes to the planning system through the Localism Act and the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF), the Borough Council set about preparing a Local Plan rather than a Core Strategy. The new plan became known as 'Draft Borough of Redditch Local Plan 4'. The NPPF states that it is at the discretion of individual local authorities to determine their own density levels, and therefore does not prescribe minimum density targets.
- 3.4 The Local Plan 4 outlines the vision and policies regarding how Redditch will aim to be like in 2030. It states that while any housing development should take density limits into account and that each potential new housing site should be assessed on its own individual merits. Local Plan No. 4 was to be published for public consultation during April / May 2013. Members felt it was therefore timely to analyse whether the Council's emerging Policy 5, incorporating housing density policy, would be suitable for the town's housing requirements in future.
- 3.5 As part of the wider Local Plan No. 4, the individual Policy 5 states that 'effective and efficient use of land must be sought in all new development schemes.' In particular, it states that: 'densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare will be sought in Redditch Borough, and 70 dwellings per hectare will be sought on sites for residential development that are within or adjacent to Redditch Town Centre and the District Centres'.
- 3.6 Policy 5 also states that 'lower densities will only be considered acceptable where it has been demonstrated that there are site specific limitations which negate standard densities being met, or where there would be a detrimental impact on the current and future amenity, character, and environmental quality of the neighbourhood. Development may be supported if there are substantial overriding environmental, social and economic benefits to justify the development'.
- 3.7 The group initially consulted relevant lead Officers to gain a greater understanding of the justification for Policy 5 as it stood. Members then referred to existing data regarding what Redditch's housing requirements were expected to be in future based on projected demographic changes, with particular reference made to the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment (SHMA) for Redditch (2012). Members also consulted a local housing developer to gain their perspective on how density level requirements affected the housing trade in the Borough. Finally, questionnaires were submitted to the majority of estate agents in the town to seek their views about the existing level of demand and around what provision was needed to meet future demand.

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4. RECOMMENDATION

We **RECOMMEND** that Policy 5 of the emerging Draft Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 be revised as per Appendix 1 to incorporate the following headline points:

- i. all new housing developments within the Borough on sites less than 0.16 hectares should be exempt from the Council's housing density requirements**

- 4.1 It was explained to the group during their investigations that current housing density requirements made it extremely difficult for small locally based developers to compete with nationally based firms due to the latter's greater capacity to deliver larger housing developments that met density requirements. It was suggested to the group that more opportunities should be facilitated for smaller scale select builds on certain sites which could enable a wider variety of housing to be developed.
- 4.2 Members were also told that local developers were far more likely to source their employment locally compared to the large nationally based developers, and heard that the difficult conditions for smaller developers had a negative impact on local employment. In the case of the housing developer that was consulted, they also worked with local colleges to give apprentices the opportunity to gain experience working in the building trade.
- 4.3 The group was told that smaller developers should become far more competitive if they could build to lower density requirements. Members therefore feel that smaller, locally based developers need more help and flexibility in this respect, especially as it was argued they could help provide a wider range of housing in the Borough. It was felt that this could help make Redditch a more attractive proposition to people currently living outside the town and enable it to better compete with nearby locations such as Bromsgrove and Barnt Green as a desirable place to live. Indeed, a local estate agent commented that they had seen many potential buyers for executive level detached homes in Redditch look elsewhere due to lack of supply. Furthermore, all of the estate agents that responded to the group's consultation felt that Redditch needed a larger supply of larger executive type housing.
- 4.4 Evidence from the Worcestershire SHMA suggests that 'there is also a continued requirement to deliver medium and larger family-size dwellings consisting of 3 and 4+ bedrooms in all authorities'. Evidence specific to Redditch suggests that 'there is likely to be a significant increase in the number of higher value jobs, linked to the expansion of the service sector.' The group therefore feels that local housing developers must be supported to help deliver more detached executive homes that will be sufficient to meet rising demand. In particular, it is felt that Redditch needs to attract more professionals to live and work in the Borough. Policy 5 explains that 'applicants should refer to the most up to date SHMA to determine the most appropriate types of dwellings required throughout the Borough'. The Redditch SHMA Overview Report mentions that "the lower levels of lettings turnover in the

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larger 3 bedroom and, in particular, 4+ bedroom family housing result in there being limited availability of such stock and highlight the continued need to deliver new additional dwellings to boost supply for families.”

- 4.5 During their investigations, Members were informed by a representative from the Asian community in Redditch that finding suitable larger houses within the Borough for extended families from the Pakistani community was a real issue. The group heard that many of these families were housed in the town centre area where properties are older and in many cases in need of considerable repair. The group therefore suggests that the supply of larger properties within the Borough should be increased to help meet the housing needs of this community.
- 4.6 Members also became concerned that, in some instances, the Council's existing minimum density requirement of 30 dwellings per hectare had led to developments having a 'detrimental impact on the amenity, character and environmental quality of an area' as stated in Policy 5. Members feel that density requirements have not been suitable for particular developments within the Borough, and have indeed reduced the visual attraction of these locations. Members of the review suggest that applying density level requirements to these smaller sites is not appropriate as there is very little flexibility for developers to meet these requirements without compromising the look and amenities of the general area itself.
- 4.7 The group appreciates that there must be a fair balance between giving local developers more freedom to deliver new housing on smaller sites while ensuring that there is sufficient land for the Council to meet its own housing targets. With this in mind, the Council's Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) (2011) explains that sites needed to be at least 0.16 hectares in size before they were considered. Essentially this means that they are able to accommodate a minimum of five dwellings at a minimum of thirty dwellings per hectare. Members therefore propose that a threshold is established at 0.16 hectares for exempting new developments from density requirements. This would ensure that all these developments would meet the minimum density requirements to be assessed under the SHLAA. This five dwelling threshold would also give the Council a strong argument for including a windfall allowance in the five year housing supply.
- 4.8 The group feels that exempting all new housing developments within the Borough on sites less than 0.16 hectares from the Council's housing density requirements could lead to a number of significant benefits being realised in terms of providing greater support to local developers, producing more local employment opportunities, and facilitating a wider variety of housing in the Borough to help meet future demand. The group therefore believes that setting a threshold at 0.16 hectares would help achieve a fair balance for the needs of local developers, the Borough Council, and local residents.

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- ii. **all new self-build housing developments on sites larger than 0.16 hectares within the Borough should meet a minimum housing density requirement of 15 dwellings per hectare**

- 4.9 It was suggested to the group by a local housing developer that there was significant local demand for self-build developments in Redditch. They were referred to previous self build sites that had been successfully developed within the Borough, including on Icknield Street and Wolverton Close in Ipsley. It was therefore suggested that more land should be put allocated for these types of developments.
- 4.10 Central Government introduced new initiatives as part of the Localism Act to help encourage more self-build developments. For example, the *Community Right to Build* initiative allows local communities to undertake small-scale, site-specific, community-led developments, including new homes. The intention is to enable the individual communities to retain the benefits of the development. Proposals must meet some minimum requirements, including the strategic elements of the local plan, before they can be approved.
- 4.11 The group are aware that self-build developments can possess a number of strong ecological advantages over traditional house building, especially around energy saving through its strong emphasis on green building design leading to zero carbon housing standards. The group feels that more self-build developments in Redditch, whether through private groups or cooperative means, can also help make local people more employable through improving their range of skills, especially in the construction and business fields.
- 4.12 The group suggests that more should be done to encourage more of these developments to produce a wider variety of housing in the Borough through innovative designs to suit the distinct needs of local residents. Community cohesion could also be improved through local people coming together on these developments. Members are aware that there have been a number of successful cases across the country to the benefit of the local community and environment, including the Hedgehog Housing Co-Operative development of ten timber frame detached bungalows which were constructed in Bevendean, Brighton. The project, which started in 1996, was initiated by four local residents who were in urgent need of being rehoused. They saw self build project as a means to take real ownership and to literally build for a secure future for their family. Drawing on the support of self build groups, they were successful in gaining approval from the city council by highlighting the potential benefits to the local community through the provision of more eco-friendly housing that would be tailored to the needs to the current inhabitants. The scheme has since been praised as a clear example of how self built housing can be truly innovative.
- 4.13 Members feel that more of these of the developments should be actively encouraged in Redditch. It is proposed that self-build projects on sites larger than 0.16 hectares within the Borough should meet a reduced minimum housing density requirement of 15 dwellings per hectare. It is argued that reducing the density

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requirement would allow individual communities to benefit from these developments within the Borough, and to help facilitate a wider variety of local housing provision which Members feel can help attract more people to live in Redditch now and in future. Eliminating density requirements altogether on sites less than 0.16 hectares would give added incentive for more of these developments on very small pockets of land. The group believes that in giving local people the opportunity work together on these schemes could help develop a greater sense of community in Redditch and would improve the skills of local residents in doing so.

iii. all new bungalow developments within the Borough on sites larger than 0.16 hectares should meet a minimum density requirement of 15 dwellings per hectare

- 4.14 According to the Office for National Statistics, Worcestershire is projected to have a population of almost 607,000 by 2031, representing an increase of around 49,500 on the 2010 figure, or just less than 9 per cent. This projected increase in population is concentrated almost exclusively in the 65-plus age range, with the number of people aged 65 and over projected to increase by more than 64,000. In total, this represents a growth of nearly 60 per cent among the 65+ age group between 2010 and 2031. This accounts for 130 per cent of the total projected population increase for Worcestershire during this period.
- 4.15 However, during the review, Members grew concerned that Redditch did not appear to possess a sufficient supply of suitable accommodation to meet the demand of an ageing population.
- 4.16 The majority of estate agents that responded to the group's questionnaire suggested that there was a real need for more bungalows to be built within the Borough, with one estate agent claiming that more two and three bedroom bungalows were 'desperately needed'.
- 4.17 The group suggests that there is an inadequate supply of accommodation for elderly people who want to live independently within the Borough. They are concerned that a significant proportion of existing elderly accommodation within the Borough is not suitable for independent living. In particular, the group argues that there needs to be more ground floor based accommodation that is easily accessible for elderly people in Redditch.
- 4.18 At the time of publication, there were 494 households on the Council's housing register where the main applicant was aged 55 or over. This equated to 23 per cent of the total number of households on the register. 277 of these were aged 65 or over.
- 4.19 It is felt that there needs to be more flexibility for new bungalow developments within the Borough to help meet a rising demand for ground floor accommodation. Once again, the group suggests that a threshold site size should be established at 0.16 hectares before a reduced minimum density requirement would apply. This would

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ensure that all developments that reach this threshold could be assessed for inclusion in the SHLAA and would give the Council a strong argument for including a windfall allowance in the five year land supply.

Financial Implications

4.20 There are no financial implications.

Legal Implications

4.21 The proposed re-wording of Policy 5 is a variation to the current Draft Borough of Redditch Local Plan No. 4 policy that has been out for consultation. If accepted, the revised Policy 5 would be incorporated into the Publication Version of the plan, which is due to be published for consultation, in September 2013.

Service / Operational Implications

4.22 There are no service or operational implications.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

4.23 There are no customer equalities or diversity implications.

5. RISK MANAGEMENT

There are no risk management identified.

6. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Policy 5 Effective and Efficient Use of Land, extracted from the Draft Borough of Redditch Local Plan 4.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Michael Craggs, Democratic Services Officer, on behalf of the Housing Density Targets Task Group

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Policy 5 Effective and Efficient Use of Land

Land for development is a finite resource. Whilst it is acknowledged and accepted that some greenfield land must be used to meet development requirements, there remains a need for prudent re-use of previously developed (brownfield) land within the Borough which, has the potential to contribute towards meeting Redditch's development needs. Furthermore, the greenfield land that is allocated for development should be developed efficiently to maximise its potential.

Policy 5

Effective and efficient use of land must be sought in all new development schemes. With respect to residential development, this will be achieved in the following ways:

- i) the reuse and regeneration of Previously Developed Land (PDL) will be actively encouraged. Where the economic viability of a scheme on PDL is questionable, and can be fully demonstrated by the applicant, the Borough Council may negotiate a more appropriate level of infrastructure provision, or deferred payment scheme with the applicant, in order to secure beneficial reuse of a site;
- ii) densities of between 30 and 50 dwellings per hectare will be sought in Redditch Borough, and 70 dwellings per hectare will be sought on sites for residential development that are within or adjacent to Redditch Town Centre and the District Centres
- iii) higher densities will be sought in locations close to public transport interchanges; and
- iv) ~~iv-~~ higher densities will also be sought in other locations where it can be demonstrated that there will be no detrimental impact on the amenity, character and environmental quality of an area.

Applicants should refer to the most up to date Strategic Housing Market Assessment to determine the most appropriate types of dwellings required throughout the Borough. Lower densities will ~~only~~ be considered acceptable where ~~it has been demonstrated that the scheme reflects the Borough's housing needs, there are~~ ~~there are~~ site specific limitations which negate standard densities being met, or where there would be a detrimental impact on the amenity, character and environmental quality of an area if the standard densities were to be pursued on-site.

Lower density developments may be necessary on some smaller sites, self-build sites or when providing bungalows. In these situations the following approaches will apply:

- i. all new housing developments within the Borough on sites less than 0.16 hectares should be exempt from the Council's housing density requirements
- ii. all new self-build housing developments on sites larger than 0.16 hectares within the Borough should meet a minimum housing density requirement of 15 dwellings per hectare.

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iii. all new bungalow developments within the Borough on sites larger than 0.16 hectares should meet a minimum density requirement of 15 dwellings per hectare.

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Schemes for the development of private residential gardens will generally not be supported unless they lie within existing settlements, integrate fully into the neighbourhood, and can clearly demonstrate that there would be no detrimental impact on the current and future amenity, character and environmental quality of the neighbourhood. Development may be supported if there are substantial overriding environmental, social and economic benefits to justify the development.

With respect to non-residential development, schemes on PDL, which propose the re-development of tired or redundant sites, will be considered favourably.

There will be a presumption against development on PDL where it can be clearly demonstrated that over time, land has been afforded beneficial amenity value or where biodiversity issues would be compromised through redevelopment of the site.

Reasoned Justification

Encouraging development on previously developed land allows maximum use to be made of vacant and previously developed sites within the Borough; thus reducing the pressure for development on greenfield sites and maximising the use of existing infrastructure.

The National Planning Policy Framework removes the previous PPS3 requirement for a specific PDL target, allowing local authorities the flexibility to consider whether a local target would be appropriate. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) demonstrates that it is clearly not possible to deliver substantial levels of housing on PDL in Redditch. This is due to its tight administrative boundaries which are surrounded by Green Belt, and the nature of its previous New Town status, which limits the amount of development that may have reached the end of its natural life and is prime for redevelopment within the urban area. The Borough Council's previous brownfield development target, identified in the Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996 – 2011, stipulated a target of 25% of all residential development on brownfield land. The Borough Council was able to more than double the brownfield delivery against this target during the period up to 2011. Therefore, exceeding previous brownfield development targets, limits the scope and potential during this Plan period. However, there is still a need to promote the reuse of PDL in the interest of Redditch's capacity limitations, and whilst it is not considered beneficial to set a PDL target, it would be prudent to actively encourage development on the areas of known PDL within the Borough. The SHLAA and Employment Land Review (ELR) identify PDL potential within the Borough. Therefore, the Borough Council considers it prudent to encourage regeneration and redevelopment of sites which may be tired or have remained vacant for a number of years, in order to revitalise these parts of the town, thereby encouraging future investment in Redditch and contributing towards the Borough's development targets.

There are some instances where redevelopment of brownfield land should be resisted, such as previously cleared sites which have, over time, become part of the open and green character of an area and value is placed on the contribution these areas make to the community or biodiversity. In these instances, the contribution these sites make to the

character of the area will be afforded careful attention before their redevelopment is considered.

The NPPF does not specify minimum density targets and considers that density levels should be set by local authorities to reflect local circumstances. Based upon past density rates achieved in Redditch, at a time when minimum density requirements were set, it is considered that continuation of these density ranges will continue to be achievable and in keeping with the character of existing development within the Borough. There may be instances when achieving minimum density targets will compromise ~~the e the~~ character of the surrounding area, meeting particular identified housing needs -or if there are physical limitations within the site boundary. In these circumstances, the character of the surrounding area, the identified housing need, or and the sites physical constraints will be afforded careful attention before higher density development is considered.

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Homes with large back gardens are common feature in some of the older districts in the Borough and previously a number of housing completions have come from developments on garden land. Although garden land was previously defined as brownfield land, it has now been removed from this definition. This does not mean that all development on garden land should be refused but rather that careful consideration should be given to any proposals and whether there are any mitigating factors. One of the most important considerations will be the retention of the existing character of residential areas. Development which significantly increases the proportion of ground coverage or the scale of proposed buildings is likely to be out of keeping with its surroundings and therefore is likely to be unacceptable and will be refused. Development of garden land will only be supported where it fully integrates into the neighbourhood and is in keeping the character and quality of the local environment, unless it can be demonstrated there are significant overriding mitigating circumstances.

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COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr John Fisher
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering (Exec Director)
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	None specific

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To enable Members to consider proposals to reduce the financial impact to the Borough and other precepting bodies in relation to the Government changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that the Executive Director of Finance and Resources be authorised to consult on the options to change the Council's Council Tax Support Scheme with effect from April 2014. The options to be consulted on are to be selected from those included in this report.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 As members are aware, from April 2013 the national scheme of Council Tax Benefits was replaced by locally agreed Council Tax Support schemes. Pensionable age claimants are protected but local billing authorities can determine the extent of support for working age claimants. Furthermore, as a discount rather than a benefit, the impact of the change to Council Tax Support was to reduce the taxbase for the Council by the amount of any support given. This therefore affected all organisations that raise a precept, including ourselves, major preceptors and the parish council. Compensation for the loss of council tax was to be paid for by the Government as Council Tax Support Grant to billing authorities and major preceptors. The Grant is equivalent to around 90% of previous council tax benefit costs.
- 3.2. The cost of council tax benefits in Redditch was around £6.5m per year. The 10% shortfall of around £650k is split between the Borough Council (including the parish council) and our major preceptors broadly in line with the proportion of council tax levied. Clearly the County Council will take the largest share of the shortfall. The cost to the Borough is in the region of £91k (14%).

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- 4.3 Also from April 2013, more discretion was given to billing authorities regarding discounts and exemptions for second and empty homes. The Borough Council took advantage of this and reduced discounts on second homes from 10% to nil and reduced short term empty property exemptions from 100% to 50%. These changes will claw back in the region of £257k of the £650k overall funding gap . In addition, the Council took advantage of a late Government offer of transitional grant for 2013/14 only, designed to limit the impact of the changes on claimants. The total transitional grant amounted to £158k bringing the funding gap for the Council and its preceptors to less than £235k.
- 4.4 In January 2013, in agreeing the changes to exemptions the Council resolved to consider the options available to meet the remaining shortfall in funding for 2014/15 and future years. This is particularly so given the expectation that local schemes should be designed to make work pay, that the transitional funding will not continue beyond 2013/14 and given on-going financial pressures both at this Council and at our major preceptors. In order to make any changes, it will be necessary to consult on the possible options and delegation is sought for the Executive Director of Finance and Resources to undertake this consultation on the options, as determined by Executive at this meeting.
- 4.5 Prior to the announcement of the transitional grant for 2013/14, the Council had been considering limiting the amount of council tax support to amounts which would apply for a band D property. This was not implemented as it resulted in a very limited value of Council Tax to the Borough.
- 4.6 The Government have confirmed that a transitional grant will not be payable for 2014/15 and therefore a shortfall remains of around £393k for all preceptors to include £51k for the Borough.
- 4.7 In determining a range of options officers have considered a consistent approach to all benefit claimants to ensure that there is clarity in the reductions proposed. In addition it is anticipated that the administration grant, currently funded by Central Government will be reduced and therefore a less complicated system would ensure that the Council has appropriate resources to administer the scheme.
- 4.8 The models as attached at Appendix 1 include:
- £5 minimum Council Tax Support level
 - £10 minimum Council Tax Support level
 - 10% reduction in Council Tax Support
 - 20% reduction in Council Tax Support
 - Limiting Council Tax Support to Band D level
 - Withdrawing any Council Tax exemptions on developing properties (excluding new developments)

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As mentioned previously these reductions are limited to impact on all claimants of working age and do not include any of pensionable age.

- 4.9 Appendix 1 gives the total estimated savings and those applicable to the Borough, number of claims affected and an assessment as to whether the scheme would generate any administrative savings.
- 4.10 It should be remembered that any reduction in council tax support will result in more council tax to collect. The impact of the changes, particularly on residents who are of low income and have not previously paid Council Tax will need to be assessed and those individuals offered support and advice on managing their finances. It is hoped that with the framework of personal support that is in place as part of the transformation of the service this will mitigate the impact on residents and reduce any potential shortfalls in income recovery.
- 4.11 Following the initial consultation on options over August and September, a report will be submitted to the Executive in October to allow consideration of our proposed Council Tax Support scheme from April 2014. This will allow a further short period of consultation on our proposed scheme ahead of final decision making by the Executive and Council in November / December.

Legal Implications

- 4.12 None as a direct result of this report. The Council has an obligation to consult with affected residents in relation to any proposed changes to services. These will be addressed during the consultation period.

Service / Operational Implications

- 4.13 As reported above the income recovery and financial support officers will have to ensure that residents are supported through any changes to mitigate the impact on their own finances together with those of the Borough. In addition there may be changes to software required however this will be dependent on the revisions to the scheme that are finally approved.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 4.14 Any changes to council tax support will only affect working age claimants but proposals will need to be fully assessed before final decisions can be made. The Council would maintain a small budget for discretionary assistance in the event that changes are made to our Council Tax Support scheme.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Any changes to council tax support whilst increasing council tax income to the Council and our major preceptors will potentially have wide implications for our residents and therefore officers will ensure that support on managing finances and advice on other potential benefits is made available. In addition the income recovery team will continue to measure the arrears position to ensure that members are aware of the impact on income collected.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Options for change

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Council Tax Support – Consultation Options

Option	Number of working age claimants affected (out of total of 3,749)	Total amount saved	Saving to Redditch (including parish)	Average annual increase	Average weekly increase	Administration benefit?
Introduce minimum council tax support of £5 per week. Currently no minimum support amount	2,000	£112,000	£16,000	£259	£5	Yes
Introduce minimum council tax support of £10 per week	2,150	£115,000	£22,000	£518	£10	Yes
Restrict all council tax support to Band D equivalent amounts		£8,000	£1,000			No
Introduce minimum payment of 20% council tax for all working age claimants. Only 80% of council tax liability assessed for council tax support	4,600	£449,000	£63,000	£50	£1	No
Introduce minimum payment of 10% council tax for all working age claimants. Only 90% of council tax liability assess for council tax support	4,600	£225,000	£31,000	£100	£2	No
Withdraw all Council Tax exemption for short term empty property (Class C) Currently 50% for 6 months (excluding new developments)		£134,000	£18,000			No

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**REVIEW OF POLICY FOR LEASES OF COUNCIL LAND & PROPERTY AT
A CONCESSIONARY RENT**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance & Resources
Wards Affected	All

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 Members are requested consider a number of amendments to the policy for the granting of rent relief/concessionary rents to voluntary sector organisations and approve the amended policy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive is requested to RESOLVE that:

the updated Policy attached at Appendix 1 be approved, and implemented with immediate effect.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1. On the 18th December 2012 members approved a policy for the awarding Rent Relief Grant to the Voluntary and Community Sector. At the same meeting members resolved that the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management considers the report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and determines whether aspects of its recommendations might be incorporated into the Policy in due course.
- 3.2. A meeting has been held with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management to consider the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The changes accepted by the Portfolio Holder have been incorporated into the revised document attached at Appendix 1. In making the changes the Portfolio Holder has been mindful of the practicality and cost of implementing some of the recommendations.
- 3.3. The recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were as follows:
- 1) 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;

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- 2) that Officers facilitate a series of workshops to advertise and promote the new policy to the third sector in Redditch;
 - 3) 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; and
 - 4) that each approved concessionary rent agreement be for a minimum of five year duration, include a three year break clause, and be monitored on an annual basis;
- 3.3. In addition to above review by the Portfolio Holder the Grants Panel in operating the Policy have proposed a change to criteria for awarding Rent Relief Grant which would if approved increase the number of organisation entitled to the full 70% relief. The Grants Panel have also suggested a number of points of clarity for adding to the scheme criteria.
- 3.4. The proposed changes are as follows:
- 1) The Second Tier criteria in respect of the receipt of grant funding to deliver services **is moved to the Third Tier.**
 - 2) The criteria at the Third Tier regarding the organisation not being in receipt of any funding in respect of rent on their building via external grant funding **is reworded and included as a condition.**
 - 3) The Overview & Scrutiny recommendation 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 the particular property **has been included as a condition. Rather than a detailed business case the wording states 'appropriately detailed.**
 - 4) A further condition has been added in respect of **monies accrued from sub-letting of space/rooms.**
 - 5) The wording of the awarding of Rent Relief Grant for a three year period has been amended to say **a review of continuing eligibility for Rent Relief Grant will be undertaken at three yearly intervals unless triggered by an earlier change in the VSC's circumstances.**
 - 6) The involvement of the **Local Councillor** in the appeals process has been **removed.**

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- 3.5. No further action has been taken in respect of recommendation 3.2.(2) and (3) detailed above as each organisation affected by the Policy has been contacted directly. Any other organisations wishing to take up a lease in one the Council's properties will be advised of the Policy at the time of the enquiry.

Financial Implications

- 3.4 The change proposed by the Grants Panel could result in more organisations being entitled to the maximum 70% relief.

Legal Implications

- 3.6 There are no direct legal implications.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.7. If approved the revised policy will be applied for all future applications for Rent Relief Grant.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.8. There is a potential for more organisations to qualify for the maximum 70% relief.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

The policy seeks to reduce the financial impact on individual organisations through the use of transitional arrangements and the availability of an appeals process.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Amended Voluntary and Community Sector Rent Relief Grant Policy

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Executive Committee report 18th December 2012.
Overview & Scrutiny Committee report 11th December 2012..

AUTHORS OF REPORT

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Appendix 1 – Amended Voluntary & Community Sector Rent Relief Grant

Voluntary & Community Sector Rent Relief Grant

All applications for Rent Relief Grant will be considered by the Grants Panel.

There are three tiers for determining the amount of Rent Relief Grant to be awarded to Voluntary & Community Sector Groups (VSGs). The process includes a provision for VCS groups to appeal* for a further reduction via the Executive Committee.

First tier - 25% Reduction for all VCS groups – this will be determined by the following criteria:

1. Registered Charity
2. Community Interest Company
3. Social Enterprise
4. Locally recognised Community Organisation

Second Tier – Additional 20% Reduction – Above + following criteria

1. Is providing a service that is addressing the needs of the local community.
2. Employs Staff or has Volunteers or a mix of both to deliver services

Third Tier – Additional 25% Reduction – Above + following criteria

1. Supports Redditch Borough Councils local priorities
2. In receipt of grant funding to deliver services
3. Is capable of, or does maintain the building to the required standards
4. Has a long term plan (three year) for delivery of their service into the Borough***

Where more than one organisation is applying to occupy the same premises the Grants Panel's existing scoring criteria will be used to distinguish between the applicants. Property Services will at the same time assist with identifying suitable alternative premises.

The Grants Panel will recommend to the Head of Finance & Resources the level of Rent Relief Grant to be awarded up to the 70% ceiling.

All organisations will be offered a lease agreement with the approved Rent Relief Grant applied under the terms agreed with Property Services, to include

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a provision of a periodic** review of the rent relief. Rent Relief Grant will be paid/awarded on the signing of the lease agreement.

***Further appeal process:**

If the full 70% relief is applied and the organisation feels that the rental value applied is still too high we propose that the organisations put a business case to the Head of Finance & Resources for consideration by the Executive Committee. The organisation must fulfil all of the above criteria in order to initiate the appeal process

** A review of continuing eligibility for Rent Relief Grant will be undertaken at three yearly intervals unless triggered by an earlier change in the VSC's circumstances.

Conditions:

1. All applications must be accompanied by an appropriately detailed business case***.
2. All external grant funding (i.e. any third party grant funding not awarded by Redditch Borough Council) received in respect of the rental of premises owned by Redditch Borough Council must be declared. The Council reserves the right to claw back all or part of the Rent Relief Grant in such circumstances.
3. All monies accrued from the sub-letting of space/room in any leased premises for which an application for Rent Relief Grant has been submitted should be:
 - a. Identified in the financial budget for any grant application (including for Rent Relief Grant);
 - b. Submitted as evidence to support the sustainability of the VCS organisation within the Borough.

The Council reserves the right to claw back all or part of the Rent Relief Grant where monies accrued from the sub-letting of premises are being used to build up financial reserves.

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**SELECTION OF REGISTERED PROVIDER FOR DEVELOPMENT OF
HEWELL ROAD SWIMMING BATHS SITE**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Mark Shurmer
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Sue Hanley, Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director, Leisure, Environment & Community Services
Wards Affected	Batchley & Brockhill
Ward Councillor Consulted	
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Executive Committee resolved on the 12 February 2013 that Hewell Road swimming baths site and adjacent play area be disposed of by sale or transfer for the development of affordable Housing to a Registered Provider from the Council's Preferred Partner list.
- 1.2 This report brings forward the Member panel's recommendation for the selection of Redditch Co-op Homes to deliver affordable housing on the Hewell Road swimming baths site.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- 1) Redditch Co-op Homes be selected as the preferred partner to deliver affordable housing on the Hewell Road swimming baths site; and**
- 2) authority be delegated to the Head of Finance and Resources and the Housing Strategy Manager to complete the transfer of the site to Redditch Co-op Homes subject to planning permission being obtained.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 Due to the requirement that the RP is to demolish the swimming baths none of the submissions offered a capital receipt of more than £1.

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- 3.2 No capital receipt will be received on the sale of the land to Redditch Co-op Homes.

Legal Implications

- 3.3 Under the General Disposal Consent (England) 2003 it is permissible to make disposals at less than best consideration if those disposals contribute to the social, economic and environmental well-being of the area.
- 3.4 As the disposal is to a Registered Provider (RP) the sale at an under value amounts to the Borough Council providing financial assistance under sections 24 and 25 of the Local Government Act 1988 for which a section 25 General Consent for disposal of land to an RP is required. The proposal comes within General Consent A which provides that a Local Authority may provide an RP with any financial assistance or any gratuitous benefit consisting of disposal to the RP of land for development as housing accommodation.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.5 Invitations were sent to all preferred partner registered providers by e-mail and post requesting that submissions be returned to the Council by 17 May 2013.
- 3.6 Officers received submissions from Rooftop, Festival and Redditch Co-op Homes.
- 3.7 The selection panel was to consist of Cllr Mark Shurmer (chair), Cllr Greg Chance, Cllr Pattie Hill, Cllr Brandon Clayton and Cllr Derek Taylor.
- 3.8 The selection panel meet on 4 June 2013, with Cllr Taylor having to give his apologies on the day. Officers discussed the absence of Cllr Taylor with the Democratic Services Manager who advised that the panel was still able to proceed.
- 3.9 The panel considered each submission against the scoring matrix approved by the Executive Committee on the 12 February 2012 and provided a score on a consensus basis.
- 3.10 The final order of the submissions scored by the panel is
1. Redditch Co-op Homes
 2. Rooftop
 3. Festival

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Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 The disposal will assist in meeting the increase the supply of affordable housing in the Borough and assist in mitigating the impacts of Welfare Reform.
- 3.12 The proposal will mean the loss of a play area. However, Officers and Ward Members have confirmed this play area is not well used and suffers with anti-social behaviour.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

RISK	CONSEQUENCE	CONTROLS
Following detailed investigation development may not proceed due to viability	Affordable homes not built and site remains vacant and Council still incurs costs to secure	Delegated authority already given to dispose on open market

5. APPENDICES

None.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Executive Committee Report dated 12 February 2013

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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healthwatch
Worcestershire



Launch

10th May 2013

Healthwatch Worcestershire

‘The independent champion for
‘all’ consumers of publicly funded
health and social care services in
Worcestershire’

Peter Pinfield
Chairman



Our area of activity is...

Helping you get the best out of health and social care services in Worcestershire

We want to be known as...

Local voices voices improving local health and social care services

Our ambition is...

The best health and social care services, shaped by local needs and experience



The principles that drive us are...

Championing equality
Representation, Evidence, Accountability

The way we go about all our work is...

Open, flexible, approachable
Practical and dynamic
'From the ground-up'

We want people to feel that we are all about...

Every voice counts
Local influence for local impact



Redditch BC, 4 June 2013

Simon Adams

www.healthwatchworcestershire.co.uk

Healthwatch...

- **Healthwatch England**

Guidance & Support but NOT direction and Control

- **A Network of Local Healthwatches**

Sharing a national brand

- **Healthwatch Worcestershire**

A Local Healthwatch - Arrangements the responsibility of WCC

Healthwatch Worcestershire...

- Social Enterprise Company Ltd by guarantee
- Board of Directors
- Reference & Engagement Group
- Volunteers
- Register for information
- Worcestershire's population

Scope of Healthwatch Worcestershire...

- Local people
- Publicly funded health & social care services
- Out of county services
- Legislative & contractual arrangements determine what HWW must and can do

Our Values...

- Independent
- ‘Consumers’ first
- Transparent
- Balanced & fair
- Partnership
- Mutual Respect
- Intelligence led
- Targeted activity
- Evidenced based
- Partnership
- Responsive
- Marginal gains

Adding value, and making a difference...

Legislation says LHW must...

- Promote & support involvement of ‘consumers’ in commissioning and delivery of services
- Enable ‘consumers’ to monitor service provisionservice improvements
- Obtaining ‘consumers’ views & making them known to commissioners, providers and scrutinisers

And...

- ‘Signposting’ incl referral to Independent Advocacy
- Formulate views on the standard of provision & whether/how local services could/ought to be improved
- Provide HWE with intelligence & insight
- Publish an Annual Report

Legislation says LHW can...

- Involve persons/organisations to help carry out some activities
- Additional reporting to an overview & scrutiny committee of the Local Authority
- The power to ‘Enter & View’ as an engagement activity

HWW's Influence...

- Statutory member of Health & Wellbeing Board
- Right to request information and to require a response to reports
- Reporting to HWE/CQC
- Annual Report
- Quality Accounts
- **Relationships with Commissioners & Providers**

The How...

- Good Governance
- Reference & Engagement Group
- Volunteers
- Business plan - issues of priority to ‘consumers’ & ‘Signposting’
- Capacity to respond to unforeseen issues reported by ‘consumers’
- Marketing & communications activity to enable effective business planning and delivery

Potential Risks...

- National/local promotion of LHW could raise unrealistic expectations of HWW
- Misunderstanding of roles
- Failing to connect effectively with all ‘consumers’, particularly those who need HWW services the most
- Single interest groups utilise disproportionate share of HWW resources

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

9th July 2013

ADVISORY PANELS, WORKING GROUPS, ETC - UPDATE REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To provide, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels, and similar bodies which report via the Executive Committee.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that

subject to Members' comments, the report be noted.

3. UPDATES**A. ADVISORY PANELS**

	<u>Meeting :</u>	<u>Lead Members / Officers :</u> (Executive Members shown <u>underlined</u>)	<u>Position :</u> (Oral updates to be provided at the meeting by Lead Members or Officers, if no written update is available.)
1.	Climate Change Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Debbie Taylor</u> / Vice-Chair: Cllr Andy Fry Kevin Dicks / Ceridwen John	Last meeting – 15 th May 2013
2.	Economic Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> / Vice-Chair: Cllr John Fisher John Staniland /	Last meeting – 15 th April 2013

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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		Georgina Harris	
3.	Housing Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Mark Shurmer</u> / Vice-Chair: Cllr Pat Witherspoon Liz Tompkin	Next meeting – Date to be established
4.	Planning Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Rebecca Blake</u> John Staniland / Ruth Bamford	Next meetings – 9 th July and 20 th August 2013

B. OTHER MEETINGS

5.	Constitutional Review Working Party	Chair: <u>Cllr Bill Hartnett</u> / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> Sheena Jones	Next meeting – Date to be established.
6.	Member Support Steering Group	Chair: Cllr John Fisher / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Phil Mould</u> Sheena Jones	Next meeting – 17 th June 2013.
7.	Grants Panel	Chair: Cllr David Bush / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> Donna Hancox	Next meeting – 19 th June 2013.
8.	Procurement Group	Chair: <u>Cllr Bill Hartnett</u> / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> Jayne Pickering / Teresa Kristunas	In abeyance pending Transformation.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

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9.	Independent Remuneration Panel	Chair: Mr R Key / Sheena Jones	Last meeting – 24 th June 2013
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AUTHOR OF REPORT

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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ACTION MONITORING

Portfolio Holder(s) / Responsible Officer	Action requested	Status
18th December 2012		
Cllr Shurmer/ D Allen / M Bough	Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy Officers were in the process of developing a Protocol with other Local Authorities to address the provision of accommodation for homeless people and offered to circulate it to members of the Committee following the meeting.	A county-wide draft policy has now been developed.
11th June 2013		
Cllr John Fisher / A de Warr	Making Experiences Count - Quarterly Customer Service Report - Quarter 4 2012/13 Officers undertook to make Members more aware of the Report It function on the Council website.	Information on Report It circulated to Members following the meeting.
<u>Note:</u>	<i>No further debate should be held on the above matters or substantive decisions taken, without further report OR unless urgency requirements are met.</i>	Report period: 18/12/12 to 11/06/13

