



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 24th  
November, 2014  
7.00 pm

Committee Room Two  
Town Hall  
Redditch



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- Unless otherwise stated, all items of business before the Executive Committee are Key Decisions.
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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 Amanda Scarce  
Democratic Services Officers**

**Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH  
Tel: 01527 64252 (Ext. 3268 / 3267)  
e.mail: [jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk) /  
[a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)**

# Welcome to today's meeting.

## Guidance for the Public

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### **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 Democratic Services 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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# Overview and Scrutiny

## Committee

Monday, 24th November, 2014

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

### Agenda

#### Membership:

Cllrs: Jane Potter (Chair) Carole Gandy  
 Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) Alan Mason  
 Joe Baker Paul Swansborough  
 David Bush Pat Witherspoon  
 Andrew Fry

<p><b>1. Apologies and named substitutes</b></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><b>2. Declarations of interest and of Party Whip</b></p>	<p>To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests, and any Party Whip.</p>
<p><b>3. Minutes</b> (Pages 1 - 12)</p>	<p>To confirm the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21st October as a correct record.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>4. Concessionary Bus Travel - Discussion</b> (Pages 13 - 14)</p> <p>Judith Willis, Acting Head of Community Services,              Councillor Greg Chance,              Deputy Leader of the Council</p>	<p>To consider further information about the provision of concessionary bus travel to eligible Redditch residents.</p> <p>(Report attached).</p> <p><b>All Wards</b></p>
<p><b>5. Market Scrutiny Task Group - Monitoring Update Report</b> (Pages 15 - 24)</p> <p>Steve Singleton, Economic Development Manager</p>	<p>To consider action that has been taken to implement the recommendations made by the Market Scrutiny Task Group in March 2013.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>

# Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

Monday, 24th November, 2014

<p><b>6. Proposals for Change by Tudor Grange Academy Short, Sharp Review - Final Report</b></p> <p>(Pages 25 - 56)</p> <p>Councillor Pat Witherspoon</p>	<p>To consider the final report of the Proposals for Change by Tudor Grange Academy Short, Sharp Review.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(Various Wards)</b></p>
<p><b>7. Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel - Update Report</b></p> <p>(Pages 57 - 58)</p> <p>Councillor Jane Potter</p>	<p>To consider an update from the Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel about the latest meeting of the panel.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>8. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme</b></p> <p>(Pages 59 - 76)</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 Committee's Work Programme are suitable for scrutiny.</p> <p>(Minutes attached).</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>9. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme</b></p> <p>(Pages 77 - 80)</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"><li>• The Forward Plan / Committee agendas</li><li>• External publications</li><li>• Other sources.</li></ul> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>10. Task Groups - Progress Reports</b></p> <p>Councillor Jane Potter</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"><li>• Tackling Obesity Task Group – Chair, Councillor Jane Potter</li></ul> <p>(Oral reports)</p> <p><b>All Wards</b></p>

# Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

Monday, 24th November, 2014

<p><b>11. Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b> (Pages 81 - 90) Councillor Pat Witherspoon</p>	<p>To receive a verbal update on the recent work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC).</p> <p>Members have been provided with a copy of a presentation that was delivered during the last meeting of HOSC. Councillor Witherspoon will provide further information, including contextual information, during the meeting</p> <p>(Report attached and oral report to follow)</p> <p><b>All Wards</b></p>
<p><b>12. Exclusion of the Press and Public</b></p>	<p>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:</p> <p>“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”.</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"><li>• Para 1 – <u>any individual</u>;</li><li>• Para 2 – the <u>identity of any individual</u>;</li><li>• Para 3 – <u>financial or business affairs</u>;</li><li>• Para 4 – <u>labour relations matters</u>;</li><li>• Para 5 – <u>legal professional privilege</u>;</li><li>• Para 6 – <u>a notice, order or direction</u>;</li><li>• Para 7 – the <u>prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime</u>;</li></ul> <p>and may need to be considered as ‘exempt’.</p>







# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Jane Potter (Chair), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Joe Baker, Michael Braley (substituting for Councillor Paul Swansborough), David Bush, Andrew Fry, Carole Gandy, Alan Mason, Nina Wood-Ford (substituting for Councillor Pat Witherspoon)

### Also Present:

Councillor Phil Mould (Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism)

### Officers:

J Godwin, S Hanley, J Pickering, L Tompkin, C Walker, J Willis and A Wyre

### Democratic Services Officers:

J Bayley A Scarce

## 35. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Paul Swansborough and Pat Witherspoon with Councillors Mike Braley and Nina Wood-Ford attending as substitutes.

## 36. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

Councillor Jane Potter declared an other discloseable interest in respect of Minute No.45, the update on the work of the Proposals for Change by Tudor Grange Academy Short, Sharp Review. She left the room and took no part in the discussions about this update.

Councillor David Bush also declared an other discloseable interest in respect of Minute No.45, as a member of the board of governors at the Walkwood Middle School, part of the pyramid group which would be affected by the changes proposed by Tudor Grange Academy. He left the room and took no part in the discussions about this update.

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Chair

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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In light of the Chair having to leave the room it was noted that the Vice Chair would preside over the relevant part of Minute No. 45.

Councillor Andrew Fry declared an other discloseable interest in Minute No. 40 Fees and Charges Report, due to his personal family connection to the Head of Community Services.

## 37. MINUTES

Officers reminded Members that they had received two emails since the last meeting in respect of the request for an update on defibrillators. Members discussed where the defibrillators had been installed and who had funded them. Officers confirmed that this matter had originally been referred to the Health and Safety Committee and a number had been sited at the Leisure Centres, with others being installed at the Town Hall and Palace Theatre. These had been funded by the Council, though defibrillators had also been donated for free by the West Midlands Ambulance Service.

Members were reminded that this issue had been raised following receipt of correspondence by Councillor Bush, in his capacity as the former Chair of the Committee, from a resident. It had been reported to Members that the Leader had made a pledge to provide defibrillators and as it was not clear to Members from the information received, whether this pledge had been made further clarification was requested from the Leader.

### **RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd September 2014, be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 38. FREE SWIMMING DISCUSSION

The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism, supported by Officers, responded to the pre-prepared questions that the Committee had provided.

Members were provided with details of the uptake of free swimming and it was explained that this was made available by the use of cards by those wishing to take advantage of the facility. The service had originally been instigated by central government for a short period and then reintroduced by the Council in more recent years. The Committee discussed the benefits of free swimming for both age groups and highlighted that in respect of the over 60s the

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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attraction was not always about exercise as swimming could also be a social activity. It was difficult to pinpoint whether the service had encouraged more people to go swimming as the current system used did not provide enough detailed information on this subject. It was acknowledged that the system in place needed to be refreshed in order to provide more useful analytical data.

The following areas were discussed in more detail:

- Sports England's survey and whether the data could be used.
- The Sports England 3 x 30 minute indicator, which it was understood had been reduced to 1 x 30 minute session of sport.
- The increased figures for those participating in 1 x 30 minute session.
- How the service was publicised and whether the awareness of the service was reaching those who would benefit from it the most.

Members asked Officers to provide the following information:

- detailed usage figures for the period pre and post the cancelled central government funded scheme;
- the usage figures for the Council funded scheme based on monthly report broken down into financial years.
- a postcode analysis of the card sales for the period to show what locations the cards were purchased from.

The Committee also agreed that further promotion of the service should be considered by the Leisure Team to ensure that residents were aware of this option.

In respect of the impact of free swimming provision on public health and tackling obesity locally the Committee were informed that Redditch had seen an increase in the Active People Survey results and specifically there had been an increase in adults aged 16 or more participating in swimming activities at least once a week. This in turn had raised awareness of the Abbey Stadium and the other facilities that were available. Officers had been contacted by older people who wanted to get more active. They had been signposted either to suitable sessions at the Abbey Stadium or to community sessions such as the Falls Intervention. The recent Local Health Profiles for Redditch had shown a decrease in hip fractures for people aged 65 and over, an increase in levels of physical activity amongst adults and a reduction in early death from health related diseases.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the information provided be noted; and

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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**2) the additional information requested during the meeting be provided and circulated for the consideration of Members.**

## **39. FUTURE YEARS FINANCIAL PLAN 2015/16 - PRE-SCRUTINY**

Officers delivered a presentation which provided an overview of the proposals to ensure that the Committee were more involved, than in previous years, in scrutiny of the budget. The scrutiny process would assist in driving improvements in budget setting and transparency.

The following areas were also covered within the presentation:

- How the budget setting process was decided.
- The use of the Council's strategic purposes in the breakdown of the budget to ensure that a clear picture of proposed spending and measures in place to support each service..
- Lessons learned and the impact in future years.
- The use of the transformation process in order to redesign services and make savings.

Key dates were also provided which highlighted when specific reports would be considered.

Following the presentation Members discussed their disappointment as they had understood that they would have been considering more detailed information about the budget and not just the process for future meetings. During this discussion the following issues were raised:

- The findings and issues raised within the Council's Audit Report.
- The linking of the strategic purposes to more detailed budget information.
- The lack of a three financial year plan
- The ongoing transformation of services and whether all service interventions had been completed. It was suggested that for Members interested in this attendance at the forthcoming Shared Services Board meeting would provide further information and business case proposals.

The Chairman was concerned that with an already heavy work programme, particularly at its meeting on 24th November, the Committee would have insufficient time to carry out an in depth scrutiny of the Council's budget. It was therefore suggested that an additional meeting be set up to cover the budget items only.

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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## RESOLVED that

**officers arrange an additional meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 10th November 2014, commencing at 6.30 pm, to scrutinise the Council's budget.**

## 40. FEES AND CHARGES REPORT - PRE-SCRUTINY

Members received the Fees and charges Report for pre-scrutiny and were advised that the Heads of Service had been invited to attend and would highlight any fees and charges which had increased outside of the standard 3 per cent. It was anticipated that these new rates would be set with effect from 1st January 2015 and in future would be reviewed every calendar year as opposed to financial year. The average 3 per cent increase would provide a total income of around £100,000 which would be included within the Medium Term Financial Plan.

### Leisure and Cultural Services

Officers highlighted a number of areas where an increase of slightly more than 3 per cent had been put in place and informed Members that often this was purely to round up (or in a small number of cases down) the amounts charged to make this manageable, particularly for reception at the leisure centres, when providing people with change. A number of items in respect of block booking had increased by around 5 per cent, and it was explained that as these bookings involved between 10-12 people, the increase per head equated to only a relatively small amount.

Members questioned the increase in Swimming Lessons, particularly those for Juniors, in light of a recent water related fatality. It was felt that by holding the price of at least the Junior Swimming Lessons that the Council could show that they were acknowledging the concerns around water safety and acting on them. The Committee discussed whether the potential to make no increase had been considered and the role of the schools in teaching young people to swim. Officers explained that under Key Stage 2 there was a level of competence which pupils were expected to reach (to be able to swim 25m). It was understood that the schools had various funding streams available to them to provide this activity, but each school had different arrangements and it was often the cost of transporting pupils to the swimming baths, which had an impact on the lessons they provided. It was believed that parents often used the swimming lessons provided by the Council to supplement those provided by the schools.

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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The following areas were highlighted and discussed in respect of Leisure and Cultural Services fees and charges:

- The use of the rounding up and rounding down process.
- Charges for Sports Development services in order for people to be given the opportunity to participate in leisure activities in the community.
- The new pricing policy for community centres implemented in order to encourage new groups to develop and grow by initially paying a reduced rate. A sampling exercise had been carried out as part of this process.
- Increase in allotment charges. It was confirmed that discussions with users and allotment groups had taken place.
- Increase in civic suite commercial charges and the overhead costs incurred when hired out at the weekend.
- Reduced hire rates for community groups.

## Community Services

The Committee was informed that all increases were within the 3 per cent threshold. It was noted that there had not been an increase in the fees for the Dial a Ride service. Members were advised that it had been agreed with service users that an increase would be implemented every three years in line with inflation.

## Environmental Services

Officers highlighted the following points within the report:

- For the bulky household waste service an instant quote could be provided.
- The lack of space within the cemetery. There was confusion in respect of the interment of cremated remains and Officers agreed to provide further clarification for Members outside of the meeting.
- Reduction in charge for use of chapel for burial service at off peak times.

## Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Officers highlighted the following matters in relation to the fees and charges for Worcestershire Regulatory Services:

- The increases for Pet Shops, Dog Breeding and Animal Boarding were 6 per cent and this was to ensure they were comparable with the rates charged by the rest of the County.

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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- In respect of Hackney Carriages and Private Hire Vehicles a charge had been introduced for the Knowledge Test to cover administration.
- The remainder of the charges were set by statute and therefore no changes had been made.

## Corporate, Customer Access and Legal and Democratic Services

Members were informed that there were no changes to the Corporate Charges. In respect of the Customer Access and Financial Support charges, Surveyors Fees had increased by 3.9 per cent to reflect the cost of the service.

It was highlighted that there was now a charge for a Deed of Variation which referred to complex s106 agreements and this charge had not previously been made.

## Housing Services

Officers informed Members that there were no significant changes to the charges for Housing Services other than those in respect of St David's House, which had previously been agreed.

## Planning and Regeneration

Officers highlighted the following matters:

- The move to charging the actual cost of providing documents, for example the schedule of buildings of local interest for less than the current cost.
- The availability of documents via the internet free of charge.
- The inclusion of an additional charge in respect of domestic extensions to a single building. This charge related to the need to employ an outside contractor to certify for example electric work which had not been fitted by a professional electrician.
- The increase in charges for archived applications was above 3 per cent and due to remote storage of these documents.
- Members were reminded that the Building Control department was not able to either make a loss or a profit from the charges it made for services.

In respect of recommendation 2 in the main report, Officers explained that due to the commercial nature of the business of Leisure and Cultural Services by granting the Head of Service delegated powers to change the fees it enabled him to ensure that for example the Sports Hall at the Abbey Stadium could be utilised

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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at a reduced rate on a Friday evening, thereby allowing the Council to maximise usage of the facility.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the rate for Junior Swimming Lessons remain at the current 2014/15 rate;**
- 2) the fees and charges for 2015/16 as set out in Appendix 1-9 of the report be approved, subject to the recommendation detailed above, other than in the cases where;**
  - (a) Fees or charges are statutory,**
  - (b) Fees and charges are set externally, or**
  - (c) Other Council approved circumstances apply; and**
- 3) the Head of Leisure and Cultural Service be given delegation to alter the leisure fees and charges by a variation of up to 30%.**

## **41. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATION TRACKER - UPDATE REPORT**

Officers provided a number of further updates in respect of the tracker, which had been received following publication of the agenda:

- Access for Disabled People Task Group – The disabilities awareness training had taken place as part of the Equalities training on 18th September. Unfortunately there had been a disappointing turnout for this, with only three Members attending.
- Abbey Stadium Task Group's Recommendation 1 - Members were advised that the Executive Committee had also agreed the amended wording in respect of therapeutic services and a sauna and steam room. This would be included in the next tracker report.
- Abbey Stadium Task Group's Recommendation 6 – A further update had been received and Members were advised that it was anticipated that the new displays would be in place by 5th November.
- Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group's Recommendation 4 - Human Resources had confirmed that they were in negotiations with the local college and were currently working on a job description and person specification for the suggested apprentice post.
- Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group's Recommendation 8 - Whilst support had been given to this



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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recommendation by the Executive Committee Officers had highlighted a number of concerns which could potentially mean that it was not practical to have a new staff award for voluntary work carried out by staff.

- Football Provision Task Group final report – The recommendation from the group had been agreed by Executive Committee and would be included within the next tracker report.

Following this additional update Members discussed the following areas in more detail:

- The use of “smiley faces” and that consideration should be given to amending these for some of the recommendations following the updates received.
- Arts and Culture Task Group - the possibility of an Arts Centre being established and whether it was realistic for this recommendation to remain on the tracker.
- Landscaping Task Group’s Recommendation 1 - the invitation for members to visit the Place Team and whether this had been taken up by any Members.
- Landscaping Task Group’s Recommendations 6 and 7 - It was understood that these had been suggested by officers and Members requested further information as to the feasibility of implementing these recommendations in the current climate before deciding whether they should remain on the tracker.
- Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group and the new staff award for voluntary work carried out by staff. After discussion it was agreed that this would remain on the tracker in order to provide the Chair of the Task Group with an opportunity to consider the response from officers.
- Voluntary and Community Sector Task Group’s Recommendation 9 in respect of the Redditch Hour on twitter. The Committee was advised that the Executive committee had suggested that the Redditch Town Centre Partnership should be asked to facilitate the launch of the Redditch Hour but the partnership had declined this offer. Following discussions Members agreed it would be appropriate to suggest that the Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN) would be a more suitable facilitator for it.
- Market Task Group – as there had been concerns raised about the lack of action on these recommendations a separate report would be received by the Committee at its meeting on 24th November.
- Whilst it was acknowledge that the Executive Committee had approved the Abbey Stadium Task Group’s recommendation in respect of the potential for a trust to manage the Council’s

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

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leisure facilities, Members requested clarification as to when this review was expect to take place.

After further discussion it was

**RECOMMENDED that**

**the Executive Committee ask the Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN) to facilitate the launch of a Redditch Hour on social media.**

**RESOLVED that**

**subject to the information requested in the preamble above being provided by the relevant officers, the report be noted.**

**42. JOINT WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES (WRS) SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - UPDATE REPORT**

The Committee was provided with an update on the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee's response to the recommendations which had been put forward by the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Scrutiny Task Group in its Final Report. Members were advised that the recommendations had been considered by all the Overview and Scrutiny Committees in the County and had been agreed by all but one (Wyre Forest District Council).

At the Joint Committee's meeting held on 2nd October the final report had been presented for its consideration by the Chair and Vice Chair. Recommendations 1 to 5 had been approved, and had referred recommendation 11 to the Executive committees at partner authorities for approval. In respect of recommendations 7 to 10 the Joint Committee had requested officers to bring forward alternative proposals to address the issues which had been raised.

Recommendation 6 had been addressed at a previous Joint Committee meeting when they had discussed alternative financial arrangements and recommendation 12 had been agreed and required action by partners' Overview and Scrutiny Committees.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group Update Report be noted.**

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

---

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

Officers confirmed that the Executive Committee had considered the Football Provision Task Group's final recommendation and had approved it. It had also considered an amendment to the Abbey Stadium Task Group Task Group's recommendation in respect of Therapeutic Services and Sauna/steam room to be included within its remit when exploring the option for a Leisure Trust, and this had also been approved.

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the Executive Committee held on 8th September and the latest edition of the Executive Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

**44. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme.

**RESOLVED that**

**subject to the addition of a meeting to scrutinise the budget, as detailed in Minute No. 39, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

**45. TASK GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS**

Proposals for Change by Tudor Grange Academy Short, Sharp Review – Chair, Councillor Pat Witherspoon

As Councillor Witherspoon was unable to attend the meeting she had provided a written update on the work of the group. Councillor Carol Gandy also provided further information in respect of the following:

- The group had met with representatives of Tudor Grange Academy.
- The group had also interviewed the local M.P. and Councillor Rebecca Blake who had played an integral part in the petition.
- A representative of the Redditch Democratic Alliance had also been invited to attend a meeting, but had chosen to provide a written response.

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st October, 2014

---

Councillor Gandy confirmed that the Group remained on track to bring their final report to the 24th November meeting.

(Prior to consideration of this update Councillor Potter declared an other disclosable interest in the subject as a school governor at Tudor Grange Academy. Councillor Bush also declared an other discloseable interest in this update as a school governor at Walkwood Middle School, part of the pyramid group which would be affected by the changes proposed by Tudor Grange Academy. They both left the room during consideration of this update and did not take part in the discussions).

### Tackling Obesity – Chair, Councillor Jane Potter

Councillor Potter confirmed that the group had met on several occasions and at the last meeting had looked at data and health profiles for the County including levels of obesity and diabetes. This data had shown a slight improvement in obesity levels but a steep increase in Type 2 Diabetes. The group had also formulated some questions for leisure services Officers and public health representatives from Worcestershire County Council and were aiming to interview them at forthcoming meetings.

### **RESOLVED that**

**the update reports be noted.**

## **46. HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

In the absence of Councillor Pat Witherspoon, the Council's representative on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) a written update had been provided. The update referred to specific issues which had been discussed during the meeting. To help clarify the outcome of these discussions it was suggested that the minutes of the HOSC meeting should be circulated to Members.

### **RESOLVED that**

**Officers circulate the minutes of the HOSC meeting to Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.**

**Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Concessionary Bus Travel Questions**

**1) What is the take-up (number of users)?**

There has been a high take up of the pre 09:30 concessionary travel and in its first year of operation the usage was higher than predicted. The figures for first financial year 2013/14 and this financial year up to September 2014 are as follows:

The figures have reduced recently due to the changes in bus services in the Borough.

<b>2013-14</b>	Diamond	Green Transport	Johnsons	Stagecoach	Fleet	All
M01-Apr	10,581	92	3	106	61	10,843
M02-May	11,815	105	208	90	44	12,262
M03-Jun	10,812	53	253	64	167	11,349
M04-Jul	13,880	12	275	103	65	14,335
M05-Aug	12,308	6	218	156	102	12,790
M06-Sep	12,059	3	320	32	32	12,446
M07-Oct	12,507	2	294	56	20	12,879
M08-Nov	11,886	0	363	82	28	12,359
M09-Dec	11,096	1	297	47	13	11,454
M10-Jan	11,742	0	294	46	6	12,088
M11-Feb	10,818	0	243	44	6	11,111
M12-Mar	12,627	0	315	54	12	13,008
Actual Total	142,131	182	3,080	774	495	146,924

<b>2014-15</b>	Diamond	Green Transport	Johnsons	Stagecoach	Fleet	All
M01-Apr	10,736	0	327	0	2	11,065
M02-May	11,106	0	267	110	6	11,489
M03-Jun	11,189	0	298	77	7	11,571
M04-Jul	11,932	0	344	153	15	12,444
M05-Aug	9,690	0	88	164	5	9,947
M06-Sep	9,196	47	129	94	0	9,466
Actual Total	63,849	47	1,126	598	33	65,653
Current Projection	127,698	94	2,252	1,196	79	131,319

**2) How much does Redditch Borough Council pay the bus company to subsidise concessionary travel?**

The council has a budget set aside of £86,000 and has negotiated a fixed sum payment with each of the bus operators with registered services operating within the Borough. For commercial reasons the individual payments are not disclosed.

**3) How is the financial contribution from the Council to support concessionary travel calculated?**

The calculation was based on figures supplied by Worcestershire County Council, those figures were based on take up of the pre 09:30 concession that was available until 2011 prior to the transfer of responsibility for concessionary travel from the District Councils to Worcestershire County Council. The pre 09:30 journeys comprise 7.8% of all concessionary journeys originating on the routes on which the Scheme operates and is in line with the advice received from the County Council.

**4) Do the bus company have plans to introduce more accurate automated ticket machines (to allow more accuracy around the number of users)?**

The major bus companies have all installed SMART Ticket machines, capable of reading the passes, the County Council has a scheme to provide similar equipment to smaller bus companies.

To date Diamond, Stagecoach, Johnson's and Green Bus have the machines and the remaining operator (Fleet) will be equipped this financial year.

**5) How are eligible users informed about the service?**

When residents receive a pass or replace a pass, they receive a leaflet provided by the County Council that includes details of the Redditch Scheme. In addition at the start of the scheme there was press coverage in the local papers.

The effectiveness of this can be demonstrated in the high passenger numbers.

**6) Why do retired people need to travel before 9.30am?**

Generally residents use their pass access a wide range of services/facilities at times to suit their needs. This includes medical facilities before 09:30. In addition the Scheme also includes disabled residents who may be travelling to activities or to education as free home to 'school' travel is not available to residents over 16 years of age.

An example of one such group are Disabled residents with Learning Difficulties, such as those accessing the 'Where Next' facility in Wellesbourne Close off Easemore Road.

However, with the age for eligibility for a pass rising nationally, there are far fewer residents using their pass for access to work

**Overview and Scrutiny Recommendations Tracker**  
**Market Recommendations**

**Redditch Market Review**  
*(considered by Executive Committee on 12/3/13)*  
*(Seventeen recommendations)*

**All of the recommendations were all APPROVED subject to the Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport taking the lead on working on the detail of proposals and on the adoption of a bold and radical approach to recommendations 1 and 2 in particular, including a full assessment of the options for delivering a vibrant and viable market.**

The following update has already been provided for Members' consideration on the remaining recommendations: In addition to arrangements being in hand to form the working group to develop the five year strategy and as part of the "full assessment of the options for delivering a vibrant and viable market", the North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWedr) Service's Client Management Group has instructed Officers to explore various options with a view to potentially externalising the markets function.

<b><u>RECOMMENDATION</u></b>	<b><u>UPDATE ON ACTION TAKEN</u></b>
<p><u>Recommendation 1</u>: a new strategy for the market be developed which clearly sets out how the market can be revitalised over the next five year period.</p>	<p>North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit's Client Management Group has approved the appointment of the consultancy arm of the National Association of British Market Authorities, to advise on what type of market(s) could realistically be attracted to Bromsgrove, Kidderminster and Redditch Markets, income generating potential and possible delivery arrangements that could be put into place to operate future markets – including the potential to outsource the</p>

	<p>management of the markets to an external operator or operators.</p> <p>More specifically for Redditch, the consultancy will advise as to the other types of markets that could realistically be attracted to Redditch and provide an assessment of the consequence of the reduction of trading days from five to three.</p> <p>The report is due to be received on 12th December 2014 following which it will be considered by the Client Management Group and acted upon accordingly. Any changes to the existing management arrangements of the Redditch Market will be brought to full Council for consideration.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 2:</u> A small core working group consisting of local stakeholders should be created to help develop and implement the new strategy.</p>	<p>The group has considered the various recommendations. With the agreement of the Portfolio Holder, the group will meet again as and when it is deemed necessary.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 3:</u> the number of general retail market operating days should be reduced to no more than three days a week. The working group to consult with existing regular traders about which particular days should be retained.</p>	<p>Members are reminded that the initial feedback from traders was that they generally would not want a reduction from five to three days.</p> <p>Notwithstanding this and whatever the advice contained within the impending consultancy report, consideration has been given as to which days to not hold a market. As Mondays and Thursdays bring in the lowest income these are perhaps the obvious days. Tuesdays, Fridays and Saturdays bring in the most income which would be the most obvious reason for them to remain.</p>



	<p>However, reducing the trading days would have operational and financial implications.</p> <p>The closure of the two lowest income generating days (Monday and Thursday) would see a reduction in income of approximately £35,000 per annum. Whilst some operational expenditure (in the region of £10,000 per annum) could potentially be saved by reducing the days, Monday and Thursday trading days still make a surplus and the £25,000 (approximate) annual net income that the Council currently receive, would be lost.</p> <p>This recommendation will be considered further following the receipt of the above referred to Consultancy report.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 4</u>: consideration is given to holding more speciality markets to take place on non general retail market operating days on a regular basis to help create a niche for the Redditch market. The working group to consider how such markets would be managed within the available resources.</p>	<p>There are numerous types of “speciality market” that could potentially be invited. These include:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Farmers/Local produce market</li> <li>• Local Product Market - eg “Made in the Midlands”</li> <li>• Antiques, and Collectables/Second hand goods/”Trash and Treasure”</li> <li>• Continental Markets</li> <li>• Seasonal Markets</li> <li>• Themed Markets – such as Books, Arts and Crafts/Flower, plants and Garden/ Homemade Crafts: Knitwear, Wooden produce, Candles, jewellery/Hobby themed - eg games, toys, model collectables etc</li> </ul> <p>It is suggested that taking forward this Recommendation relates to the previous Recommendation above and Recommendations 11 (realigning and extending the layout) and 13 (alternative stalls).</p>

	<p>If the number of regular trading days were to reduce to three days, then resources would still exist to introduce speciality markets on two alternative days. However informal discussions suggest that the number of specialist markets would not equal the number of trading days lost from the regular market and there would be a resultant loss of income to the Council.</p> <p>Notwithstanding any advice within the impending consultancy report, informal discussions from other market operators is suggesting that the presence of the fixed stalls heavily restricts the opportunity to host speciality/themed markets. In particular it is apparent that Continental, Farmers and potentially other specialised markets prefer an open space, unrestricted by existing stalls and other obstacles to arrange their stalls and trading vehicles in a preferred and optimum layout.</p> <p>Further challenges arise, as it has been suggested that Continental and Farmers' markets in particular, prefer to have a trading monopoly (ie not trading alongside the existing market) and Continental markets at least, prefer to trade on at least two consecutive – and mainly three – days and always at weekends.</p> <p>Given the desire to reduce the number of existing trading days and bring in more “specialist” markets, plus the fact that the current fixed stalls restricts Market Place being used for other uses, it is suggested that a partial solution at least would be to permanently remove the fixed stalls to allow the space to be used more flexibly.</p> <p>This would bring about the opportunity to acquire new, modern design, demountable stalls that could be put up and taken down in accordance with the numbers trading to allow the regular market to be better laid out, make it less spread out and more compact. Market Place would also look more inviting on</p>
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	<p>non market days as the distraction of old fashioned and empty stalls would not exist.</p> <p>However, in addition to going to the expense of acquiring new stalls plus an associated vehicle and trailer (and any storage required), North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit would require additional staff (notwithstanding the outcome of the consultancy report) to put up and take down the stalls on the three trading days as it is not currently resourced to undertake this additional work.</p> <p>Initial current estimates as to the capital cost are approximately £40,000 with revenue costs being in the region of £31,500 per annum. If the Council was minded to pursue this option, these figures would be firmed up and be subject to the usual procurement process.</p> <p>The potential would then exist to invite alternative “specialist” markets to use the new flexible space and potentially make use of the new demountable stalls.</p> <p>However, it is suggested that the net loss of income to the Council by trading less days when added to the potential increase in operational costs (despite some income from specialist markets) means that, on first sight at least, the benefits of introducing specialist markets and using the area as alternative events space would appear to come at a cost.</p> <p>This recommendation will be considered further following the receipt of the above referred to Consultancy report.</p>
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<p><u>Recommendation 5</u>: the market working group considers the feasibility of introducing an on-site Redditch Market information point.</p>	<p>Subject to obtaining relevant permissions, the potential exists to acquire and install purpose built notice boards in the Market Place area which can be used to display and impart relevant information to the public regarding the market.</p> <p>Whilst traders already have the contact number of the market manager, the board would display North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit's generic contact number and email address for enquirers to either speak directly to a member of the team and/or leave a message. The board would also direct people to relevant market and town centre web site(s) and could also be used to promote market and town centre events and potentially promote market traders – as space permits.</p> <p>It is considered that this could be funded from existing budgets.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 6</u>: the market working group considers the feasibility of market customers being provided with an opportunity to pay the traders for goods through their mobile phone and debit and credit card payment facilities.</p>	<p>Traders have been reminded of this suggested scheme - though it cannot be enforced.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 7</u>: each trader is required to possess a returns policy which should be clearly advertised.</p>	<p>The traders have been advised and the regulations have been updated accordingly.</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 8:</u> The working group facilitates further opportunities for local people, especially students and the unemployed, to obtain business experience through operating stalls in the market place at no charge on a short-term basis, to include the introduction of a new mentoring scheme to offer help and assistance to new traders.</p>	<p>A pilot scheme is in place for local people to “test” their business idea by applying for a free stall for up to eight trading days over a four week period on Monday and Saturdays – subject to availability. The scheme allows for those people who, as a result, go on to start a business regularly trading for at least 30 hours a week, to take part in the existing mentoring support which is available through the Worcestershire’s “Enterprising Worcestershire” New Business Startup programme which also includes a small grant.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 9:</u> the working group facilitates further opportunities for local businesses to showcase their goods and services on market stalls.</p>	<p>A pilot scheme is being promoted locally, subject to stall availability.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 10:</u> the working group facilitates the allocation of free stalls on a rotating basis to local people to promote forthcoming community events and the work of local charities, subject to stall availability.</p>	<p>This opportunity is being promoted locally subject to stall availability.</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 11</u>: the market working group explores the possibility of realigning and extending the layout of the market past its current location.</p>	<p>Whilst the Council has planning permission to extend the market down Alcester Street, informal discussions with other market operators suggest that the optimum location for the market is in its existing location – not least by the fact that it is called “Market Place” in the first instance. The position of trading pitches depends very much on footfall and the current location offers a better footfall than other potentially available trading positions.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 12</u>: the market working group explores the feasibility of introducing a covered food court area.</p>	<p>It is considered that the potential does exist to introduce a covered food court area. This could be a “pop up” stall structure and would probably best be introduced as part of any proposal to realign the existing layout and potentially acquire new stalls (see Recommendation 4 above and 13 below) as no resource currently exists to be able to put up and take down (or store) the structure.</p> <p>If such a structure was to be acquired – even if it was to be part of the current layout - then it could be acquired at a relatively modest cost, though a resource would currently be needed to put it up and take it down. Either way, however, alternative operational arrangements would need to be considered as hot food and drink traders are currently kept separate.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 13</u>: the market working group explores the suitability of the design of the current market stalls and to consider whether the introduction of alternative stalls would improve the overall visual appearance of the stalls.</p>	<p>The current stalls are old fashioned, inflexible and to all intents and purposes, in need of renewal. It is suggested that the introduction of new modern design “pop up” stalls which could be branded “Redditch Market”, would vastly improve the visual appearance and bring a new vitality to the market.</p> <p>Consideration of this recommendation has been considered previously within Recommendation 4 above.</p>

<p><u>Recommendation 14:</u> the market working group ensures that any review of signage in the town centre includes adequate reference to the market.</p>	<p>A review of signage in the town centre has been carried out and a scheme is scheduled to be implemented in 2015 which will include adequate reference to the Market.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 15:</u> the market working group works with local bus operators to help further promote the market.</p>	<p>The previous response from the main bus operator was that they do not have many final destinations that say “Redditch Town Centre” in any case. The Committee is reminded that they try to be more specific about where the final destination of the bus is. All their buses are now Disability Discrimination Act (DDA) compliant which means they have working destination blinds.</p> <p>The relevant Act stipulates that destinations should be as clear as possible and they advise the best way to do this is to have as few words as possible on the blind. They suggest that adding “Redditch Town Centre and Market” or “Town Centre Market” would be difficult to read and, with certain types of blind, would be too many characters to display. Their position continues to be that this is something they would not be particularly keen to do.</p>
<p><u>Recommendation 16:</u> the Council should engage with the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association with a view to reaching an agreement to regulate the working days and areas of charity street fundraisers in Redditch Town Centre.</p>	<p>The Site Management Agreement (SMA) between the Council and the Public Fundraising Regulatory Association (PFRA) has been finalised and reported to the Licensing Committee at its meeting on 3rd November 2014.</p>

Recommendation 17: Redditch Borough Council should join the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA) and participate in the *Love Your Local Market 2013* event to publicise the changes and new opportunities that would have been introduced at the market.

Redditch Borough Council has joined the National Association of British Market Authorities (NABMA), has participated in the Love Your Local Market 2013 and 2014 fortnights.





# Overview & Scrutiny

## Proposals for Change to Tudor Grange Academy Short, Sharp Review.

November 2014



[www.redditchbc.gov.uk](http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk)



## CONTENTS

	Page Number
Chair's Foreword	2
Summary of Recommendations	3
Introduction/Background Information	5
Chapter 1: Process	8
Chapter 2: Local Education Authority	16
Chapter 3: Items to Note	20
Conclusion	23
<b>Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference</b>	24
<b>Appendix 2 - Witnesses</b>	26
<b>Appendix 3 - Timeline of Activities</b>	27
<b>Appendix 4 – Changes to Academy Schools</b>	28
<b>Appendix 5 – Changes to Academy Schools: Suggested Consultation Stakeholders</b>	29

### **Membership of the Task Group**

Councillors Pat Witherspoon (Chair), Carole Gandy, Pattie Hill, David Thain and Nina Wood-Ford.

### **Support Officer**

Jess Bayley, Democratic Services Officer, Tel: (01527) 64252 Extn: 3268  
 Email: [jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

### **Completed**

November 2014

### **Contact**

Further copies of this report are available on request from:

Address: Overview and Scrutiny Team, Democratic Services, Redditch Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH

Email: [scrutiny@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@redditchbc.gov.uk)

**FOREWORD**

This investigation was launched as a Short, Sharp Review at the agreement of members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

As a group we have been mindful of the fact that we cannot influence the outcome of the proposals for change that have been made by Tudor Grange Academy Redditch. However, we would like to think that all interested parties will agree that this report creates a more transparent view of the process that was followed by Tudor Grange Academy.

My thanks are due to all of my colleagues who worked hard on this review: Councillors Carole Gandy, Pattie Hill, David Thain and Nina Wood-Ford. Our thanks also go to Jess Bayley for the enormous amount of work she did collating all viewpoints.

**Councillor Pat Witherspoon,  
Chair of the Proposals for Change by Tudor Grange Academy Short, Sharp Review**



**Councillor Pat Witherspoon,  
Chair of the Proposals for  
Change by Tudor Grange  
Academy Short, Sharp  
Review**

**SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS****CHAPTER 1: PROCESS****Recommendation 1**

We recommend that the Chief Executive of Redditch Borough Council should write to the Secretary of State for Education, the Right Honourable Nicky Morgan MP, and the Minister of State for Schools, the Right Honourable David Laws MP, to request that specific guidance be issued to schools about changing the age range of their pupils in a three-tier education system. This guidance should address the process that must be followed in cases where a school unilaterally decides to make changes that will impact on other schools in the local authority area and / or within a school pyramid.

**Financial Implications:** For Redditch Borough Council there would be the cost of Officer time to produce the correspondence, though it is anticipated that the financial costs involved would be minimal.

**Legal implications:** No legal implications have been identified.

**CHAPTER 2: LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY****Recommendation 2**

We recommend that Worcestershire County Council should consult with Borough Councillors alongside County Councillors when commissioning educational services (within the remit of the Head of Learning and Achievement).

**Financial Implications:** No financial implications have been identified for Redditch Borough Council.

Worcestershire County Council might need to invest additional time and resources when consulting on the commissioning of these particular services. However, The group has been advised that consultation with County Councillors is due to form part of the commissioning process so the costs would be incurred in relation to extending the process to an additional number of consultees. It is difficult to quantify how much this might cost Worcestershire County Council as the costs would vary according to the method of consultation that is selected.

**Legal implications:** This recommendation needs to be referred to Worcestershire County Council.

**Recommendation 3**

Worcestershire County Council, as the local education authority, should produce written guides about the education system and the process that needs to be followed when changes are made to schools. These guides should be produced in plain English and should be made available for parents and other interested stakeholders to access.

**Financial Implications:** No financial implications have been identified for Redditch Borough Council.

Worcestershire County Council would need to invest Officer time into producing and publishing these guides on the Council's website. However, Members do not anticipate that this would require substantial funding.

**Legal implications:** This recommendation needs to be referred to Worcestershire County Council.

**CHAPTER 3: ITEMS TO NOTE**

**Communications:** One of the key findings of the review was that there was poor communication by and between numerous parties in relation to the proposals that were brought forward by Tudor Grange Academy. This underpinned the response to the school's proposals within the wider community.

**Consultation with local schools:** The group consulted with local schools during the review and received a significant number of responses which were welcomed and helped to inform the final recommendations detailed in this report.

**Review of the education system in the Borough:** A number of witnesses consulted during the investigation suggested that a further review, focusing on the entire education system in the Borough, should be undertaken. However, the group has concluded that, based on the evidence gathered, a review would not be appropriate but would instead raise expectations within the community that could not be met.

**Planning School Places:** A key concern of the group has been to ensure that adequate school places continue to be provided in the Borough. Whilst Worcestershire County Council is responsible for planning pupil places Members would urge schools to take into account the content of a number of planning documents when considering whether to make changes to their admissions policies.

## **INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND INFORMATION**

In June 2014 elected Redditch Borough Councillors collectively received a significant amount of email correspondence from local residents about proposals made by Tudor Grange Academy Redditch, to change their admissions policy and the consultation process that had been followed by the school. Whilst Redditch Borough Council has no responsibility for education it was recognised that elected Borough Councillors had a moral responsibility as community champions to investigate the concerns of residents further. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee therefore agreed in July 2014 to launch a review of the process that had been followed. A decision was made to undertake this investigation as a Short, Sharp Review, which are shorter reviews than standard scrutiny exercises, to ensure that the group's findings could be reported to the local community in a timely fashion.

There were a number of key objectives to the review, as detailed in the scoping document.

- To understand the proposals by Tudor Grange Academy to extend the age range of pupils;
- To assess the potential impact on schooling arrangements in the Borough if the proposals were to be implemented;
- Through investigation of this proposal and the basis on which academy schools operate, to support Ward Councillors and residents in understanding how they can best contribute most effectively to the debate and decision on this issue.

The group was not tasked with determining whether the changes proposed by Tudor Grange Academy Redditch should be implemented the outcome of which Members recognised they could not influence. Members were also not asked to reach any conclusions about three-tier and two-tier education or which system would be preferable for the Borough in the long-term.

The review consisted of a number of approaches to gathering evidence. This included an interview at an early stage with the Head of Learning and Achievement at Worcestershire County Council, in order to provide Members with an opportunity to clarify the powers of the local education authority in relation to the changing education environment as well as the process that schools needed to follow when making changes to their admissions procedures. Key documentation, particularly the *Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy* guidance (issued by the Department for Education in January 2014), also helped to inform the group's understanding of the process that needed to be followed by academy schools when proposing and implementing changes.

Members also interviewed representatives of Tudor Grange Academy Redditch during a visit to the school on 3rd October 2014. This provided the group with an opportunity to learn about the rationale for the changes from the perspective of the school and their views of the process that they had followed.

The Right Honourable Karen Lumley MP was invited to an interview to discuss her response to the process and the work that had been undertaken at the national level to address the impact of the proposed school changes. Councillor Rebecca Blake was also invited to an interview, due to her involvement with a petition which addressed some of the issues arising from the school's consultation process. Further evidence was submitted in writing by the Redditch Democratic Alliance and a representative of the action group, Redditch School Changes.

Evidence was also requested from the Council's planning department. This was because the group was keen to obtain information about projected housing growth in the Borough and the potential impact on future demand for school places.

At all times Members were mindful of the limited time available to complete the review. For this reason a decision was taken not to interview representatives from every school in the Borough as part of the review. Instead, Members favoured consultation using questionnaires as this ensured that the group could engage with the largest number of schools possible in the time available. For similar reasons Members issued a questionnaire to Councillors representing wards in the catchment area for Tudor Grange Academy Redditch in order to find out what support, if any, ward Councillors required when responding to changes to the education system in the Borough.

The group finalised their recommendations in early November 2014. The recommendations are all based on the evidence that was gathered during the course of the review. Members also identified a number of key points which, though not related to any of the recommendations, they wanted to highlight in this report (as detailed in Chapter 3).

### Local context

At the time of writing there is a three-tier education system in Redditch Borough. Within this system there are First Schools for children aged 4 to 8, Middle Schools for children aged 8 to 13 and secondary/high schools for children aged 13 to 18. There are also school pyramids, whereby students from particular First Schools are more likely to attend certain Middle and Secondary Schools later in their education.

There was a review of educational provision in Redditch in 1997/98 which was undertaken by Worcestershire County Council. During the course of this review three consultation documents were issued and interested stakeholders were asked about whether to retain a three-tier education system in the Borough. The review aimed to reduce the number of surplus places and some schools were amalgamated as a result. However, based on the feedback provided during the consultation process the decision was taken to retain a three tier education system in the Borough.



In the Worcestershire Comprehensive Area Assessment in 2010 a red flag was included which raised concerns about the quality of life in Redditch. One of the key concerns was educational attainment levels in the Borough. Since 2010 progress has been made which is partly due to the commitment from a range of partners to work together to collectively address this problem. Education attainment and raising the aspirations of young people is a priority in the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy, which was produced by the Redditch Local Strategic Partnership. At the local level “help me be financially independent (including education and skills)” is one of Redditch Borough Council’s strategic purposes.

Recent progress with improving educational attainment in the Borough is reflected in national statistics. The number of pupils in the Borough achieving five or more A\* - C grades at GCSE increased from 39.6 per cent in 2008/09 to 68 per cent in 2012/13. Whilst the group recognises that partners cannot become complacent Members felt that these achievements should be acknowledged.

**CHAPTER 1: PROCESS**

<b>Recommendation 1</b>	We recommend that the Chief Executive of Redditch Borough Council should write to the Secretary of State for Education, the Right Honourable Nicky Morgan MP, and the Minister of State for Schools, the Right Honourable David Laws MP, to request that specific guidance be issued to schools about changing the age range of their pupils in a three-tier education system. This guidance should address the process that must be followed in cases where a school unilaterally decides to make changes that will impact on other schools in the local authority area and / or within a school pyramid.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	There would be the cost of Officer time to produce the correspondence, though it is anticipated that the financial costs involved would be minimal.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	No legal implications have been identified.

**National Context: Changing the age range of pupils**

Early in the review process Members investigated the requirements set at a national level that academies are required to follow when proposing to make changes to a school. Clear guidance is provided in the *Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy: Departmental Advice for Academy Trusts* report, published by the Department for Education in January 2014. A distinction is made in the document between changes that can be fast-tracked without an academy school having to produce a business case and significant changes which require a detailed business case to be produced by the academy.

Changes that can be fast tracked include changing the lower or upper limit of a school by up to two years (not including the addition of a sixth form). Changes to the age range of pupils are classified as significant when this would extend to three years or more. A full list of changes that can be proposed by academy schools and whether these changes qualify as changes that can be fast tracked or as significant changes requiring a business case is provided in Appendix 4.

In the case of both fast track and significant changes approval is required from the Secretary of State for Education. However, for changes that can be fast tracked it is stated in the departmental guidance that the Secretary of State “...is likely to approve the majority of these requests provided that he is assured that adequate local consultation has taken place and responses have been taken into account, any financial arrangements are sound and appropriate planning

*permissions and other relevant agreements have been secured, where necessary.”*

Process for Changes to the age range of pupils attending an academy:

Academies seeking to make changes to a school that can be fast tracked must demonstrate the following:

- Adequate consultation has taken place.
- Funding has been secured in relation to the proposed change.
- The change is aligned with local authority place planning.
- Appropriate planning permissions have been secured (is applicable).

A slightly different process must be followed when an academy is making significant changes to a school. The business case for these types of changes, once it has been produced, must be submitted to the Education funding Agency (EFA). The group learned from Worcestershire County Council during the course of the review that in addition, as of September 2014, business cases should also be submitted to the Regional Schools Commissioner for the West Midlands. The Regional Schools Commissioners are responsible for making important decisions about the academies and free schools in their area and must take into account the conclusions of the EFA when reaching their decision.

Consultation forms a key part of both fast track and significant changes to academy schools. The consultation process on a significant change must last for a minimum of four weeks and run alongside consultation about admissions arrangements if there are proposals to change these too. Specific timeframes are not provided in the guidance for consultation over changes that can be fast tracked, though academies must be able to demonstrate that “adequate” consultation has taken place.

As part of the consultation process the local education authority must be consulted and the EFA must be satisfied that the Council’s feedback, including “reasonable objections”, has been taken into account by the academy. There are other stakeholders which it is suggested the academy should consult with. A full list of suggested consultees is detailed in Appendix 5 to the report.

Process for changes to admissions:

Any changes that affect the admissions arrangements for an academy are subject to compliance with the national *Schools Admissions Code: Statutory Guidance for School Leaders, Governing Bodies and Local Authorities*, (February 2012). Under the terms of this code all schools must have admissions arrangements that clearly outline how children will be admitted to the school and admissions authorities must set their admissions arrangements annually.

All admission authorities must set an admission number for each age group which is known as a Published Admission Number (PAN). In cases where an admissions authority is proposing to decrease their PAN the authority must

consult on these proposals. This consultation process must last for a minimum of eight weeks and must take place between the 1st November and 1st March of the year before the arrangements are due to apply (the example provided in the code is to complete consultation by 31st March 2012 for admissions in September 2013). Stakeholders can object to any proposed changes to the admissions arrangements and these objections must be referred to the Schools Adjudicator by 30th June. Any decision made on this subject by the Schools Adjudicator must then be acted on by the admissions authority.

#### Tudor Grange Academy Redditch – Process for Change

Tudor Grange Academy Redditch opened on 1st April 2014, in place of the previous Kinglsey College which closed on 31st March 2014, and is sponsored by Tudor Grange Academies Trust. In May 2014 Tudor Grange Academy Redditch announced that they would be consulting on making changes to the school.

Tudor Grange Academy Redditch did provide a rationale for proposing changes to their admissions policy. The school highlighted the potential benefits that could be accrued by pupils in terms of educational attainment. In particular, the changes would contribute to continuity of education and reduce the need for pupils to move schools mid-way through Key Stage 3. Furthermore, when responding to a number of points that had been raised by stakeholders in response to the consultation, Tudor Grange Academy Redditch stated that *“... we are keen to further improve the educational experience that we offer. We feel that offering parents/carers the choice of an 11-18 school within Redditch will support our drive to achieve this and further improve the educational outcomes for all our students.”*

The following key changes were proposed by Tudor Grange Academy Redditch to the school's admissions policy:

1. Changing the age range of Tudor Grange Academy Redditch from the present high school age range of 13 – 18 years to a secondary school age range of 11 – 18 years.
2. Changing the PAN to 180 students for years 7 – 11 and 220 in the sixth form. (The school was proposing that the changes to the PAN should be phased in and did not propose to change the PAN for years who were already studying at the school).

The consultation for the proposed changes to the age range of pupils studying at the school took place over a period of five weeks from 19th May to 20th June 2014. The consultation for the proposed changes to the admissions policy at the school took place over a period of nine weeks from 19th May to 18th July 2014. Interested stakeholders were invited to respond to the school in writing about their proposals, though a parents evening was also arranged to take place on 10th June from 7.00pm to 8.00pm at the school. All of the consultation documents were published on the school's website.

When consulting on changes academy schools are urged “*to take timing into account in order to maximise response to the consultation, including attendance at any public meetings – for example consulting during term time rather than school holidays.*” The group believes that Tudor Grange Academy Redditch took this guidance into account and for this reason the consultation periods for both suggested changes were extended from the minimum of four weeks (for a significant change to the age range at the school) to five weeks and from a minimum eight weeks, for changes to the admissions process, to nine weeks thereby taking into account the June half-term week.

In addition, Tudor Grange Academy Redditch notified Worcestershire County Council in advance of the formal announcement that they would be consulting about changes to the school’s admissions policy. However, the group has not been able to clarify the exact amount of notice that was provided.

Originally it was proposed by the school that the changes would come into effect from September 2015 and the scrutiny group understood that based on the nature of the proposals Tudor Grange Academy was eligible to fast track their changes. However, following the conclusion of the consultation exercise Tudor Grange Academy Redditch held a school governors’ meeting to consider the feedback that had been received during the consultation period. Following this meeting, on 13th August 2104, the school announced that they would be submitting a business case to the EFA by September 2014 with the intention to implement any changes from September 2016.

The scrutiny group was interested to learn that Tudor Grange Academy Redditch had decided to submit a business case even though the changes were eligible to be fast tracked. In part the group recognises that due to the timing of the school’s consultation processes the proposed changes to the PAN could not have been implemented until September 2016. However, a number of key considerations were raised by Tudor Grange Academy Redditch as reasons for issuing a business case and changing the proposed deadline for implementation of the changes:

- The school’s governors took into account the feedback that had been received from stakeholders during the consultation process. A number of respondents had suggested that the changes appeared to have been proposed relatively quickly and that it would be helpful for parents and children if there could be a postponement.
- A number of schools in the Tudor Grange Academy pyramid had responded to the proposals by proposing to make changes to the age range of their pupils and admissions procedures at their schools.
- Some of the schools in the Tudor Grange Academy pyramid had reported that they would prefer to commit to pyramid wide change co-ordinated by the local education authority.
- Tudor Grange Academies Trust is managed as a business. Submitting a business case represented sound business sense.

At the time of writing Members had not been informed about whether a decision had been made by the EFA or Regional Schools Commissioner for the West Midlands regarding the school's proposals.

Feedback from Stakeholders:

During the course of the review Members consulted with a number of interested stakeholders about the proposals for change that were made by Tudor Grange Academy Redditch.

As part of this process the group sent a questionnaire to local schools to obtain further information about their views of the process. A total of 11 completed questionnaires were received from a variety of First, Middle and Secondary Schools. There was general consensus in the responses that were received that a thorough consultation process should be followed by schools when proposing to make any changes to their admissions policies. Typical of these responses were the following comments:

*"...As the key stakeholders (parents) should be central to any decision making... and the consultation needs to be properly considered and acted upon."*

*"...Schools should not be allowed to do this without a full consultation with parents. Children caught up in the transition period would suffer and results could take a downturn."*

A number of schools also suggested that consultation should involve thorough co-operation with other schools in a pyramid in order to minimise the uncertainty and disruption that might otherwise be experienced by pupils as well as to reassure parents and teachers at those other schools:

*"...The governing body wishes to maintain the integrity of the current local and educational community (and to ensure) that changes are made as a result of robust collaboration and not in isolation or in competition for pupils. The governing body is not in principle against two-tier education (but) believes any changes needs to be across the town, not in localities or piecemeal."*

A small number of respondents had undertaken formal consultation, like Tudor Grange Academy Redditch, to change their school's admissions process:

*"..Our proposals have been made public and we will submit our plans to the EFA".*

However, more schools reported that they had already consulted informally with parents about the potential to change the age range of their pupils to be more like a school in a two-tier education system than that in a three-tier system.

*“A consultation (informal) was shared with all parents across the pyramid and the response was overwhelmingly in favour of retaining the three-tier system. This was done in the summer term.”*

*“... We surveyed our parents and with a high response rate they voted for the three-tier system (93%).”*

A number of schools had not undertaken any consultation but had instead assessed their capacity to make changes. In general these schools had concluded that changes would not be feasible because the school would need to reduce their PAN and because the changes could have a negative impact on the school's finances.

*“We would not be able to without lowering our PAN from 45 to 30.”*

*“We have undertaken a feasibility study and we would need to cut the PAN significantly. With a lag in funding this would also mean this change would wipe out our reserves.”*

The group also received further information about the petition that was launched following the announcement that Tudor Grange Academy Redditch would be consulting on changes to their admissions policy. Members discussed this petition in detail with Councillor Rebecca Blake and were advised that this petition did not oppose the school's proposals per se but was launched in response to the consultation process that was adopted. The petition also provided an opportunity for parents and other interested stakeholders to share views about the proposed changes and consultation process. A total of 1,800 people signed the petition which was submitted for the consideration of Tudor Grange Academy Redditch. A further petition was organised by the action group Redditch School Changes following the announcement that the school would be submitting a business case. This petition and accompanying information was dispatched to the Secretary of State for Education, The Right Honourable Nicky Morgan MP, for consideration.

Some of the key concerns raised by the lead petitioners in both cases were:

- The impact that changes to one school could have on other schools in the pyramid.
- Parental concerns that if they did not send their children to secondary school aged 11 they might miss a place at age 13 when leaving Middle school.
- The future viability, both financially and in terms of numbers attending the schools, of Middle Schools and what impact this might have on pupils.
- A reduction in the PAN for schools where changes to the age range are implemented and the potential impact this could have on the provision of school places in the Borough if a significant number of schools decide to implement such changes.
- Awareness amongst parents of the potential impact of the changes on local schools, particularly those in the same pyramid, and the process that needed

to be followed by academies in order to make any changes to their admissions processes.

- The need for greater co-operation between schools within a pyramid over any potential changes to minimise disruption experienced by other schools and students.

The evidence submitted by the Right Honourable Karen Lumley MP was also considered extremely useful by the group. Members were advised that in response to the proposals for change that she had organised meetings with local schools on a pyramid by pyramid basis, based on an understanding of the implications of changes to any one school on other schools in that pyramid. She had also raised questions in Parliament in relation to this case. The responses revealed that the Department for Education did not hold records for the number of local authorities that operate three-tier education systems, though the department was able to confirm that 190 schools in England are recorded as being Middle Schools. As there are over 240 schools in Worcestershire alone Members concluded that the figures provided for the number of Middle Schools in the country demonstrate that the three-tier education system is in a minority at the national level.

#### Conclusions:

Based on the evidence gathered the group has concluded that Tudor Grange Academy Redditch followed the proper process when proposing and consulting on changes to their school inasmuch as the school followed the guidance provided by the Department for Education about changes to academy schools as well as guidance in the Schools Admission Code. Indeed, the school went beyond these requirements by consulting with the local education authority in advance of announcing the consultation process. Furthermore, Members agree that the rationale provided by Tudor Grange Academy for making changes to their admissions policy demonstrated that they had good intentions with regard to improving the educational attainment of pupils at the school.

However, based on the feedback received from other schools in Redditch Members concur that ideally more action could have been taken when consulting on changes to the school's admissions policy. The examples of the other schools in the area that had undertaken informal consultation with parents about a potential change from a three-tier to a two-tier education system demonstrate that additional steps outside the formal process could have been implemented and this would have helped to address local concerns.

In a three-tier authority area Members feel that there is likely to be greater consideration amongst local people of the potential impact that changes to the age range of pupils in one school will have on other schools in the same pyramid. Members agree that the uncertainty surrounding the future of other schools in the pyramid encouraged concerns to develop within the community that led to the significant levels of critical feedback, including the email correspondence that was sent to Borough Councillors, prior to the launch of this scrutiny review. Members also feel that this uncertainty contributed to the decision by some other



schools in the pyramid to consult on their own changes, thereby creating potentially even greater uncertainty.

In this context, the group has concluded that the national guidance for changes to academy schools does not address the particular needs of schools in a three-tier education system and needs to be updated to reflect these considerations. In particular, Members concur that reference needs to be made to the need for greater co-operation between schools within the same pyramid to occur when any schools, including academy schools, are considering making changes to their admissions policies. Members believe this needs to be addressed in order to ensure that the uncertainty and confusion that followed Tudor Grange Academy Redditch's announcement that they would be consulting on changes do not accompany future consultation processes which they feel will inevitably arise, whether in Redditch or in other parts of the country, where a three-tier education system is currently in place. This would help to reassure parents, as there will be greater clarity about how consultation should proceed in these circumstances and the potential outcomes, and would also provide useful support to academy schools that want to explore making changes that they feel will benefit their pupils.

**CHAPTER 2: LOCAL EDUCATION AUTHORITY**

<b>Recommendation 2</b>	We recommend that Worcestershire County Council should consult with Borough Councillors alongside County Councillors when commissioning educational services (within the remit of the Head of Learning and Achievement).
<b>Financial Implications</b>	<p>No financial implications have been identified for Redditch Borough Council.</p> <p>Worcestershire County Council might need to invest additional time and resources when consulting on the commissioning of these particular services. However, The group has been advised that consultation with county Councillors is due to form part of the commissioning process so the costs would be incurred in relation to extending the process to an additional number of consultees. It is difficult to quantify how much this might cost Worcestershire County Council as the costs would vary according to the method of consultation that is selected.</p>
<b>Legal Implications</b>	This recommendation needs to be referred to Worcestershire County Council.

**Local Education Authority Responsibilities**

At an early stage Members investigated the powers and responsibilities of Worcestershire County Council as the local education authority in the county. Members were interested to learn that the local education authority retained a small number of statutory responsibilities, though had limited powers over local schools, particularly academies and free schools. Some of the key responsibilities of the local education authority include:

- determining the funding formula for local schools, including academies and free schools.
- a statutory responsibility to ensure that every child is provided with a school place of a reasonable quality.
- responsibility for ensuring that pupils are provided with transport to enable them to access their nearest school.

Commissioning Services

Members were advised during the course of the review that Worcestershire County Council was considering commissioning many of the services that are delivered by the Council and within the remit of the Head of Learning and Achievement. As part of the commissioning process the Council is intending to consult with relevant stakeholders and was considering consulting with local County Councillors in order to appreciate local views about any proposed commissioning arrangements.

The group has discussed with the Head of Learning and Achievement the potential for Borough Councillors to be included in this consultation process. Members highlighted the fact that residents primarily addressed their email correspondence about Tudor Grange Academy Redditch's proposals to their Borough Councillors demonstrating that residents were likely to turn to elected representatives at the district level for support regardless of whether the service was within the remit of the Borough or the County Council. The group therefore concurs that Members at a district level have access to local knowledge that would be useful for Worcestershire County Council to consider as part of their commissioning process.

Furthermore, Redditch Borough Council has committed to supporting efforts to improve educational attainment in the Borough, through adoption of the Strategic Purpose "help me be financially independent (including education and skills)." This strategic purpose, though designed to address previous concerns about educational attainment levels in the Borough, is also partly based on recognition that young people are the employees of the future and that a well-educated workforce will have a beneficial impact on the local, regional and national economy. Any contribution that Members can make to addressing this objective, including participation in a commissioning process for learning and achievement, should make a positive contribution to meeting this strategic purpose.

However, in order for Worcestershire County Council to obtain valuable input through consultation with Borough Councillors elected Members at the district level would need to commit to actively engaging in the consultation process. The group agrees they should highlight the fact that unfortunately they only received a limited number of responses from Borough Councillors to a questionnaire that they had been invited to complete. All Borough Councillors representing wards in the catchment area for Tudor Grange Academy Redditch, were invited to complete a questionnaire, (except for two of the Members representing wards in the areas who had also been appointed to the review; Councillors Carole Gandy and David Thain). Two Members, Councillors Joe Baker and Jane Potter, returned completed questionnaires. Two further Members, Councillors Rebecca Blake and Michael Braley, submitted evidence in an alternative form. This leaves eight Councillors who did not respond to the questionnaire.

Members were incredibly disappointed in the low number of questionnaires that had been submitted by Borough Councillors. The group would suggest that in future, particularly if Worcestershire County Council does choose to consult with

Borough Councillors, the group Leaders should be invited to take an active role in encouraging members of their group to respond to any consultation. Ultimately this will benefit residents who have sought help from their Borough Councillors, as by participating in the consultation process Borough Councillors will be acting as effective community champions.

<b>Recommendation 3</b>	Worcestershire County Council, as the local education authority, should produce written guides about the education system and the process that needs to be followed when changes are made to schools. These guides should be produced in plain English and should be made available for parents and other interested stakeholders to access.
<b>Financial Implications</b>	No financial implications have been identified for Redditch Borough Council.  Worcestershire County Council would need to invest Officer time into producing and publishing these guides on the Council's website. However, Members do not anticipate that this would require substantial funding.
<b>Legal Implications</b>	This recommendation needs to be referred to Worcestershire County Council.

### School Changes Procedures – Awareness

During the course of the review Members learned a lot about the current education system in the country that they had not previously appreciated. This included obtaining information about the process for making changes to academy schools, the remaining responsibilities of the local education authority and the role of particular individuals and bodies within the education system.

When consulting with a number of expert witnesses Members discovered that there were certain features of the education system that were not typically widely known. This included limited awareness:

- That local authority maintained schools had similar powers to fast track certain changes to their admissions processes without needing the prior approval of the local education authority. This was highlighted during consultation with Worcestershire County Council.
- Of the role of Regional Schools Commissioners in making decisions about changes to academy schools.

- Of the increasingly restricted powers available to local education authorities vis-à-vis academies and free schools in particular.

Members concluded that if the witnesses they were consulting were unfamiliar with these factors it was likely that local residents, including many parents, would also be unaware of some of these matters. Indeed, a number of the witnesses consulted by the group commented that there appeared to be limited public awareness of many aspects relating to changes being made to schools. The following typified these comments:

*“In the main they are not aware. Parents are also shocked when they have a problem with a school and that if they are an academy the LA (local authority) will no longer get involved, such as regarding problems with admissions, SEN etc.”*

In addition Members reached the conclusion that the education system was a rapidly changing environment and this could make it difficult for interested stakeholders to remain familiar with the different processes and powers. Indeed, it was during the course of the review that the Regional Schools Commissioners assumed their roles in respect of academy schools.

In this context the group concurred that it would be useful for written guides, containing up to date information about key processes and the powers of different stakeholders, to be made available for public consideration. Ideally, the group believes that this information should be maintained by Worcestershire County Council as the local education authority. There are already pages on Worcestershire County Council’s website which are dedicated to schools, providing further information about issues such as school closures, schools admissions, school transport and free school meals. The group agrees that it should be possible to upload additional information onto this website in the form of written guides. The information provided in these written guides could clarify procedures and outcomes for making changes to school admissions policies and thereby potentially both reassure parents and help to ensure that any future proposals to make changes at local schools are not accompanied by the same level of confusion and uncertainty that was experienced following Tudor Grange Academy Redditch’s proposals.

**CHAPTER 3 – ITEMS TO NOTE****Communications:**

One of the key conclusions reached by Members during the review was that much of the confusion and uncertainty that arose locally did so due to poor communications. This was a problem for a number of key bodies, though in particular the group feels that Tudor Grange Academies Trust and Worcestershire County Council could learn from this experience.

Members acknowledge that, based on comments made by representatives of the school during a visit in October, the school was committed to considering all feedback provided in response to their consultation process and potentially amending their proposals accordingly. Unfortunately, Members also feel that the speed with which the consultation was announced and the lack of significant discussions with other schools prior to this announcement about the proposed changes led interested stakeholders to conclude that the proposals were a fait accompli. To ensure that similar misunderstandings do not arise in future Members would suggest that when proposing changes all schools should carefully communicate the rationale for their proposals to key stakeholders and the extent to which feedback will inform any outcomes of the process.

Similarly the group recognises that Worcestershire County Council did not have the power to determine the outcomes of Tudor Grange Academy's proposals to make changes to their admissions policy. However, Members have concluded that Worcestershire County Council, as the local education authority, could have taken more action to co-ordinate responses to the consultation process and to clarify the process that needed to be followed. Members believe that this would have helped to reassure the public, particularly parents, pupils and other schools in the Tudor Grange Academy Redditch pyramid. Members therefore urge Worcestershire County Council to play a more active role in responding to any further proposals to change schools in the Borough that might emerge in the future.

**Consultation with local schools:**

During the course of the review Members issued a questionnaire to local schools. This questionnaire was designed to provide schools in the Borough with an opportunity to submit evidence during the exercise. Unfortunately, due to the inevitably tight timescales available during a Short, Sharp Review, Members were only able to provide limited notice and the deadline was set the week before half term in October 2014 which Members recognise is a busy period for schools.

Despite these obstacles Members were pleased to receive 11 completed questionnaires from local schools. The identities of the schools that sent completed questionnaires to the group have been treated as confidential. However, Members wanted to thank all of these schools for taking the time to complete their questionnaires. The evidence they submitted did help to inform the group's conclusions including the recommendations detailed in this report.

**Review of the education system in the Borough:**

During the course of the review a number of witnesses consulted by the group suggested that the changes proposed by Tudor Grange Academy Redditch and the response from the public to these proposals indicated that there was a need for a review to be undertaken to provide greater certainty about the future structure of the education system in the Borough. In a number of instances the witnesses suggested that this review should be undertaken by the local education authority.

The group did investigate this suggestion further but concluded that unlike in the 1990s, when the local authority undertook a review of the Redditch education system, Worcestershire County Council was not in a position to undertake this review. Nor did Members feel a review of this subject would necessarily add value to the debate. Members were mindful of the fact that academy schools have significant autonomy and do not need to refer to the local education authority to make changes to their admissions policies. Indeed, any school, whether it is an academy school or local authority maintained school, can submit proposals to change the age range of their pupils via a fast tracking process without requiring the local education authority's permission. In this context the local education authority lacks the power to require schools to comply with any conclusions that might be reached in a review of the education system.

Worcestershire County Council have confirmed, both during an interview with the group and during a County Forum meeting at Redditch Town Hall on 1st October 2014, that the Council lacks both the power and the resources to undertake a review of the education system in the Borough. There is also a risk that if Worcestershire County Council was to launch a review of this subject expectations could be raised which could not be met because the Council would not be able to require local schools to comply with any conclusions that might be reached.

The group did consider the potential for a review to be conducted by an alternative body but did not identify any organisation or individual who could fulfill this role in an independent manner. Furthermore Members learned during the course of the review that in some parts of the country two-tier and three-tier school structures coexist. Whilst Members felt that changes need to be considered on a pyramid by pyramid basis they concluded from these examples and the rest of the evidence they had gathered that the two systems could operate side by side. For these reasons the group did not feel that in response to the changes proposed by Tudor Grange Academy Redditch there was a need for a review of the entire education system in the Borough.

**Planning School Places**

Worcestershire County Council, as the local education authority, is required to provide certain data on an annual basis to the Department of Education. This includes a forecast of future numbers on the school roll in order to assist in

predicting potential shortfalls in school places in the county. The Council publishes these figures for the year ahead on their website.

The forecast figures are also reported to the Planning Department at the Borough Council's request. These forecast figures help to inform the content of a number of key documents produced by Redditch Borough Council's Planning Department. This includes the *Planning Obligations for Education Contributions (Supplementary Planning Document)* and the *RBC Infrastructure Delivery Plan Report*, which is a working, evidence based document rather than a Planning policy.

These documents recognise that in recent years there has been a reduction in the number of students within Redditch studying at a secondary school level. However, the forecast figures also indicate that the long-term outlook for demand for school places in parts of the Borough is likely to increase partly due to a higher birth rate in the Borough compared to other districts in Worcestershire. The increasing demand in the long-term is clearly detailed in the *RBC Infrastructure Delivery Plan Report*:

*“Primary pupil numbers are increasing in urban areas where the rising birthrate is felt most keenly. Secondary schools are currently experiencing more of a dip in numbers but will feel the impact of the higher primary numbers in due course. WCC (Worcestershire County Council) has experienced a growth in pupils entering reception in recent intakes with demand for places particularly high in the north of the Borough necessitating new or expanded first school provision as part of new development.”*

The group recognises that it is important to be cautious when predicting the likely impact of new development on future demand for school places as it is not possible to determine completely accurately how many families will purchase homes on the new developments, the number of children per family or the parental choice that will be made regarding the education of their children. However, the group believes that it could be helpful for schools to consider the information contained within these reports when considering making any changes that could impact on their PAN.

Members considered recommending that the Supplementary Planning Document and *RBC Infrastructure Delivery Plan Report* be sent to every school in the Borough so that the schools could take into account forecast housing growth and when considering whether to make changes to their schools. However, Members have been advised that copies of the Supplementary Planning Document and of the Local Plan have already been sent to every school in Redditch. Members would therefore urge all local schools to consider the content of these documents as part of any process they follow to initiate changes to their admissions policies.



**CONCLUSION**

This review has entailed a thorough investigation of the circumstances surrounding Tudor Grange Academy Redditch's proposals to make changes to their admissions policy and the impact on the local community.

Members recognise that change is challenging and often both organisations and individuals will require support in order to manage the outcomes of any changes effectively. In this context, and taking into account all the evidence they have gathered, the group have concluded that it is imperative that within a three-tier education system changes to schools are discussed and co-ordinated by partners in the same pyramid. This is crucial to ensure that confusion and uncertainty amongst parents, pupils and other schools within the same pyramid is kept to a minimum.

Members concur that if their recommendations are implemented they will have a positive impact on the education system in the Borough and would therefore urge all parties concerned to act on their proposals.

**APPENDIX 1**  
**Scrutiny Proposal Form**

(This form should be completed by sponsoring Member(s), Officers and / or members of the public when proposing an item for Scrutiny).

**Note: The matters detailed below have not yet received any detailed consideration. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee reserves the right to reject suggestions for scrutiny that fall outside the Borough Council's remit.**

Proposer's name and designation	Councillor Pat Witherspoon	Date of referral	22/07/14
Proposed topic title	Proposals for change by Tudor Grange Academy		
Link to national, regional and local priorities and targets	<p>Council Strategic Purposes:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Help me to be financially independent (including skills and education)</li> </ul>		
Background to the issue	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tudor Grange Academy in Redditch is part of a Trust which provides education at various sites across the country. In Redditch the Trust currently runs Tudor Grange high school for children aged between 13 and 18.</li> <li>• Earlier in the year the school governors ran a consultation about changing the age range of the school to 11 – 18 years from September 2015. This would mean a reduced admission number for the school for years 7-11 and in the sixth form. Details are available on the school's website: <a href="http://www.redditch.tgacademy.org.uk/parents/change-of-age-range-consultation/">http://www.redditch.tgacademy.org.uk/parents/change-of-age-range-consultation/</a></li> <li>• The proposals were subject to consultation between 19<sup>th</sup> May – 20<sup>th</sup> June 2014 and a meeting was held at the Academy to explain the proposals.</li> <li>• A considerable number of members of the public contacted Borough Councillors expressing their concerns at the proposals and the timescales involved.</li> <li>• Education in Redditch is currently arranged as 3-tier – primary; middle and high schools. Members of the public were concerned that, if implemented, the proposals to change one school in the Borough would have an adverse impact on the other schools, as two</li> </ul>		

	<p>systems would be running side by side. They were also concerned at the proposed timescale and the impact this would have on admission arrangements for all schools across the Borough.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These proposed changes undertaken in isolation of a wider review of the education system in Redditch might contribute to a significant reduction in educational attainment and significant challenges to the other schools in the area and thus children in the Borough, which will eventually have an extremely detrimental impact on our economy.</li> <li>• Whilst this is not a matter for which the Borough Council is directly responsible we take our role as community leaders very seriously; there may be an opportunity to engage with the Borough Council, the County Council and the Redditch Partnership, school governors and parents on a wider review of the education system that operates within the Borough in order to ensure it is the best solution for the people of the Town.</li> </ul>
<p>Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)</p>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) To understand the proposals by Tudor Grange Academy to extend the age range of pupils;</li> <li>2) To assess the potential impact on schooling arrangements in the Borough if the proposals were to be implemented;</li> <li>3) Through investigation of this proposal and the basis on which Academy schools operate, to support Ward Councillors and residents in understanding how they can best contribute most effectively to the debate and decision on this issue.</li> </ol>
<p>How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)</p>	<p><i>Initial presentation to an O&amp;S Committee meeting? With consultation documents from the school as background?</i></p>

**APPENDIX 2**  
**Witnesses**

Members would like to thank the following for providing evidence during the course of the review:

Emma Baker, Acting Development Plans Manager  
Councillor Joe Baker  
Councillor Rebecca Blake  
Councillor Michael Braley  
Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive  
Mr John Edwards, Head of Learning and Achievement, Worcestershire County Council.  
Ms S Harvey, Redditch School Changes action group.  
Sheena Jones, Democratic Services Manager  
The Rt Hon Karen Lumley MP  
Ms C Maclean, Executive Principle, Tudor Grange Academies Trust  
Ms M McAllister, Admin Support, Tudor Grange Academy Redditch  
Councillor Jane Potter  
Mrs R Rees, Head Teacher, Tudor Grange Academy Redditch.  
Dr P Rock, Director, Tudor Grange Academies Trust  
Councillor Paul Swansborough  
Professor J M Winterbottom, Chair of Governors, Tudor Grange Academy Redditch, and Director, Tudor Grange Academies Trust

The group would also like to thank four students from Tudor Grange Academy and their teacher who met with the Chair of the review on Monday 3rd November for their comments.

Finally, Members once again wish to thank the schools that returned completed questionnaires for their consideration.

**APPENDIX 3**  
**Timeline of Activities**

<b>Date</b>	<b>Task Group Activity</b>
13th August 2014	Scoping discussion and brainstorm of approach to the review.
3rd September	Discussion of key documentation including the <i>Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy: Departmental Advice for Academy Trusts</i> report (January 2014).
12th September	Interview with Mr John Edwards, Head of Learning and Achievement, Worcestershire County Council.
26th September	Proposed questions for the consideration of key expert witnesses and consideration of the national <i>School Admissions Code</i> .
3rd October	Interview with representatives of Tudor Grange Academy, Redditch.
10th October	Interview with the Right Honourable Karen Lumley MP and consideration of information about population projections for the Borough.
17th October	Interview with Councillor Rebecca Blake, organiser of a petition in response to the consultation process that was followed by the school.
31st October	Considering evidence submitted by on behalf of the Redditch School Changes Group and the Redditch Democratic Alliance respectively. Also considering responses provided by local schools and Borough Councillors in completed questionnaires.
6th November	Agreeing the group's recommendations and content for the final report.

**APPENDIX 4:****Changes to academy schools**

The following changes to academy schools can be fast tracked:

- An enlargement of the school premises, including the physical size of the school.
- Changing the lower or upper age limit of pupils by up to two years, including a secondary school changing pupil intake from 13 – 19 to 11 – 19.
- Adding or increasing boarding provision.
- Changes to admission arrangements for academies with “old style funding arrangements”.

The following changes to academies are classified as “significant” and require a business case to be submitted by the school.

- Changing the upper or lower age limit of pupils by three years or more.
- Adding or removing a sixth form.
- Changing the gender composition of the school.
- Enlarging the physical capacity of the academy including increasing the pupil numbers.
- An academy amalgamating or merging with another academy.
- An academy setting up or joining a Multi-Academy Trust.
- Changes effecting reserved provision for pupils with Special Educational Needs (SEN).
- A change in the type of SEN for which the academy is organised to make provision.
- Decrease in or removal of boarding provision.
- Gaining a faith designation.
- Change to a Church of England Academy’s characteristics.

**APPENDIX 5****Changes to Academy Schools: Suggested Consultation Stakeholders.**

The *Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy: Departmental Advice for Academy Trusts* report, published by the Department for Education in January 2014, details which key stakeholders must be consulted when changes are proposed to an academy school and also lists further suggested stakeholders to consult.

The local education authority must be consulted due to the Council's role in relation to the provision of school places locally to children.

The document also suggests that academy schools consult with the following stakeholders:

- Each local authority which maintains a SEN in respect of a child attending the school.
- Parents of children attending the academy.
- Other parents living in the area.
- Primary and secondary schools, FE colleges and Sixth Forms in the area.
- The Admissions Forum in the area (if one exists).
- Admissions authorities in the area (if admissions are likely to be effected).
- The relevant PCT in the area.
- Any NHS Trust or Foundation Trust in the area.
- Any diocesan authorities or faith sponsors of academies with a religious designation.





### **Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel, 29th October 2014 – Chair's Update**

The Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel considered two key items during the meeting. It was not possible to receive a presentation on the third substantive item. A more detailed update is provided below.

#### 1. Domestic Abuse

I asked for this item to be placed on the agenda because I feel that domestic abuse is a really important subject that needs to be addressed in our society. At the start of the meeting I drew Members' attention to an article in The Times (September 2014) which noted that according to the Crime Survey for England and Wales more than 30 per cent of women have experienced domestic abuse since the age of 16 and seven women a month are murdered by men with whom they have had a relationship. Unfortunately the Panel was advised that there were 744 recorded crimes and incidents linked to domestic abuse in Redditch in 2013/14 (it is important to note that this refers to the number of reports not necessarily the number of victims).

We were pleased to learn that a lot of action is being taken by the Community Safety team to address the issue of domestic abuse in the Borough. There are some key projects that the team are working on including:

- The Sanctuary Scheme, providing security advice and cost-effective improvements to the homes of people at risk of domestic abuse.
- The CRUSH programme, a session for children and young people to educate them about healthy relationships.
- The White Ribbon Campaign, which aims to encourage victims of domestic abuse to seek support. Participants in the campaign can demonstrate their opposition to domestic abuse by wearing a white ribbon during the period of the campaign, which will run from 25<sup>th</sup> November to 10<sup>th</sup> December 2014.
- The Worcester Heels Walk, whereby men walk a mile around Redditch town centre wearing women's shoes in order to demonstrate solidarity in opposing domestic violence. This year the walk will take place on Friday 28<sup>th</sup> November.
- The Diamond Club for Black and other Minority Ethnic Communities. The aim of this project is to provide support to women from minority ethnic communities who are experiencing or are at risk of domestic abuse.

#### 2. Support Available to the LGBT Community

We were interested to learn more about the work of the Community Safety team to support the LGBT community, particularly in light of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's agreement to launch a Task Group review of the support networks available to the community.

We were informed about quite a lot of work undertaken by partners to support the LGBT community. This includes:

- The Worcestershire LGB&T Hate Crime Forum, which meets every month to discuss community support activities, campaign opportunities and community safety concerns for the LGBT community.
- North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnerships and Reporting Centres. The partnership supports victims of hate crimes including support to people from the LGBT community who have been harassed due to their sexuality or perceived gender status.
- The Respect! community safety schools programme involving hate crime awareness sessions.
- Redditch night club – gay night pilots, which were social activities provided at local nightclubs in the town.
- A youth club group being established at the instigation of RSA Academy Arrow Vale, which will be open to children and young people from other schools to attend.

### 3. Adult Safeguarding

The Panel had been due to receive a presentation on the subject of adult safeguarding but this had to be cancelled due to a family emergency for lead Officer on the date of the meeting. The Panel has asked for a report to be circulated for our attention. If we have any concerns we will ensure that the topic is brought to Committee for discussion.

**Councillor Jane Potter,**  
**Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel**



## Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28 October 2014

### MINUTES

#### Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton, John Fisher, Phil Mould, Mark Shurmer and Yvonne Smith

#### Officers:

Ray Cooke, Kevin Dicks, Clare Flanagan, Alison Grimmett, Matthew Mead, Jayne Pickering, Amanda de Warr and Dave Wheeler

#### Committee Services Officer:

Debbie Parker-Jones

#### 39. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Debbie Taylor.

#### 40. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 41. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

There were no Leader's Announcements.

#### 42. MINUTES

##### RESOLVED that

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 8th September 2014 be agreed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.**

#### 43. IMPROVED PARKING SCHEMES

Members considered a report setting out proposals for improved parking schemes across the Borough.

.....  
Chair

Officers explained the funding elements of the proposals and advised that monies for improvements came from the General Fund. As detailed in the report, the demolition of garages and removal of resulting material to an approved tip had so far been financed by the Housing Revenue Account, which would remain the case for all future schemes.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **a virement of £139,000 be made from the Woodrow and Lodge Park Estate Enhancement Capital budgets to fund the completion of Schemes in Crophorne Close, Bushley Close and Doverdale Close Woodrow; and**
- 2) **as part of the future capital bidding processes for 2015/16 and 2016/17 Members consider funding future 'Improved Parking Schemes' in: Exhall Close, Church Hill South; Drayton Close, Matchborough West; Astley Close, Woodrow; Mainstone Close, Winyates East; Fulbrook Close, Church Hill South; Garway Close, Matchborough East; and Felton Close, Matchborough East.**

**44. DESIGNATION OF A NEIGHBOURHOOD PLAN AREA - FECKENHAM**

Members considered a request from Feckenham Parish Council for the designation of Feckenham as a Neighbourhood Plan area under decentralisation measures introduced through the Localism Act 2011.

Officers explained the background to neighbourhood planning. Neighbourhood plans were required to be 'pro-development' and could not be used to prevent any development which was already allocated or permitted, nor could they propose less development than that which was set out in the Local Development Plan.

Neighbourhood plans provided an opportunity for local communities to have a say on what development should look like in their area, and it was noted that Feckenham Parish Council would continue to be consulted on relevant planning applications as at present.

**RESOLVED that**

**Feckenham Neighbourhood Plan Area application, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be considered as providing a 'sound' basis for a six week period of public consultation prior**

**to its formal designation in accordance with the Neighbourhood Planning (General) Regulations 2012.**

**45. LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME - DRAFT SCHEME 2015/16**

The Committee received a report seeking confirmation of a Local Council Tax Support Scheme for the financial year 2015/16. The report also included data on the take-up of the Hardship Fund and other measures showing the impact of the Scheme on collection rates and recovery action.

Officers advised that there had been only a slight dip in collection rates since changes to the Council Tax Support Scheme were introduced in April 2014. Whilst there had been an increase in recovery action this was now levelling out. Members were pleased to note that only a small amount of the Hardship Fund had needed to be committed, which Officers advised was as a result of working closely with those affected and in providing support to assist them with any issues. This was also in line with the locality work currently being undertaken by the Council.

It was proposed that there be no changes to the level of support provided by the Council, but that the various allowances be uprated in line with the Secretary of State's annual announcement to ensure the Scheme remained in line with other benefits.

Some concerns were raised for the future when the Local Council Tax Support Scheme would not form part of Universal Credit, which it was felt could have a significant impact on arrears.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) no changes be made to the draft Council Tax Support Scheme for 2015/16, with the exception of 'uprating' some of the figures to take account of other national changes in benefits and allowances;**
- 2) consultation on the proposal in 1) above be carried out in accordance with legislation, before a final decision on the Scheme is recommended to Council later in the year; and**
- 3) the contents of the report in relation to take up of the Hardship Fund and other measures data be noted.**

**46. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2015/16 - 2017/18**

The Committee received a report on the costs associated with delivering the Council's Strategic Purposes and the current summary position for the financial plan.

Officers explained the background to the report and the report appendices which outlined the 2014/15 budgets for all Council services aligned to the Strategic Purposes. A correction was noted to Appendix 2, 'Provide good things for me to see and do', which included Non Adopted Highways Inspection and CCTV Operating Costs, both of which should have appeared at Appendix 5 'Keep my place safe and looking good'. It was further noted that Pay & Display Car Parks at Appendix 2 was an error.

Officers were continuing to work through the detail of their budgets across the Strategic Purposes, with a number of costs having already been identified for further detailed work. Managers were also developing savings as a result of reducing waste in their systems and reducing the costs of enabling services, which it was noted included management teams in front line services. Heads of Service were also looking at how they could deliver their services differently by bringing in alternative service providers or providing more service for a reduced cost. Proposals in this regard would be factored into future reports to the Executive and would also be considered by Overview and Scrutiny.

A shortfall of approximately £1.7m was currently projected for 2015/16. It was assumed that the Government Grant settlement, which would be made known in December, would not be significantly different to the current estimate. It was further estimated that the position for the following 2 years would not improve with further reductions in Government Grant being projected.

Officers provided a number of clarifications in response to Members' questions on the costs detailed and the elements included in these, and undertook to provide a more comprehensive response to Members after the meeting on some of the issues raised. Officers further agreed to meet with one Member separately to discuss the property budgets.

Members appreciated the greater clarity on service costs and Officers advised that they would continue to refine and develop the way in which the costs were presented to Members. It was agreed that it would in future be helpful to set out gross expenditure and gross income and for any capital charges to be removed from the figures.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the costs associated with the delivery of the Council's Strategic Purposes be noted; and**
- 2) **Officers continue work on the financial plan to realise savings and additional income to meet the projected shortfalls.**

**47. FEES AND CHARGES**

The Committee considered a report setting out the proposed Fees and Charges for the Council's chargeable services for 2015/16. Members also considered with the report the minute and recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's meeting on 21st October 2014, which had been circulated as Additional Papers, in relation to the pre-scrutiny of the Fees and Charges report.

Officers reported that an overall 3% increase in fees and charges would be achieved through approval of the proposals, and that the income target for the year had been increased by 97k when compared to the previous year. All fees and charges, save for those where an invoice had already been raised covering the last quarter of the financial year or where there was a contractual period preventing this, would take effect from 1st January 2015. Exceptionally, the Palace Theatre charges would take effect from 2016/17 as booking arrangements for the Theatre were made significantly far ahead.

It was noted that some charges did not represent a 3% increase as benchmarking with other local authorities had been undertaken and some rounding up or down of figures applied for ease, for example with cash handling at leisure centres. Some new charges had also been introduced, for example, Knowledge Tests for Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicles and Deeds of Variation under Section 106 of the Town and Country Planning Act 1990. In relation to Building Control, the number of requests from customers for local authorities to provide project specific quotations on request was rising rapidly. As such it was proposed to continue with the provision of site specific fees in accordance with the relevant regulations in those fee categories previously affected and to raise other specific declared fees by at least 3%.

Officers provided a number of clarifications to questions raised on the fees and charges.

# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28 October 2014

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Members discussed the minute and recommendations arising from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21st October 2014, and a debate ensued on whether the rate for Junior Swimming Lessons should be subject to increase. The recommendation from Overview and Scrutiny for the rate for Junior Swimming Lessons to remain at the current 2014/15 rate (part 1 of the recommendation) was not supported by the majority of the Committee. Part 2 of the recommendation formed part of the original recommendation detailed in the Fees and Charges report which was carried.

It was noted that whilst free swimming was available for the under 16's and over 60's this only applied to residents who lived within the Borough and who had registered for this. As such, a charge appeared in the schedule for those under 16's/over 60's who did not fall within those categories.

The current high occupancy levels for swimming lessons, particularly those for beginner classes, were noted, as was the fact that the Council's charges were lower than many other authorities, with concessions also applying.

### **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **the fees and charges for 2015/16 as set out in Appendices 1- 9 to the report be approved, other than in cases where:**
  - a) **fees or charges are statutory;**
  - b) **fees and charges are set externally; or**
  - c) **other Council-approved circumstances apply; and**
- 2) **the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services has delegation to alter the Leisure fees and charges by a variation of up to 30%.**

### **48. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd September 2014, and the minute of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's consideration of the Fees and Charges report at its meeting on 21st October 2014.



# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28 October 2014

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## 2nd September 2014

In relation to the 2nd September 2014 minutes, it was noted that the recommendation on the Football Task Group Final Report had already been considered and resolved by the Executive at its meeting on 8th September. Accordingly, the only recommendation to be considered by the Executive Committee related to Minute 27 regarding the minutes of the Redditch Partnership Executive Group and Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust being appended to the Council agenda.

Members agreed that rather than appending the minutes to Council agendas, it would be more appropriate for these, or any resulting notes/actions arising from the meetings in question, to be published for Members' information only on the Modern.gov committee administration system. Councillors could also be alerted to any relevant activity in this regard via the regular Members' Newsletter. It was noted that, on occasion, some elements of the discussions and outcomes concerned might contain sensitive information, which would need to remain confidential. Any queries which Members might have arising from the minutes/notes/action points could then be raised with the appropriate Officer in the first instance.

## 21st October 2014

The minute and recommendations of the 21st October 2014 Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to the Committee's pre-scrutiny of the Fees and Charges report was considered under the previous agenda item (Minute No. 47 refers).

### **RESOLVED that**

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd September 2014 be received and noted;**
- 2) the recommendation from the 2nd September Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in relation to the minutes of the Redditch Partnership Executive Group and Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust being appended to the Council agenda be rejected, and the any resulting minutes/notes/action points arising from the meetings in question instead be published to Councillors only via the Modern.gov committee administration system, and that Members also be alerted as to any activity in this regard via the Members' Newsletter;**

# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28 October 2014

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- 3) the minute and recommendation of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21st October 2014 in relation to the Fees and Charges report be received and noted;
- 4) part 1 of the recommendation from the 21st October Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting in relation to the rate for Junior Swimming Lessons remaining at the current 2014/15 rate be rejected; and
- 5) part 2 of the recommendation from the 21st October Overview and Scrutiny Committee, in its amended format to reflect that this was subject to the approval of part 1 of the recommendation, automatically fall and all original recommendations in the Fees and Charges report stand.

## 49. WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee held on 2nd October 2014.

Members had only one recommendation at Minute 16/14 to consider, relating to the Final Report of the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services Scrutiny Task Group.

### **RESOLVED that**

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee held on 2nd October 2014 be received and noted; and
- 2) the recommendation from the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee as follows be approved:

**the lessons learned from the WRS shared service experience, particularly as detailed in this report, should be heeded by elected members and senior officers when considering any future proposals for shared service arrangements involving multiple partners.**

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

There were no outstanding referrals to consider.

# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 28 October 2014

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**51. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT**

It was noted that the Planning Advisory Panel due to take place that evening had been cancelled due to lack of business.

Also, the Economic Theme Group under the Local Strategic Partnership; the successor body to the disbanded Economic Advisory Panel, had met and had had a productive meeting.

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

**52. ACTION MONITORING**

Members were advised that no update on the information requested at the previous meeting in relation to the Finance Monitoring Report 2014/15 April to June (Quarter 1) was yet available. Officers undertook to find out the details for the questions raised and to report back to all members of the Committee on this.

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm  
and closed at 8.55 pm

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Chair



# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME

**1 December 2014 to 31 March 2015**

(published as at 5<sup>th</sup> November 2014)

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;**
- (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](http://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](mailto: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: 3257 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 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 Greg Chance	Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development, Public Transport
Councillor John Fisher	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Councillor Yvonne Smith	Portfolio Holder for Community Safety & Regulatory Services
Councillor Mark Shurmer	Portfolio Holder for Housing
Councillor Debbie Taylor	Portfolio Holder for Local Environment & Health
Councillor Phil Mould	Portfolio Holder for Leisure & Tourism
Councillor Juliet Brunner	
Councillor Brandon Clayton	

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Fees and Charges <b>Key:</b> No	Council, 8 <sup>th</sup> December 2014 Executive 28 Oct 2014		Report of the Financial Services Manager	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3790
Improved Parking Schemes <b>Key:</b> No	Council 8 <sup>th</sup> December 2014 Executive 28 Oct 2014		Report of the Head of Environmental Services	Pete Liddington, GIS/Design Officer Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3638
Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy <b>Key:</b> No	Council, Executive 25 Nov 2014		Report of the Head of Transformation and Organisational Change	Lindsey Wood, Human Resources Officer Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3554
Joint Property Vehicle Full Business Case <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive 25 Nov 2014		Report of the Executive Director, Finance and Resources	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207
Land Adjacent to the Alexandra Hospital - disposal <b>Key:</b> No	Council, Executive 25 Nov 2014	Part exempt due to commercially sensitive information.	Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda de Warr, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Budget request for Additional IT Facilities to fulfil Public Service Network requirements <b>Key:</b> No	Executive, Council 25 Nov 2014		Report of the Head of Transformation and Organisational Development	Mark Hanwell, ICT Transformation Manager Tel: 01527 881248
Council Tax Support Scheme 2015/16 <b>Key:</b> No	Council, Executive 25 Nov 2014		Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda de Warr, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support Tel: 01527 64252
Home Improvement Agency <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive 25 Nov 2014		Report of the Housing Strategy Manager	Derek Allen, Housing Strategy Manager Tel: 01527 881278
Environmental Services Transformation and Shared Services Restructure <b>Key:</b> No	Council, Executive 25 Nov 2014	Potentially part exempt because of details of employees	Report of the Head of Environmental Services	Guy Revans, Head of Environmental Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3292
Review of Financial Resilience <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 16 Dec 2014		Report of the Council's external auditor	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207



Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Budget Monitoring Quarter 2 2014-15 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 16 Dec 2014		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3790
Budget Position Statement <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 16 Dec 2014		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207
Housing Revenue Account, rent and capital 2015-16 <b>Key:</b> No	Council, Executive 16 Dec 2014		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources and Head of Housing	Liz Tompkin, Head of Housing, Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3304, Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3790
Landscape Improvements to the Town Centre Phase II <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive, Council 20 Jan 2015		Report of the Director of Planning and Regeneration	Lyndsey Berry, Planning Officer
Polling Districts and Polling Places Review <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 20 Jan 2015		Report of the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services Tel: 01527 881429

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme 2015/16 - Funding recommendations <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive 20 Jan 2015		Report of the Head of Community Services	Donna Hancox, Voluntary Sector Grants Co-ordinator Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3015
Designation of a Neighbourhood Plan area - Feckenham <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 20 Jan 2015		Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning and Regeneration Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3219
Medium Term Financial Plan 2015-16 - 2017-18 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 20 Jan 2015		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources Tel: 01527 881207
Council Tax Base and Non-Domestic Rates base <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive 20 Jan 2015		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3790
Budget Monitoring October - December 2014 Quarter 3 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 10 Mar 2015		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources	

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any)	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Treasury Management Strategy <b>Key:</b> No	Council, Executive 10 Mar 2015		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources	
Write off of Debts <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Before 30 Jun 2015		Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources	Amanda de Warr, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support Tel: 01527 64252
Job Evaluation <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive			Becky Talbot, Human Resources and Development Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3385
Tenancy Policy <b>Key:</b> No	Executive		Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director (Leisure, Environmental & Community Services)	



# Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

24th November 2014

## WORK PROGRAMME

(Report of the Chief Executive)

Date of Meeting	Subject Matter	Officer(s) Responsible for report
<b>ALL MEETINGS</b>	<b>REGULAR ITEMS</b>	<b>(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)</b>
	Minutes of previous meeting Consideration of the Executive Committee Work Programme Consideration of Executive Committee key decisions Call-ins (if any) Pre-scrutiny (if any) 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
	<b>REGULAR ITEMS</b> Update on the work of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel. Quarterly Tracker Report	Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service

# Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

24th November 2014

	<p><b>REGULAR ITEMS</b></p> <p>Updates on the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Bi-Annual Monitoring Report – Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy</p>	<p>Redditch Borough Council representative on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service</p>
<b>OTHER ITEMS - DATE FIXED</b>		
<b>24th November 2014</b>	Concessionary Bus Travel - Discussion	Relevant Lead Head of Service
<b>24th November 2014</b>	Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel Update	Relevant Lead Head of Service
<b>24th November 2014</b>	Market Task Group – Monitoring Update Report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
<b>24th November 2014</b>	Proposals for Change by Tudor Grange Academy Short, Sharp Review – Final Report	Councillor Witherspoon
<b>13th January 2015</b>	Budget Scrutiny - Update	Relevant Lead Head of Service
<b>13th January 2015</b>	Extensions to Social Housing - Presentation	Relevant Lead Head of Service
<b>13th January 2015</b>	Housing Revenue Account – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head of Service

# Overview & Scrutiny

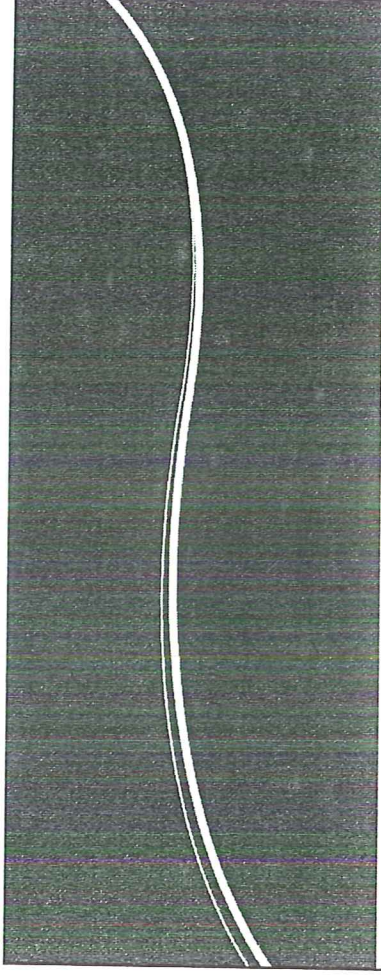
Committee

24th November 2014

<b>17th February 2015</b>	The Framework Agreement for the Provision of Debt and Budgeting Advice to be Delivered Within the Locality Areas - presentation	Relevant Lead Head of Service
<b>17th February 2015</b>	Budget Saving Proposals – Review of Executive Committee’s proposals and agreement of any suggestions for Council	Relevant Lead Head of Service
<b>3rd March 2015</b>	Tackling Obesity Task Group – Final Report	Councillor Potter
<b>3rd March 2015</b>	Void Properties - Presentation	Relevant Lead Head of Service
<b>June 2015</b>	Provision of Support Networks for LGBT Community Task Group – final report	Councillor Baker
<b>OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED</b>		
	Abbey Stadium Gym Extension Business Case – Pre-scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head of Service
	Free Swimming – Further Discussion	Relevant Lead Head of Service
	Leisure Services Trust Business Case – Pre-Scrutiny (to be undertaken if and when a business case is produced on this subject)	Relevant Lead Head of Service
	Playing Pitch Strategy – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head of Service







Proposed changes to some services at the  
Alexandra, Worcestershire Royal and  
Kidderminster Hospitals

What services are we talking about?

Only a small number of services would change:

- Births where you need to have a doctor present
- Overnight stays in hospital for children
- Some aspects of emergency care
- Some planned operations

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## Why do hospital services have to change?

- Shortage of specialist doctors and nurses
- Importance of doctors treating enough patients to keep their skills up-to-date
- Evidence that better care can be given in dedicated, specialist centres
- Less money is available so this needs to be used as effectively as possible

## Background

- Jan 2012 - "Joint Services Review" (JSR) started
- 13 possible options considered – lots of public engagement; clinicians recommended 2 options
- March 2012 - JSR ended
- April 2013 - Process restarted by Worcestershire's Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Sept 2013 - "Future of Acute Hospital Services in Worcestershire" began
- Nov 2013 - Jan 2014 - Expert doctors and nurses from outside Worcestershire looked at options from the JSR and produced a report with their recommendations

## Involvement of doctors and nurses

- Jan 2014 - Doctors and nurses from outside Worcestershire considered the two options from the JSR
- Neither option supported
- However an adapted option 1 was proposed
- Feb - Oct 2014 - local doctors and nurses looked at the detail of this option and how it would work in Worcestershire
- West Midlands Clinical Senate will look at the proposed model again and check that it's the best solution for patients

## Maternity and children's services

### What will it look like

- Assessment units for children at the Alexandra and Worcestershire Royal
- Children's surgery in Kidderminster and Worcester
- A possible new maternity unit led by midwives in North Worcestershire
- Appointments for pregnant women before and after the birth on all sites as now
- Home births more widely available

### What's the difference

- Overnight stays for children and babies would all be in Worcester
- All high risk births in Worcester
- Potential new midwife-led birth centre in the north of the county
- Enhanced home birth service for everyone

### Benefits to patients

- Mothers-to-be and children looked after in appropriate environment
- Improved patient experience
- High risk mothers with complex needs (e.g. twins) will receive expert

### Quality and Outcomes

- Improved care of high risk mothers-to-be and newborn babies
- Improved care of children staying in hospital overnight
- Expected reduction in emergency

## Emergency care

<p><b>What will it look like</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency centre for adults at the Alexandra Hospital</li> <li>GP-led Urgent Care Centre and Minor Injuries Unit for adults and children at the Alexandra Hospital</li> <li>Emergency centre for adults and children at Worcestershire Royal</li> <li>Emergency surgery at Worcestershire Royal</li> <li>Minor Injuries Unit at Kidderminster</li> </ul>	<p><b>What's the difference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Emergency Centres in Worcestershire would be networked and led by consultants</li> <li>Emergency surgery at Worcestershire Royal and not at the Alexandra</li> </ul>
<p><b>Benefits to patients</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Local emergency care in the same location as now for 95% of patients</li> <li>Specialist emergency surgery department with specialist staff and facilities at Worcestershire Royal</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality and outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved care and outcomes for patients needing emergency surgery</li> <li>Patients treated in the most appropriate location by the most appropriate staff – faster service</li> </ul>

## Planned care

<p><b>What will it look like</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Orthopaedics, Urology and Benign Upper GI Surgery at the Alexandra Hospital</li> <li>Colorectal, Bariatric, Reconstructive Breast, Vascular and Head &amp; Neck Cancer Surgery at Worcestershire Royal</li> <li>Outpatients and Diagnostics on all sites</li> </ul>	<p><b>What's the difference</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Centres of Excellence developed</li> <li>Separating planned and emergency care</li> <li>Major new Orthopaedic surgery centre at the Alexandra Hospital</li> </ul>
<p><b>Benefits to patients</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved patient experience on specialist wards</li> <li>Reduction in number of cancelled operations</li> <li>Reduction in risk of infection</li> </ul>	<p><b>Quality and outcomes</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improved patient care and outcomes</li> </ul>

## Is this affordable for the future?

- Our proposed changes would last for up to ten years
- Current services would stay in Worcestershire
- Potential for new services – e.g. renal/kidney
- Saves money which could be reinvested into hospital services

## *Alexandra Hospital - a thriving general hospital and a major hub for planned surgery*

- Networked Emergency Centre, Urgent Care Centre and Minor Injuries Unit
- Paediatric Assessment Unit
- Countywide centre for orthopaedic (bones and joints) surgery
- Countywide centre for urology (bladder and kidney)
- Maternity services (except for high risk births)
- Enhanced upper gastrointestinal (gall bladder, gullet and stomach) surgery.

## **Kidderminster Hospital and Treatment Centre**

- State-of-the-art diagnostic and treatment centre specialising in day case and short stay planned surgery and with a full range of diagnostic services
- Enhanced service for planned operations
- Minor Injuries Unit
- Support for people to live in their own homes

## **Worcestershire Royal Hospital**

- Networked major emergency centre/trauma unit
- Emergency surgery
- Colorectal resection centre for illnesses of the large intestine, bowel and colon
- Breast reconstruction centre
- Vascular (arteries and veins) surgery centre
- Head and neck cancer centre
- Bariatric (obesity/weight loss) surgery centre

## **Our aims**

- To improve patient care, quality and outcomes
- To maintain, as far as possible, local access and choice
- To ensure the best use of money, staff and facilities
- To be able to offer a wide range of local hospital services into the future
- To attract and keep the best doctors and nurses

## **Focus on quality and safety**

- Changes will not happen immediately
- There will be a formal public consultation before changes occur
- No changes will take place until capacity is available elsewhere
- Doctors and nurses meet regularly to monitor the quality and safety of current services
- We will ensure that all services are safe until any changes agreed can be made

## Transport

- We know getting to hospital can be difficult
- We have a transport group looking at transport options
- We will ask you about transport in the public consultation

## How can you be involved?

- Attend meetings and events to find out more about the proposals and give us your views
- Complete a survey as part of the consultation and all feedback will be considered by the CCGs when they make their decision
- For the most up-to-date information, have a look at our website [www.worcshfuturehospitals.co.uk](http://www.worcshfuturehospitals.co.uk)



## What happens next?

- Our proposals will be reviewed by independent doctors and nurses (November 2014)
- NHS England will check that we have done everything we need to do before putting our proposals to the public (Spring 2015)
- Public Consultation -- (late Spring/Summer 2015)
- Consideration of feedback from public consultation and decision by Governing Bodies of Clinical Commissioning Groups (late 2015)
- Implementation (from 2016)

