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# Executive Committee

Tue 16 Dec 2014 7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall Redditch



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> Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH Tel: 01527 881411 e.mail: d.parkerjones@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

# Welcome to today's meeting. Guidance for the Public

### Agenda Papers

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

### Chair

The Chair is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting. Generally to one side of the Chair is the **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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**Executive** 

Committee

Tuesday, 16th December, 2014 7.00 pm Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Membership: Agenda Cllrs: Bill Hartnett (Chair) Phil Mould Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) Mark Shurmer Juliet Brunner **Yvonne Smith** Brandon Clayton **Debbie Taylor** John Fisher To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary 1. Declarations of Interest Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests. To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to 2. **Apologies** attend this meeting. To give notice of any items for future meetings or for 1. 3. Leader's Announcements the Executive Committee Work Programme, including any scheduled for this meeting, but now carried forward or deleted; and 2. any other relevant announcements. (Oral report) To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of 4 **Minutes** the Executive Committee held on 25th November 2014. (Pages 1 - 10) (Minutes attached) Chief Executive To consider the Proposals for Change to Tudor Grange 5. **Proposals for Change to** Academy Short, Sharp Review's final report. **Tudor Grange Academy** Short, Sharp Review -(Report attached) **Final Report** (Pages 11 - 42) **Councillor Pat Witherspoon** 

## Executive

Committee

6.	Consolidated Revenue & Capital Monitoring Report Quarter 2 2014/15 (Pages 43 - 62)	To consider the Council's financial position for the period April to September 2014 (Outturn – 2014/15). (Report attached)
	Executive Director, Finance and Resources	(No Direct Ward Relevance)
7.	Budget Position Statement	To receive a presentation updating the Committee on the latest position with budget proposals for 2015/16.
	Executive Director, Finance and Resources	(No separate report)
		(No Direct Ward Relevance)
8.	Overview and Scrutiny Committee	To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 10th November 2014.
	(Pages 63 - 66)	There are no recommendations to consider.
	Chief Executive	(Minutes attached)
9.	Worcestershire Regulatory Services Shared Services Joint	To receive the minutes of the meeting of the WRS Shared Services Joint Committee held on 27th November 2014 and consider any recommendations arising from them.
	Committee	(Minutes to Follow)
10.	Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc.	To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.
	Chief Executive	
11.	Advisory Panels - update report	To consider, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels and similar bodies, which report via the Executive
	(Pages 67 - 68)	Committee.
	Chief Executive	(Report attached)
12.	Action Monitoring	To consider an update on the actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee.
	(Pages 69 - 70) Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive	(Report attached)

## Executive

Committee

13. Exclusion of the Public	<ul> <li>Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, to consider excluding the public from the meeting in relation to any items of business on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:</li> <li>"that, under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (<i>to be specified</i>) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended."</li> <li>These paragraphs are as follows:</li> <li>Subject to the "public interest" test, information relating to:</li> <li>Para 1 – any individual;</li> <li>Para 2 – the identity of any individual;</li> </ul>
	<ul> <li>Para 3 – <u>financial or business affairs;</u></li> <li>Para 4 – <u>labour relations matters;</u></li> <li>Para 5 – legal professional privilege;</li> </ul>
	• Para 6 – <u>a notice, order or direction;</u>
	Para 7 – the <u>prevention, investigation or</u>
	prosecution of crime; may need to be considered as 'exempt'.
<b>14.</b> Confidential Minutes / Referrals (if any)	To consider confidential matters not dealt with earlier in the evening and not separately listed below (if any).

# Agenda Item 4



MINUTES

**REDDITCH** BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE

Committee

25th November 2014

### Present:

Councillor Bill Hartnett (Chair), Councillor Greg Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton (during Minute No's 53 to 67), John Fisher, Phil Mould, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith and Debbie Taylor

### Also Present:

Jim Stobie – Worcestershire County Council (for Agenda Item 9: Joint Property Vehicle Full Business Case)

### Officers:

Derek Allen, Clare Flanagan, Mark Hanwell, Jayne Pickering, Deb Poole, Guy Revans, Katie Sharp-Fisher and Amanda de Warr

### **Committee Officers:**

Debbie Parker-Jones

### 53. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

### 54. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

### 55. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader advised the following:

White Ribbon Campaign 2014

The Leader referred to the White Ribbon Campaign 2014 which opposed domestic abuse and sexual violence. 25th November saw the first of a 16-day period of action for the 2014 Campaign. White ribbons were handed round and worn by Members and Officers in support of the Campaign.

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Chair

# Agenda Item 4

### **EXECUTIVE** Committee

25th November 2014

#### Additional Papers & Shared Services Board Recommendation

Additional confidential papers relating to Agenda Item 16 (Environmental Services Transformation and Shared Services Restructure) had been issued as Additional Papers 1 pack. There was also a recommendation for the Executive Committee's consideration arising from the meeting of the Shared Services Board on 6th November 2014 at Agenda Item 11, which endorsed, in principle, the Business Case for Environmental Services moving forward.

Also, as previously notified to Members, a copy of the Full Business Case for the Joint Property Vehicle at Agenda Item 9 had been published as additional papers, and a hard copy placed in each of the Members' Group Rooms owing to the size of the document.

#### Change in agenda running order

Following a request from Officers it had been agreed that the Home Improvement Agency Services report at Agenda Item 8 would be dealt with as the first substantive item on the agenda, immediately prior to Agenda Item 5; Public Service Network Compliance.

#### Work Programme

There was one matter which had appeared on the Executive Committee Work Programme for consideration at the meeting and which was not included on the agenda. This related to the Domestic Abuse Workplace Policy which it had subsequently been agreed would take the form of guidance as opposed to policy, and which therefore no longer required the Executive Committee's consideration.

It was noted that Members would still have input into the guidance as the draft of this would be referred to a future Portfolio Holder Briefing as a strategic issue, following which it would receive consideration at the Informal Trade Union and Employee Liaison Meetings.

#### Time to Change Pledge

The Pledge had received the full support of all the political groups of the Council and had been confirmed by the respective Group Leaders. The Pledge would be formally endorsed by Full Council on 8th December 2014 and would be signed by the Leader on 16th December.

# Agenda Item 4

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The Council's Pledge was: "To reduce the stigma of mental illness and support staff who are experiencing or who may experience personal or family mental health issues."

The Leader thanked all Members for their support in this regard.

### 56. MINUTES

### **RESOLVED** that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 28th October 2014 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

### 57. PUBLIC SERVICE NETWORK COMPLIANCE

The Committee considered a report which updated Members on the Council's requirement to achieve compliance with the Public Services Network (PSN), and which sought approval for the release of funds for 2014/15 to maintain compliance in the current financial year. Further funding would be needed to achieve full compliance in 2015/16, the additional financial implications of which would be included in the budget setting process for 2015/16.

It was noted that Cabinet Office was taking a zero-tolerance approach to compliance and that authorities would lose their connection to the PSN should they fail to comply. Officers advised that failure to comply would also result in significant financial consequences to the Council, meaning Members had no option other than to adhere to any current and future PSN requirements.

#### **RECOMMENDED** that

- 1) there be an increase to the 2014/15 Capital Programme of £74,000 to be funded from borrowing;
- 2) the revenue implication of £18,000 per year, as detailed in paragraph 4.1 of the report, be added as a revenue pressure from 2015/16; and
- 3) £10,000 be released from balances in 2014/15 to fund the associated revenue costs.

#### 58. COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2015/16

Further to Minute 45 of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 28th October 2014, the Committee was asked to consider

# Agenda Item 4

## **EXECUTIVE** Committee

25th November 2014

the final local Council Tax Support Scheme 2015/16 following consultation which had taken place on the draft Scheme.

Officers advised that the only changes to be made to the Scheme related to the future 'uprating' of some figures to allow for national changes in other benefits and allowances. Following consultation only one response had been received, which supported the proposed scheme.

Since changes to the support scheme had been introduced in April 2014 there had not been a substantial impact on collection rates and recovery rates were now levelling out. The authority was one of the few in the county to have a hardship fund to assist people in financial difficulty. Financial Support Officers were working closely with customers in financial hardship to discuss their financial situation and help with wider issues to help identify appropriate solutions.

Concerns were expressed by some Members for the future when the Council Tax Support Scheme would not form part of Universal Credit, which it was felt could have a significant impact on arrears. Officers responded that they were already working to try to address this, and were working closely with JobCentre Plus to ensure things ran as smoothly as possible for the residents of Redditch.

#### **RECOMMENDED** that

no changes be made to the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2015/16, other than to allow for the future 'uprating' of some of the figures to take account of other national changes in benefits and allowances.

#### 59. LAND ADJACENT TO THE ALEXANDRA HOSPITAL -DISPOSAL

The Committee received a report which sought approval to declare land at Nine Days Lane surplus and to transfer access right to the Homes and Communities Agency (HCA)

Members noted that the HCA was looking to develop a parcel of their land behind the Alexander Hospital for residential and employment purposes, and would be tendering their site for sale in the coming months. An adjacent plot of land owned by the Council, which on its own held little value for the Council, would be required to provide access to any development on the HCA land.

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#### **RESOLVED** that

- 1) the land at Nine Days Lane as outlined on the plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be declared surplus and sold in part or whole; and
- 2) access rights across Redditch Borough Council land, if required, be granted to facilitate the proposed development scheme.

#### 60. HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

The Committee considered a report which sought delegated authority to accept a tender for the re-letting of the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) contract which was due to expire on 31st March 2015.

At the time of writing the report it was not known whether the successful tender would be above the financial threshold (£250,000) for acceptance by Officers on behalf of the Council. Delegated authority was therefore being sought to accept the successful tender and enable the process to continue, and to meet the deadline to ensure continuity of service for residents.

Members noted that the grants provided assistance for people in the private sector, who either owned or rented their homes, and that there had been a lower-than-expected take up on these. Officers responded that they took seriously the underspend and that it was difficult to predict year-on-year what case numbers would be.

On average between 60-80 cases were received a year, with there being significant variation in the type of adaptations required and loan amounts involved. There was a section of the tender form which specifically addressed promotion of the service, with more needing to be understood about the town's housing market and needs in order to know how to best cater for residents' needs. Officers provided a breakdown of the number of applications received during 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14. Members queried what the take-up was for the private housing sector (between homeowners and privately rented properties), which Officers agreed to look into and report back to Members on.

#### **RESOLVED** that

1) progress with re-letting the tender for Home Improvement Agency services be noted;

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- 2) authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to accept the successful tender on behalf of the Council; and
- 3) the Head of Community Services and Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services be authorised to finalise the contract.

### 61. JOINT PROPERTY VEHICLE FULL BUSINESS CASE

The Committee received a report setting out the Full Business Case in relation to the establishment of a Joint Property Vehicle (JPV) for the delivery of improved and more efficient property and asset management services to a number of public sector partners across the West Midlands. Members were asked to consider becoming a partner within the new arrangement, agree to nominate the Council's representatives to the Board and Shareholder Group and delegate authority to Officers to implement the decision and complete the actions and documentation to do so.

Officers advised that the recommendations at paragraphs 2.2 to 2.5 of the report were recommendations to Full Council rather than matters to be resolved by the Executive Committee as stated in the report. It was further proposed that the delegation to Officers referred to at recommendation 2.5 would be in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management. Jim Stobie, JPV Manager at Worcestershire County Council, was also in attendance for this item.

Officers highlighted the key elements of the Business Case and benefits of the JPV to the Council. The JPV would be an armslength Company limited by shares, wholly owned and governed by the participating public sector partners. The JPV proposals related to the management of the Council's properties only and did not affect their ownership, which would remain with the Council.

Since 2010 the Council's Property Services had been delivered by the County Council. If participating in the JPV the authority would have a greater say over its property management services as it would have an equal shareholding in the JPV and be in a position to contribute towards change programmes. The JPV would formalise joint working, making it sustainable for the future, driving rationalisation, service transformation, regeneration, growth and efficiencies. The JPV tied in with the locality approach which was being developed in Redditch and which was already in place for some direct service delivery, and also supported a number of the Council's Strategic Purposes.

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Officers and Mr Stobie responded to Member questions during the discussion. Mr Stobie advised that the JPV would have its own IT system which would provide for a single database of property assets and therefore allow for much greater interrogation of property than was currently possible. Communication for the JPV would be key and was a current priority, with the same messages needing to be delivered to all of the partners involved at the same time.

It was queried how the outcomes from the Board of the Company would be passed on to Members, for both information and scrutiny. The exact mechanism for this had yet to be determined, although these might be reported to the Executive Committee in the same way as the minutes of the Shared Services Board and Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee were, with the Executive Committee ultimately being able to determine how it wished for such reporting to take place. It was further noted that the Company would be a limited company and therefore subject to the full legal requirements applicable to limited companies. Officers stated that any decisions on assets owned by the Council would continue to be made by the Executive Committee and Full Council. Mr Stobie stated that the JPV would not in any way circumnavigate the Council's current governance arrangements, which would also continue to apply.

#### **RECOMMENDED** that

- 1) the Council participates in establishing a Joint Property Vehicle company limited by shares;
- 2) The Director of Finance and Resources, currently representing the Council on the Shadow Shareholder Group, represent the Council on the Board of the Company;
- 3) two Member representatives and their substitutes be appointed to the Shareholder Meetings; and
- 4) authority be delegated to the Director of Finance and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, in conjunction with the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, to take the measures required to implement the decision at recommendation 1) and to complete any necessary documentation relating to it.

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### 62. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21st October 2014.

It was noted that there were two recommendations at Minute No's 40 and 41 and that the recommendations at Minute No. 40 (Fees and Charges – Pre-Scrutiny) had already been considered by the Executive Committee at its previous meeting on 28th October 2014.

#### **RESOLVED** that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 21st October 2014 be received and noted; and
- 2) the recommendation from the 21st October Overview and Scrutiny Committee as follows be approved:

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

#### 63. SHARED SERVICES BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 6th November 2014 were received by the Committee.

It was noted that there was one recommendation contained in the minutes which related to the Business Case for Environmental Services. As the Business Case appeared as a separate item later in the agenda (Agenda Item 16 refers) it was agreed that the Shared Services Board recommendation would be considered at the same time as the Business Case.

Following Member consideration of the Business Case (Minute No. 68 refers) it was

#### **RESOLVED** that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 6th November be received and noted;
- 2) it be noted that the Shared Services Board endorsed, in principle, the Business Case for Environmental Services moving forward; and

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3) the Executive Committee recommend to Full Council the approval of the Business Case for the transformation and shared service restructure of Environmental and associated services.

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

There were no outstanding referrals to consider.

#### 65. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

**RESOLVED** that

the report be noted.

#### 66. ACTION MONITORING

Members were advised that no update on the information requested at the 8th September 2014 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.

#### 67. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

**RESOLVED** that

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

Minute 68 – Environmental Services Transformation and Shared Services Restructure

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# 68. ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES TRANSFORMATION AND SHARED SERVICES RESTRUCTURE

The Committee received a confidential report on the proposed transformation and shared services restructure of Environmental and associated services and the Business Case for this.

It was noted that the Shared Services Board had considered the Business Case at its meeting on 6th November 2014 (Minute No. 63 refers) and that it had recommended that this be endorsed, in principle, moving forward.

Officers provided Members with a detailed presentation on the Business Case and responded to Member questions.

#### **RECOMMENDED** that

Full Council approve the Business Case for the transformation and shared service restructure of Environmental and associated services.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm and closed at 8.50 pm

Chair

# Overview & Scrutiny

Rages 16 17 18 19 20 21 22

Agenda Item 5

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

November 2014



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# Agenda Item 5

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#### 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: <u>jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</u>

#### Completed

November 2014

#### Contact

Further copies of this report are available on request from: <u>Address</u>: Overview and Scrutiny Team, Democratic Services, Redditch Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH

Email: 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

**<u>Communications</u>**: 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.

<u>Consultation with local schools</u>: 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.

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

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	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.

### 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:

- 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.
- 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 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**

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.

#### 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

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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.

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.

#### 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.

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#### 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.

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#### **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.

## Agenda Item 5

#### 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).

# <u>Note</u>: 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	<ul> <li>Council Strategic Purposes:</li> <li>Help me to be financially independent (including skills and education)</li> </ul>						
Background to the issue	<ul> <li>Tudor Grange Acader which provides educa country. In Redditch to Grange high school for 18.</li> <li>Earlier in the year the consultation about cha to 11 – 18 years from mean a reduced admi years 7-11 and in the on the school's website http://www.redditch.tg of-age-range-consulta</li> <li>The proposals were s May – 20<sup>th</sup> June 2014 Academy to explain the A considerable number contacted Borough Co concerns at the propo</li> <li>Education in Redditch primary; middle and h public were concerned proposals to change of have an adverse impa</li> </ul>	tion at various site the Trust currently or children aged be school governors anging the age ran September 2015. ission number for t sixth form. Details te: academy.org.uk/pa ation/ ubject to consultation and a meeting wa be proposals. er of members of the bouncillors expression sals and the times on is currently arrang- igh schools. Mem d that, if implement one school in the B	s across the runs Tudor tween 13 and ran a ge of the school This would he school for s are available arents/change- ion between 19 <sup>th</sup> s held at the ne public ng their cales involved. ged as 3-tier – bers of the ted, the orough would				

	<ul> <li>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.</li> <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>
Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)	<ol> <li>To understand the proposals by Tudor Grange Academy to extend the age range of pupils;</li> <li>To assess the potential impact on schooling arrangements in the Borough if the proposals were to be implemented;</li> <li>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>
How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)	Initial presentation to an O&S Committee meeting? With consultation documents from the school as background?

#### 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 Mr Simon Coleman (Redditch School changes Action Group) 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 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

Date	Task Group Activity
13th August 2014	Scoping discussion and brainstorm of approach to the review.
3rd September	Discussion of key documentation including the Making Significant Changes to an Existing Academy: Departmental Advice for Academy Trusts 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 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.

## Agenda Item 5

#### 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.

## Agenda Item 5

#### 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.

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16th December 2014

#### **CONSOLIDATED REVENUE & CAPITAL MONITORING REPORT QTR 2 2014/15**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor John Fisher, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management.
Portfolio Holder Consulted	
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Key Decision	

#### 1. <u>SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS</u>

This report details the Council's financial position for the period April to September2014 (Outturn – 2014/15).

#### 2. <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>

The Executive Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- 2.1 the current financial position on Revenue and Capital as detailed in the report be noted;
- 2.2 the following virements for the Housing Revenue Account Capital Programme be approved:

the Absestos budget be reduced by £290K to fund the following Capital Schemes:

£50K Kitchen Upgrades £200K to Rewiring £40K to Window Replacements; and

2.3 £77K be released from the HRA reserves to fund the demolition of Upper Norgrove House.

#### 3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 This report provides details of the financial information across the Council. The aim is to ensure Officers and Members can make informed and considered judgement of the overall position of the Council. This report now includes additional information in relation to the current position for each department to enable members to have a more detailed consideration of the financial projections for the Council.

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### **Financial Implications**

- 3.2 The Council set a balanced budget in February 2013 for the financial year 2014/15. Within the budget were included savings of £635K which were not fully identified. These included savings relating to Shared Services, Transformation, and general vacancies with the Council.
- 3.3 A review of last year's outturn has been undertaken and the unallocated savings have been allocated based on the savings achieved in 2013/14.
- 3.4 This has been done at a Head of Service level at this stage, more work will be carried out to allocate the savings to the relevant budget head.
- 3.5 A Balance of £212K is still unallocated, this relates to savings achieved by vacancy management and other savings and will be achieved during the financial year.

#### Revenue Budget Summary – Overall Council Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

- 3.6 The current financial position for services delivered within the Borough is detailed in the table over page.
- 3.7 Internal recharges have not been included in these figures to allow comparison for each service area. However Support costs have been included.

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Environmental Services	2,781	1,427	1,361	-66	2,734	-47
Community Services	2,286	1,190	1,183	-7	2,259	-26
Regulatory Services	556	279	270	-8	552	-4
Leisure & Cultural Services	3,235	1,627	1,661	35	3,262	27
Planning & Regeneration	1,724	795	753	-42	1,665	-59
Customer Access & Financial Support	3,468	1,163	1,151	-12	3,316	-153
Finance & Resources	2,028	482	495	14	2,046	19
Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	963	426	410	-17	931	-32
Business Transformation	1,771	1,075	945	-130	1,723	-48
Head of Housing Services (GF)	1,055	527	506	-22	1,018	-37
Corporate Services	1,266	576	550	-26	1,204	-62
Service TOTAL	21,133	9,567	9,287	-280	20,710	-423
Savings	-635	-318	0	318	0	635
TOTAL for Quarter & Projected	20,498	9,250	9,287	38	20,710	212

#### Financial Commentary:-

There are a number of savings projected to be achieved in 2014/15 to deliver the £635k of unidentified savings. These are based on the reductions to budget as achieved in 2013/14 to ensure that the budget will be met during this financial year.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### Capital Budget Summary – Overall Council Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

Department	Revised Budget 2014 /15 £'000	Actual spend April – Sept £'000	Variance£ '000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
Environmental Services	2,905	261	-2,644	2,905	0
Community Services	907	455	-452	907	0
Regulatory Services	56	0	-56	56	0
Leisure & Cultural Services	387	290	-97	387	0
Planning and Regeneration	44	0	-44	44	0
Housing	9,411	4,948	4.460	8,993	-418
Customer Access & Financial Support	359	167	-192	359	0
Business Transformation	140	45	-95	140	0
TOTAL	14,209	6,166	3,576	13.791	-418

#### **Financial Commentary:**

Due to the review of Environmental Services, there has been a delay in the procurement of vehicles and plant. With timescales involved, vehicles may not be received in this financial year. Officers to report back at the third quarter with more details.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### Environmental Services Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Bereavement Services	-304	-122	-145	-24	-340	-36
Cleansing	958	478	423	-55	920	-38
Climate Change	13	9	9	0	15	2
Environmental services Management	654	327	338	11	666	12
Highways & Drainage (inc civil parking)	56	33	56	23	102	45
Landscape & Grounds Maintenance	112	57	31	-26	63	-49
Manager supplies & Transport	0	0	0	0	0	0
Waste Management - Refuse & Recycling	1,281	640	658	18	1,308	27
Waste Management Policy	10	4	-9	-13	0	-10
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	2,781	1,427	1,361	-66	2,734	-47

#### Financial Commentary:-

Bereavement Services income is higher than budgeted but there is anticipation that £20k will be put towards a provision for future cremator maintenance.

Salary savings from vacant posts in the first half of the year account for the majority of the savings in Cleansing and Landscape services, some of which have been covered by agency staff.

Environmental Services have held back on recruiting as they go through restructure.

Civil Parking enforcement has seen a reduction in anticipated income and Wychavon District Council who provide the service under an SLA agreement are investigating the variances and will report back to Senior Officers.

The deficit on Waste Collection Services has been due to vehicle breakdowns. New vehicles are being procured at the present time however delivery of these will be just after the new financial year.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### **Capital Budget summary**

Service	Revised Budget 2014 /15 £'000	Actual Spend April – Sept £'000	Variance £'000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
Crematorium Enhancement	138	10	-128	138	0
Crematorium Extension	11	0	-11	11	0
Crossgate Depot Imps 2010	20	0	-20	20	0
Estate Enhancements	228	0	-228	228	0
Footpath Improvements	2	0	-2	2	0
Foxlydiate Crescent Lighting	25	25	-25	25	0
Improved Parking Scheme	263	133	-130	263	0
Land Drainage schemes	111	5	-106	111	0
Landscape Improvement Programme	46	46	0	46	0
Recycling Project	25	17	-8	25	0
Town Centre Landscape Scheme	429	3	-426	429	0
Vehicle replacement programme	1,590	22	-1,568	1590	0
Woodland Schemes	17	0	-17	17	0
TOTAL	2,905	261	-2,644	2,905	0

#### **Financial Commentary:**

Officers are currently in the process of organising works for the improved parking scheme, and estate enhancements.

Procurement is taking place for the vehicle replacement programme but vehicles may not be received until the beginning of the new financial year. Officers may have more information at the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter and therefore it is likely it will be requested for the budget to be carried forward to the new financial year.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### Community Services Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Community Services	1,954	861	846	-15	1,921	-33
CCTV / Lifeline	282	287	297	10	315	33
Care & Repair	50	42	40	-2	46	-4
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	-22	-22
TOTAL	2,286	1,190	1,183	-7	2,259	-26

#### Financial Commentary:-

Within Community Services a receipt of £40k for Early Help Pension is anticipated which was not known when the budget was set.

Due to WCC withdrawing the Local Area Agreement Income for Lifeline we are forecasting a loss of income. However the situation may change as more people agree to join the scheme.

#### **Capital Budget summary**

Service	Revised Budget 2014/15 £'000	Actual Spend £'000	Variance £'000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
Disabled Facilities Grant	575	441	-134	575	0
Energy & Efficiency Installs	94	0	-94	94	0
Hmo Grants	60	0	-10	60	0
Home Repairs Assistance	100	14	-86	100	0
Housing Needs Assessment	4	0	-4	4	0
Strat Hsg Research & Dev	10	0	-10	10	0
Warmer Worcs Insul Scheme	17	0	-17	17	0
Small Area Improvements	47	0	-47	47	0
TOTAL	907	455	-452	907	0

#### **Financial Commentary:**

There has been a reduction in new applications for disabled Facilities Grants and Home Repairs Assistance however the Council continues to meet demand in this area.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### Regulatory Services Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Environmental Health	571	286	280	-6	575	4
Licensing	-172	-86	-89	-2	-180	-8
Support Charges	158	79	79	0	158	0
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	556	279	270	-8	552	-4
Financial Commentary:	-					
No significant variances						

#### Capital Budget summary

Service	Revised Budget 2014 /15 £'000	Actual spend April – Sept £'000	Variance £'000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
Worcestershire Regulatory Services – ICT system	56	0	-56	56	0
TOTAL	56	0	-56	56	0

#### Financial Commentary:

The funding is in place to support the share of the cost associated with the ICT system in Regulatory Services. The system is currently being implemented.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### Leisure and Cultural Services Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Business Development	123	48	61	13	132	10
Cultural Services	943	482	467	-15	927	-17
Leisure & Cultural Manage.	82	43	33	-9	76	-6
Parks & Open Spaces	1,080	547	544	-3	1,071	-9
Sports Services	1,007	507	556	49	1,056	49
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3,235	1,627	1,661	35	3,262	27

#### Financial Commentary:

The projected overspend within Sports Services relates to higher Business rates and utility bills than expected, these are under reviews and remedial action will be taken where appropriate.:

There is a shortfall in fitness income at Abbey Stadium and due to essential maintenance the pool at Kingsley Sports Centre was closed for 5 week in the second quarter. The Golf course has underachieved on the number of rounds provided and a promotion campaign to increase a short form of the game for the winter months is being prepared to remedy this situation.

A new promotional campaign has been launched to increase sales and retention and we are hoping to recruit new members which will help to address reduce the concerns on income generation in this area.

The uptake on sponsorship of advertising on roundabouts has been slower than expected resulting in reduced income within Business development.

Cultural services has savings relating to increased usage of the community centres and the income generation at the Palace Theatre continues to be strong including changes to the Youth theatre delivery model.

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### **Capital Budget summary**

Service	Revised Budget 2014 /15 £'000	Actual Spend April – Sept £'000	Variance £'000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
Abbey Stadium	315	284	-31	315	0
Greenlands Pub Open Space	8	0	-8	8	0
Pitcheroak Golf	16	6	-10	16	0
Old Forge Car Park	48	0	-48	48	0
TOTAL	387	290	-97	387	0
Financial Commentary:		_			

The Abbey Stadium main contract is now completed with remedial works expected to be completed by year end.

Old Forge car parks to be completed by Q3.

All remaining projects are expected to be completed by year end.

#### Planning and Regeneration Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Building Control	191	95	97	2	196	5
Development Management	152	75	85	10	165	13
Economic Development	258	60	41	-19	232	-25
Planning Policy	1,124	564	530	-34	1,072	-51
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,724	795	753	-42	1,665	-59

#### Financial commentary

Planning Policy saving partly due to maternity leave and legal budget not utilised as anticipated. The Business Centres have savings on their utilities.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### **Capital Budget summary**

Service	Revised Budget 2014 /15 £'000	Actual Spend April – Sept £'000	Variance £'000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
Town Centre Development	11	11	0	11	0
TOTAL	11	0	0	11	0
Financial Commentary:					

No significant variances to report as this quarter.

Customer	Access	& Financia	I Support
Quarter 2	(April - S	September)	2014 /15

#### Revenue Budget summary

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Asset & Property Management	1,014	599	646	47	1,070	56
Customer Services	538	300	307	7	548	9
Revenues & Benefits	1,916	265	198	-66	1,698	-218
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	3,468	1,163	1,151	-12	3,316	-153
Financial Commontony						

#### Financial Commentary:-

The Asset & Property Mgmt overspend is due to a number of factors, including £9,000 security costs for Crossgates Depot, £19,000 increased energy costs, and the cost of Concessionary Rents.

Within Customer Services the overspend is due to a reduction in funding from Worcestershire County Council.

Revenues & Benefits has an underspend which is made up of a number of elements and the projected variance for the year is overstated and will be adjusted in Quarter 3 to take account of Service Reviews. Savings of £60,000 have been achieved through Service Reviews and vacancy management in the Benefits and Fraud Teams. Transformation of processes in the Income and Revenues respectively.

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### **Capital Budget summary**

Service	Revised Budget 2014 /15 £'000	Actual Spend April-Sept £'000	Variance £'000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
GF Asbestos	54	27	-27	54	0
Public Building	280	140	-140	280	0
Energy Management	25	0	-25	25	0
TOTAL	359	167	-192	359	0
Financial Commentary:					
Expenditure as per schedu	lle for the year.				

#### Financial Services Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Financial Services and Procurement	888	336	351	16	906	19
Corporate Management and Audit	1,140	145	144	-1	1,140	0
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	2,028	482	495	14	2,046	19

#### Financial Commentary:

The projected overspend is due to redundancy and pension strain costs following a service review

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Democratic Services & Member Support	340	156	158	2	346	5
Elections & Electoral Services	302	113	110	-4	299	-2
Legal Advice & Services	320	157	142	-15	285	-35
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	963	426	410	-17	931	-32

#### Financial Commentary:

In Legal the officers have been working collaboratively with other Councils to reduce the need to use external lawyers and have therefore achieved a saving on the external legal budget. This will now be adjusted for future years.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### Business Transformation Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Corporate Strategy	86	43	40	-3	80	-7
Business Transformation	949	562	528	-34	922	-27
Human Resources	582	305	217	-88	555	-27
IT Services	154	166	161	-5	166	12
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,771	1,075	945	-130	1,723	-48

#### Financial Commentary:-

It is projected that ICT will be overspent by £12k due to cost increases of corporate software licences.

The projected underspend in HR is due to current vacancies within the department. However, these vacancies are scheduled to be filled within the next month.

#### **Capital Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014 /15 £'000	Actual Spend April – Sept £'000	Variance £'000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
Members IT Facilities	10	0	-10	10	0
IT Replacement Programme	40	0	-40	40	0
PSN Project	90	45	-45	90	0
TOTAL	140	45	-95	140	0

#### **Financial Commentary:**

ICT replacement programme is currently being reviewed as part of the PSN project. The PSN project is currently underway, reviews are being made as to the specific requirement to meet the Public Service Network regulations

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### Housing Services (General Fund) Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Housing general fund	1,055	527	506	-22	1,018	-37
Savings to be achieved	0	0	0	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,055	527	506	-22	1,018	-37

Financial Commentary:

No significant variances to report.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### **Capital Budget summary**

Service	Revised Budget 2014 /15 £'000	Actual Spend April – Sept £'000	Variance £'000	Projected Out-turn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 2014/15 £'000
Catch up repairs- bath replacements	819	911	92	911	92
Catch up repairs- Kitchen Upgrades	70	70	0	70	0
Catch up repairs	366	179	-187	366	0
Asbestos General	808	67	-740	100	-708
Structural repairs	281	183	-98	281	0
General roofing	671	488	-183	671	0
Rewiring	806	1,001	195	1,001	195
Upgrade of Ch systems	1,422	986	-435	1,422	0
Window replacements	61	56	-5	61	0
Disabled adaptions	726	331	-395	726	0
Security Door Entry Scheme	51	0	-51	51	0
Sheltered Scheme – Facility Upgrade	0	3	3	3	3
External Cladding & Wall hanging	315	282	-33	315	0
Insulation	1,656	4	-1,651	1,656	0
Repairs to Sheltered Hsg Stock	38	3	-35	38	0
Winslow Close Heating	34	7	-27	34	0
Drainage	50	12	-38	50	0
Water supply	99	42	-57	99	0
Environmental Enhancements	640	253	-387	640	0
Masonry works	398	70	-328	398	0
Housing Management IT System	100	0	-100	100	0
TOTAL	9,411	4,948	-4,460	8,993	-418

Financial Commentary:

Officers are working to deliver the capital works as per the HRA business plan.

Although the bathroom replacement is a planned contract, where bathrooms are being replaced in the void properties these costs can charged to the capital budget, the value of these bathrooms is coded against the bathroom replacement budget resulting in an increase in the number of units and spend against the original budget.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### Asbestos

The asbestos budget was originally set following a large amount of work to remove asbestos from council properties. The budget was set for future years based on this demand, in the current year it has not been necessary to use the budget. There are a number of virements requested which will reduce the Asbestos budget to cover the overspends, the remaining budget will be kept in case unforeseen asbestos works are required in the future. Electrical upgrades, additional units have been completed and the release of retention monies have caused the overspend against the budget.

The underspend on the asbestos contract will cover the overspend on the Bathroom and Rewiring contracts.

There are a number of virements requested to reduce the Asbestos budget and move the spend to other areas of the Capital Programme and cover any overspends.

#### Insulation – (External insulation)

The project was originally slow to get off the ground due to a number of reasons. We have also had a spell of inclement weather which has held up the finishing process. Under new guidelines by OFGEM, the utility companies cannot invoice for properties that have not been signed off and completed and therefore they are unable to submit the Carbon which then holds up the invoicing process.

Putting this aside, the EWI project is ongoing with EON and officers anticipate a large proportion of the monies to be spent by March 15. The external insulation work is on a rolling programme and officers are currently looking at the next phase which will be around the town centre, any budget unspent will roll over to complete the works.

#### Disposal of Upper Norgrove House

The WCC's building surveying and risk team have reported that the rational for demolition of Upper Norgrove centres on potential Health & Safety concerns, should children or trespassers manage to enter the premises and then are subsequently injured or worse. Security has been provided on the site at a cost of £3,024.00 in 2013/14 and a similar amount will have been spent in 2014/15.

Council Tax has not been charged due to the building being damaged by fire and uninhabitable.

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## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### Corporate Services Quarter 2 (April - September) 2014 /15

#### **Revenue Budget summary**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £,000	Budget April - Sept £'000	Actual spend April - Sept £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/15 £'000	Projected Variance 14/15 £'000
Corporate Admin / Central Post / Printing	839	420	392	-28	793	-46
Other op exp	427	156	159	3	411	-16
TOTAL	1,266	576	550	-26	1,204	-62

#### Financial Commentary:-

- There is a projected saving within the post room due to the changes in the structure

- A £5k saving on communications due to reduction of expenditure on promotion /advertising.

- An additional grant (new burdens) has been received of £16k

- It is unlikely to recruit to the vacant post of Executive Director PRRH this financial year - £30k saving

#### Treasury Management

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

#### Credit Risk

- 3.9 Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the Council's customers. Credit risk is minimised by use of a specified list of investment counterparty criteria and by limiting the amount invested with each institution. The Council receives credit rating details from its Treasury Management Advisers on a daily basis and any counterparty falling below the criteria is removed from the list.
- 3.10 At 30 September2014, short-term investments comprise:

	30 <sup>th</sup> September 2014 £000
Deposits with Banks/Building Societies	2,000

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

#### 16th December 2014

#### Income from investments

3.11 An investment income target of £25k has been set for 2014/15 using a projected rate of return of 0.75% - 1.50%.

#### **General Fund Balances**

3.12 The General Fund Balance as at the 31st March 2014 is £1.1m; a balanced budget was set in February 2014, should the unidentified savings not be achieved during the year or any unexpected expenditure occur this would be funded from Balances.

#### General Fund Balance

	£'000	£'000
Balance as at 1 <sup>st</sup> April 2014	1,166	
Contribution from balances		-22
Estimated Balances 31 <sup>st</sup>		1 1 1 1
March 2015		1,144

#### Legal Implications

3.13 No Legal implications have been identified.

#### Service/Operational Implications

3.14 Sound performance management and data quality are keys to achieving improved scores in the use of resources judgement. This performance report supports that aim.

#### **Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

3.15 Performance Improvement is a Council objective.

#### 4. <u>RISK MANAGEMENT</u>

Risk considerations are covered within the report.

#### 5. <u>APPENDICES</u>

None

#### 6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None.

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### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### AUTHOR OF REPORT

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## Public Docement Pack Agenda Item 8

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Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 10th November, 2014

### MINUTES

Councillor Jane Potter (Chair), Councillor Gay Hopkins (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Joe Baker, Michael Braley, Natalie Brookes, David Bush, Andrew Fry, David Thain and Pat Witherspoon

#### Also Present:

Councillors Andrew Brazier, Juliet Brunner and Brandon Clayton

#### Officers:

Present:

Ruth Bamford, Ray Cooke, John Godwin, Sue Hanley, Mark Hanwell, Jayne Pickering, Deb Poole, Guy Revans and Dave Wheeler

#### **Democratic Services Officers:**

J Bayley and A Scarce

#### 47. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Carole Gandy, Alan Mason and Paul Swansborough with Councillors David Thain, Natalie Brooks and Michael Braley attending as substitutes respectively.

#### 48. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

#### 49. BUDGET TO STRATEGIC PURPOSES - OVERVIEW

The Chair reminded Members that this evening's meeting had been called to consider the budget and that Members had received additional information, which she had requested.

Officers explained that an enhanced budget was being prepared with all costs linked to the Council's strategic purposes. Savings

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Chair

## Agenda Item 8

## Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 10th November, 2014

were being looked at across the Council in order for a balanced budget to be achieved, although currently there was a deficit of approximately £1.7m. There was an anticipated saving of £120k to be factored in following the agreement of the Shared Services Board to progress the review of Environmental Services. There were also a number of pieces of work being carried out reviewing enabling services, which it was anticipated would also lead to savings. Officers were not in a position to provide full details of where savings would be made, but preliminary figures were expected to be available in a draft proposal for the Executive Committee in December. The budget figures that had been provided for Members' consideration were those relating to 2014/15 which were also being used as a base for the 2015/16 budget. A balanced budget was due in January/February 2015 and further reports would be brought to the Committee during this period.

Members were advised that a new method had been adopted to presenting budget information for the Committee to consider, in order to enable Members to carry out more detailed scrutiny. The initial report provided the overall net costs against each strategic purpose including enabling services, with the additional papers providing a comparison for services for previous years split into gross expenditure and income. The aim of the report was to enable Members to look at these figures and, if appropriate, pick any areas which they felt warranted further scrutiny in order to achieve savings.

Members commented that whilst they had information for the previous two years and the current year, which showed progress to date, it would have been helpful to have details of all services together with income and government grants, together with a summary sheet containing the overall figures. Officers were also advised that it would have been useful for Members to have received the budget figure together with figures for the actual expenditure to ensure that these were in line.

Members discussed the following areas in detail:

- Advice provided in respect of the strategic purposes "help me be financially independent" and "help me run a successful business".
- The spike in the payroll figures, which it was believed related to work delivered on behalf of Wyre Forest District Council.
- The ability to provide the detail behind the figures and the role of Internal Audit.

## Agenda Item 8

## **Overview and**

Scrutiny

Committee

Monday, 10th November, 2014

- The provision of a narrative against the higher figures in order for Members to understand the discrepancies when preparing such a report in future years.
- The departure of the Head of Finance and Resources post and the associated redundancy costs.
- The production of the report in the new format, taking account of strategic purposes and the availability of the same data for previous years.
- The revised way in which staff training was recorded, leading to the increase in corporate staff costs that had been recorded under enabling services.
- Details around corporate expenses and administrative buildings.
- Consistent savings on the overall budget of 5% over recent years.
- Details of the breakdown of the Environmental Services budget including the various Cleansing and Waste Collection teams and the forthcoming review of the service and the potential savings.
- An increase in actual expenditure on Civil Parking Enforcement.
- Street lighting and the decision by Worcestershire County Council to turn some lighting off at specific times.
- The Local Development Framework Work and Local Plan including the fees charged by the Inspector.
- Concessionary fares it was confirmed that there would be an item on the agenda for the meeting on 24th November which would allow Members to scrutinise this area in more detail.

Officers were asked to provide the following additional information as soon as possible:

- "Management Meetings Rooms". An explanation of what this title referred to and details of the why there had been a significant increase in the budget, to include details of repairs and maintenance costs.
- A breakdown of all IT licences in place, including costs and where they were being used.
- The Print and Reprographics Unit an explanation of the large variance from 2012/13 to 2013/14.
- Income received from the installation of solar panels.
- Details of why the overall spend on enabling had increased by almost £600k.
- Budget figures for 2012/13 for comparison purposes, though with the capital finance costs removed, particularly for larger schemes such as the Abbey Stadium.

## Agenda Item 8

## **Overview and**

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Committee

Monday, 10th November, 2014

- Data on how many businesses had been helped, and had asked for help and whether the support provided had been successful, including through the provision of grants.
- Further detail in respect of the reduction in Anti-Social Behaviour costs compared to the increase for Community Safety and whether there was a correlation between these costs.
- Details of all street lighting in Church Hill particularly Sandhurst Close.
- The Housing Options team how many enquiries the team had dealt with and how effective this work had been.
- Local Development Framework how much had been spent on consultants for the last two year period and what work this had covered.
- Shopmobility usage levels (including the locality of users) and costs, together with details of the grant provided by the Kingfisher Centre.
- Dial-a-Ride a breakdown of costs together with replacement and maintenance costs.

As there was a significant amount of additional information requested by Members it was agreed that no action would be taken on the report at this stage. Officers confirmed that the comments in respect of the reporting mechanism and report format would be taken on board and would inform future budget scrutiny exercises.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm and closed at 7.28 pm

## Agenda Item 11

#### **REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

16th December 2014

#### ADVISORY PANELS, WORKING GROUPS, ETC - UPDATE REPORT

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

### 1. <u>SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS</u>

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

#### 2. <u>RECOMMENDATIONS</u>

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

subject to Members' comments, the report be noted.

#### 3. UPDATES

#### A. <u>ADVISORY PANELS</u>

	<u>Meeting</u> :	Lead Members / Officers : (Executive Members shown <u>underlined)</u>	<u>Position</u> : (Oral updates to be provided at the meeting by Lead Members or Officers, if no written update is available.)
1.	Economic Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr John</u> <u>Fisher</u> Georgina Harris	Disbanded. Members now part of the Economic theme group under the Local Strategic Partnership
2.	Planning Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Rebecca Blake</u> Ruth Bamford	Next meeting – 16 <sup>th</sup> December 2014 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2015

## Agenda Item 11

#### **REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

### **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

#### 16th December 2014

3.	Housing Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Mark Shurmer</u> / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Greg</u> <u>Chance</u>	Next meeting – Date to be established.
		Liz Tompkin	

#### B. <u>OTHER MEETINGS</u>

4.	Constitutional Review Working Party	Chair: <u>Cllr Bill Hartnett</u> / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Greg Chance</u> Sheena Jones	Next meeting – Date to be established.
5.	Member Support Steering Group	Chair: <u>Cllr John Fisher</u> / Vice-Chair: <u>Cllr Phil Mould</u> Sheena Jones	Last meeting – 13 <sup>th</sup> October
		Chair: Cllr David Bush /	L oot mooting
6.	Grants Assessment Panel	Vice-Chair: Cllr Greg Chance	Last meeting – 17 <sup>th</sup> November
		Donna Hancox	
7.	Independent Remuneration	Chair: Mr R Key /	Last meeting –
	Panel	Sheena Jones	24 <sup>th</sup> November 2014. IRP report is due to be submitted to the Council in January 2015

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## Agenda Item 12

#### **REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

## EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

25<sup>th</sup> November 2014

#### **ACTION MONITORING**

Portfolio Holder(s) / Responsible Officer 8 <sup>th</sup> September	Action requested	Status
2014 Cllr Fisher J Pickering, C Felton and J Godwin	<ul> <li>Finance Monitoring Report 2014/15 April to June (Quarter 1)</li> <li>Officers undertook to let all Committee members have the following information: <ul> <li>The number of voluntary bodies using Council accommodation and where these are:</li> <li>Whether any posts are being deleted to make anticipated savings in the Legal and Democratic Services Department;</li> <li>The split between the swimming pool and gym in the projected overspend (shortfall in income) for the Abbey Stadium.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	
<u>Note</u> :	No further debate should be held on the above matters or substantive decisions taken, without further report OR unless urgency requirements are met.	Report period: 08/09/14 to present