

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wed 30 Jul
2008
7.00 pm

Committee Room Two
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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- Access to a summary of the rights of the public to attend meetings of the Council and its Committees etc. and to inspect and copy documents.
- In addition, the public now has a right to be present when the Council determines “Key Decisions” unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Unless otherwise stated, all items of business before the Executive Committee are Key Decisions.
- (Copies of Agenda Lists are published in advance of the meetings on the Council’s Website:
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**If you have any queries on this Agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of the above rights of access to information, please contact
Jess Bayley and Helen Saunders
Overview and Scrutiny Support Officers**

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آپ انگریزی میں مدد چاہتے ہیں— نسلیاتی رسائی [Ethnic Access] سے رابطہ کریں ٹیلیفون: 01905 25121

ইংরেজি ভাষার বিষয়ে সাহায্য চান – এথনিক অ্যাকসেস [Ethnic Access] এর সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন,
টেলিফোন: 01905 25121

‘Potrzebujesz pomocy z Angielskim – skontaktuj się z Ethnic Access Tel: 01905 25121’

Welcome to today's meeting.

Guidance for the Public

Agenda Papers

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

Chair

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

Running Order

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

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

Decisions

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

Members of the Public

Members of the public may, by prior arrangement, speak at meetings of the Council or its Committees. Specific procedures exist for Appeals Hearings or for meetings involving Licence or Planning Applications. For further information on this point, please speak to the Committee Support Officer.

Special Arrangements

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Further Information

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Fire/ Emergency instructions

If the alarm is sounded, please leave the building by the nearest available exit – these are clearly indicated within all the Committee Rooms.

If you discover a fire, inform a member of staff or operate the nearest alarm call point (wall mounted red rectangular box). In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately following the fire exit signs. Officers have been appointed with responsibility to ensure that all visitors are escorted from the building.

Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do Not use lifts.

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

The emergency Assembly Area is on the Ringway Car Park.

Declaration of Interests: Guidance for Councillors

DO I HAVE A "PERSONAL INTEREST" ?

- Where the item relates or is likely to affect your **registered interests** (what you have declared on the formal Register of Interests)

OR

- Where a decision in relation to the item might reasonably be regarded as affecting **your own** well-being or financial position, or that of your **family**, or your **close associates** more than most other people affected by the issue,

you have a personal interest.

WHAT MUST I DO? **Declare the existence, and nature, of your interest and stay**

- The declaration must relate to specific business being decided - a general scattergun approach is not needed
- **Exception** - where interest arises only because of your membership of another **public body**, there is no need to declare unless you **speak** on the matter.
- You **can vote** on the matter.

IS IT A "PREJUDICIAL INTEREST" ?

In general only if:-

- It is a personal interest **and**
 - The item affects your **financial position** (or conveys other benefits), or the position of your **family, close associates** or bodies through which you have a **registered interest** (or relates to the exercise of **regulatory functions** in relation to these groups)
- and**
- A member of public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably believe the interest was likely to **prejudice** your judgement of the public interest.

WHAT MUST I DO? **Declare and Withdraw**

BUT you may make representations to the meeting before withdrawing, **if** the public have similar rights (such as the right to speak at Planning Committee).



OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Wednesday, 30th July, 2008

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs: P Mould (Chair) W Hartnett
D Smith (Vice- Chair) W Norton
K Banks D Taylor
M Chalk D Thomas

1. Apologies and named substitutes	To receive apologies for absence and details of any Councillor (or co-optee substitute) nominated to attend this meeting in place of a member of this Committee. (No Specific Ward Relevance)
2. Declarations of interest and of Party Whip	To invite Councillors to declare any interest they may have in items on the Agenda and any Party Whip. (No Specific Ward Relevance)
3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 10)	To confirm the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a correct record. (Minutes attached) (No Specific Ward Relevance)
4. Actions List (Pages 11 - 14)	To note the contents of the Overview and Scrutiny Actions List. (Report attached) (No Specific Ward Relevance)
5. Call-in and Pre-Scrutiny	To consider whether any Key Decisions of the Executive Committee's most recent meeting(s) should be subject to call-in and also to consider whether any items on the Forward Plan require pre-scrutiny. (No separate report). (No Specific Ward Relevance)

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<p>6. Task & Finish Reviews - Draft Scoping Documents (Pages 15 - 16)</p>	<p>To consider the following scoping documents provided for possible Overview and Scrutiny review:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Housing Mutual Exchange. (Report to follow) <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
<p>7. Task and Finish Groups - Progress Reports</p>	<p>To consider progress to date on the current reviews against the terms set by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The current reviews in progress are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Role of the Mayor Task and Finish Group - Chair - Councillor M Chalk; and2. Third Sector Funding Task and Finish Group – Chair - Councillor D Thomas. <p>(Oral reports)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
<p>8. Joint Scrutiny Exercise on Flooding</p>	<p>To consider further developments in the joint scrutiny exercise on flooding.</p> <p>(Oral report)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
<p>9. Housing and Homelessness Appeals Report - Officer Update (Pages 17 - 36)</p>	<p>To consider the recommendations contained within the Housing and Homelessness Appeals Report produced by the Housing and Homelessness Appeals Task and Finish Group in March 2007 and to consider whether any further action is required.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
<p>10. Performance Monitoring Outturn Report April 2007- March 2008 (Pages 37 - 48)</p>	<p>To consider aspects of the Council's overall performance for the year April 2007 to March 2008.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>

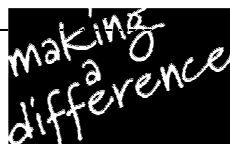
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11. Referrals	<p>To consider any referrals to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee direct, or arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Executive Committee or full Council• Other sources. <p>(No separate report) (No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
12. Work Programme (Pages 49 - 54)	<p>To consider the Committee's current Work Programme, and potential items for addition to the list arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Forward Plan / Committee agendas• External publications• Other sources. <p>(Report attached) (No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
13. Exclusion of the Press and Public	<p>Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Borough Director, during the course of the meeting to consider excluding the public from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:</p> <p>"That, under S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (to be specified) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act".</p>

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

9th July 2008

Committee

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Phil Mould (Chair), Councillor David Smith (Vice-Chair) and Councillors K Banks, M Chalk, D Taylor and D Thomas

Also Present:

P Hill

Officers:

S Hanley, S Shammon and S Skinner

Committee Officer:

J Bayley and H Saunders

22. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Hartnett and Norton.

23. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest or of any party whip.

24. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday the 18th of June be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

25. ACTIONS LIST

Officers provided an update on the latest edition of the Committee's Action List.

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Chair

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Officers explained that, in respect of Action 10 on the Actions List (concessionary bus passes), the facility for members of the public to apply for a concessionary bus pass on the internet had been made available on the Council's website on the 2nd of July.

Action 11 on the Actions List (Service Plans), regarding the possible removal of all reference to the Service Plans from the Committee's Work Programme, was discussed by Members. Officers informed Members that as the priorities of the Council were due to change, the Corporate and Performance Plan was not due to be published until the Autumn, which would result in a delay of the publication of the Service Plans until 2009. Officers explained that the Service Plans would be presented for the Committee's consideration following this date. Therefore, Members agreed to retain the reference to the Service Plans on the Committee's Work Programme.

Members were informed that, as detailed at Action 4 (Economic Development and Educational Attainment), the Committee was required to make a decision about how and when to consider economic development and educational attainment levels in the Borough. Members had agreed at a meeting of the Committee on the 27th March 2008 that the Committee would consider what action to take on these topics after the Work Programme Planning Afternoon had taken place. Members decided that these two issues should be considered by the Committee and that, to begin the process, they wished to be reminded of the previous scrutiny report on the subject.

RESOLVED that

- 1) reference to the Service Plans be retained in the Committee's Work Programme;**
- 2) the Economic Development and Educational Attainment item be considered at the meeting of the Committee on Wednesday the 20th of August;**
- 3) the Jobs, Employment and Economy Scrutiny Report be circulated to the Committee; and**
- 4) subject to these updates, the Actions List be noted.**

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26. CALL-IN AND PRE-SCRUTINY

There were no call-ins and no proposed items for pre-scrutiny.

27. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

The Committee considered a scoping document from Councillor Chalk proposing that the Role of the Mayor be the focus of a scrutiny exercise.

Councillor Chalk explained that he felt the role of the Mayor at the Council could be utilised in a more effective way to promote the town and that this premise formed the focus of his proposed exercise. Some Members commented that the role of the Mayor was not a priority for the Council or for local people and that there were other potential scrutiny topics that warranted greater attention from the Committee.

Members debated to what degree the proposed focus of the scoping document fulfilled the questions listed in the Scrutiny Scoping Document Checklist. Officers advised that if the Committee felt it was not appropriate to tackle these issues as a piece of Overview and Scrutiny work, Members could request that the issue be added to the Forward Plan for the Executive Committee to consider, on the basis of an Officer report.

The Chair proposed that the scrutiny exercise be accepted for a Task and Finish review on condition that a small group of Members undertake a short, sharp review in accordance with the timescales stipulated in the scoping document. Members agreed to this suggestion.

The Chair explained that he had discussed the potential membership of the Task and Finish Group with the Vice-Chair and they had decided that Councillors Boyd-Carpenter, Enderby and Hunt be invited to take part in the exercise. Councillor Chalk was confirmed as the Chair of the Task and Finish Group.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the proposed scrutiny of the Role of the Mayor be approved for Task and Finish review;**
- 2) **Councillor Chalk be appointed Chair of the Task and Finish Group; and**

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- 3) **Councillors Boyd-Carpenter, Enderby and Hunt be invited to take part in the exercise.**

28. TASK & FINISH GROUP - PROGRESS REPORT

The Committee considered update reports in relation to current reviews. The following oral report was given:

- a) Third Sector Task and Finish Group

The Chair of the Third Sector Task and Finish Group, Councillor Thomas, informed Members that the Group included Councillors Banks, Cookson, Pearce, and Shurmer. She also explained that the Group had agreed to co-opt Ann Sowton, from, BARN (Bromsgrove and Redditch Network), a Voluntary Sector umbrella organisation working in Redditch and Bromsgrove, onto the Group.

Members were informed that the final report was to be written by members of the Group and would be short. The Committee was also informed that a press release was to be sent to the local media in order to publicise the work of the Task and Finish Group and that the paperwork for this Group was to be made available to the public on the internet.

Members discussed the five core third sector organisations funded by the Council. Members enquired if these organisations had been given written notification that the Council was changing its procedures regarding grants to third sector organisations. Officers confirmed that they would check whether the core funded organisations had been given written notice of these changes.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted and the proposed action detailed in the preamble above be agreed.

29. JOINT SCRUTINY EXERCISE ON FLOODING

Members noted the contents of the report produced by Councillor Chalk regarding the previous meeting of the Joint Scrutiny on Flooding Task Group held on Monday the 30th of June.

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Councillor Chalk explained that, at the meeting, consideration had been given as to how the report could be presented to the District Councils. Councillor Chalk asked Committee members to express their opinions on this subject. Members requested copies of the report and a presentation from Councillor Chalk and the Chair of the Scrutiny Task Group. The Committee also requested that all Borough Council members be invited to the meeting of the Committee for the presentation of the final report.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **a presentation of the final report be given to Members of the Committee by Councillor Chalk and the Chairman of the Scrutiny Task Group; and**
- 2) **all Members be invited to the meeting of the Committee for the presentation of the final report.**

30. JOINT POLICY ON UNAUTHORISED GYPSY AND TRAVELLER ENCAMPMENTS - MEMBER DISCUSSION

The Committee had requested an update on the Worcestershire Joint Policy on Unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Encampments item that had been considered by the previous Overview and Scrutiny Committee in March 2008.

Officers explained that this issue had been raised during the previous year by former Councillor Pattie Hill, further to problems she had encountered with unauthorised encampments in her Ward. Pattie explained that she felt there were two issues of importance. In the case of the incursion in her Ward, she felt that the response to the incursion by the Police had been too slow. Secondly, she felt there had been confusion about which partner organisation was responsible for carrying out welfare checks. Members were informed by Officers that the County Council was responsible for undertaking welfare checks with Gypsies and Travellers staying on unauthorised encampments.

Officers explained that when this issue was considered at the Overview and Scrutiny meeting held in March, Members found that partners under the Joint Policy had not consistently fulfilled their responsibilities as set out in the policy. Therefore, the previous Committee had decided to write to the co-ordinating Officer at the County Council to explain Members' concerns and to request that a meeting be held to be attended by all partners.

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Members had requested that the concerns of the Council be presented at this meeting.

Members were informed that a meeting of the partners had taken place in May 2008. A Borough Council Officer had been in attendance at this meeting. He informed the Committee that this meeting had been productive and had been attended by a number of representatives of the Police service.

Members discussed site provision for Gypsies and Travellers in the Borough. Members were informed that the County-wide Gypsy and Traveller Area Assessment had been completed and that estimations had been calculated for the number of sites needed for the County and each of the District Councils. As a result of these findings, a joint approach between Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council to provide authorised Gypsy and Traveller sites had been discussed. Members agreed that the Council should examine this option for providing sites further.

In response to a Member query, Officers explained that the Joint Policy was working and that the Police had become more pro-active in their response to joint working. Members requested that Officers maintain a detailed record of unauthorised encampments, which could be used to assess the effectiveness of the new version of the policy. This record would be presented before Members at a meeting of the Committee in September.

RESOLVED that

Officers maintain a detailed record of unauthorised encampments in the Borough and present the record for the Committee's consideration at the end of September.

31. RELATIONS BETWEEN THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY AND EXECUTIVE COMMITTEES

The Committee considered a report that detailed Member responses, provided during the Work Programme Planning Afternoon, on the subject of preferred working relationships between the Council's Executive Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members agreed that the Executive Committee should also consider the report.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the report be noted; and**

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- 2) **the Executive Committee be requested to consider its contents.**

32. SUGGESTED ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

The Committee considered a report which detailed the various ideas for scrutiny that had been suggested by Members during the Work Programme Planning Afternoon. Members considered each suggestion in turn and discussed possible action for each item.

Members agreed that item 1 (adult participation in sport) and item 10 (improving the health of people in Redditch) should not be pursued by the Committee at this time. Instead, the Committee agreed that the proposer of item 10, Councillor Banks, in her role as the Council's representative on the County's Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee, should suggest this item for consideration at the County Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Members agreed that Councillor Banks should report back to the Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the autumn if no progress had been made there. In that event, a scrutiny exercise, combining the scope of both items 1 and 10, would be launched by the Committee, to be chaired by Councillor Banks.

The Committee agreed that item 2 (the Borough's carbon footprint), was an issue that had been considered by the Environment Advisory Panel, and that it was therefore not necessary to undertake a separate review of this issue.

Members agreed that, as Councillor Chalk would be engaged on another scrutiny exercise, consideration of the scrutiny exercise he suggested, number 3 on the list (communication), could be deferred.

Members discussed item 7 (Housing Mutual Exchange). The proposer of this item, Councillor Smith, explained that he had completed a scoping document for this item, which was due for consideration at the following meeting of the Committee. Members therefore agreed that this exercise should be considered by the parent O&S Committee and that the item should be chaired by Councillor Smith.

Members discussed item 5 (Fishing Tackle Heritage). Members agreed that, as Councillor Smith had expressed an interest in this item, it should be pursued as a scrutiny exercise when the Housing

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Mutual Exchange item had been completed so that he would be available to Chair the Group.

Items 9 and 11, both relating to the improvement of public transport in the town, were discussed by the Committee. Members agreed that these two items should be merged into one scrutiny exercise and that Councillor Taylor should chair the review. The Chair proposed that Councillor Taylor meet with Officers to complete a scoping document that could be considered by the Committee at a later meeting in the year.

Members considered item 13 (communal areas around Council Flat properties). The Committee agreed that this issue should be tackled by a Task and Finish Group and that Councillor Mould should chair this exercise.

Members recognised that it would be difficult to undertake all of the scrutiny exercises that had been proposed at the same time. Members noted that Member availability and the capacity of Officers to facilitate numerous reviews might mean that not all of the proposed scrutiny exercises discussed would take place.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted; and the future work programme developed in accordance with the outcomes of the discussion as recorded in the preamble above.

33. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

34. WORK PROGRAMME

RESOLVED that

the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

Actions requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date Action Requested	Action to be Taken	Response
19/12/07 1	Members discussed the proposed new format for presenting performance information to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Officers were asked to provide an explanation of the traffic light system. Members did not specify a date by which this information should be made available.	The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officers have informed the relevant Officers of this request. (TO BE DONE). Lead Officer, Head of Strategy and Partnerships (HSP), Estimated introduction date, August 2008.
27/02/08 2	Officers were asked to present community safety performance data to Members using both of the templates that had been provided for the consideration of Members at that meeting. Officers were asked to present this information to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee alongside the quarterly performance reports.	The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officers have informed the relevant lead Officer of this request. (TO BE DONE). Lead Officer, HSP, estimated introduction date, August 2008.
27/03/08 3	<p>Members agreed that a series of actions should be undertaken as preparatory work for carrying out scrutiny of economic development role at the Council. Members requested several actions as detailed below:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • the Jobs, Employment and Economy scrutiny report be circulated amongst all Overview and Scrutiny Committee Members; • the Economic Development Manger job specification be reviewed in line with the three key themes contained in the Regional Economic Strategy: business; place; and people; 	Members agreed to review Economic Development on a stage by stage basis. The Jobs, Employment and Economy report is scheduled to be reconsidered at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday the 20th August 2008. The order for consideration of the other proposed actions will be agreed following this meeting.

<p style="text-align: center;">3</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • relevant Officers from Worcestershire County Council be invited to the Committee to discuss their roles and responsibilities for economic development in Redditch; • further information be provided on roles and responsibilities for other bodies / agencies contributing to economic development in Redditch; • the latest secondary school attainment figures be obtained and distributed to Committee Members; and • representatives of Education Services from Worcestershire County Council be invited to a future meeting to educational attainment levels in Redditch schools. 	
<p>28/05/08</p> <p style="text-align: center;">4</p>	<p>Members agreed to organise for members of the Committee to attend a Select Committee meeting in Westminster to observe national best practice in scrutiny. No date was specified.</p>	<p>Officers discussed arrangements for this visit with the Chair. It was noted that there few opportunities to undertake this trip before the summer recess in Parliament and therefore the trip to Westminster would take place in Autumn 2008. (TO BE DONE). Lead Officers OSSOs, estimated completion date Autumn 2008.</p>
<p>09/07/08</p> <p style="text-align: center;">5</p>	<p>Members asked Officers to maintain a detailed record of unauthorised encampments in the Borough. Officers were asked to present this record before the Committee in Autumn 2008. The record would be used to assess the effectiveness of the revised version of the Worcestershire Joint Policy on Unauthorised Gypsy and Traveller Encampments.</p>	<p>Officers to report before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Autumn 2008. (TO BE DONE). Lead Officer, Senior Environmental Health Officer, completion date, Autumn 2008.</p>

<p>09/07/08</p> <p>6</p>	<p>Members discussed provision of authorised gypsy and traveller encampments in the area. Members agreed that in response to the Gypsy and Traveller Area Assessment undertaken at County level it was likely to be recommended that Redditch work with Bromsgrove District council to identify authorised sites for encampments. Officers were asked to start working with Bromsgrove to identify sites.</p>	<p>Planning Officers provided a response to this request for action, which was forwarded to all Members of the Committee on 22/07/08. Officers explained that they are working in accordance with a set process which will take place over a number of months. (DONE).</p>
<p>09/07/08</p> <p>7</p>	<p>Members recommended that the issues raised during the Work Programme Planning Afternoon (WPPA) on the subject of relations between the Overview and Scrutiny and Executive Committees be considered by the Executive Committee.</p>	<p>This information is scheduled to be considered at a meeting of the Executive committee on the 13th August. (WILL BE DONE SOON). Lead Officers, OSSOs, estimated completion date, 13th August 2008.</p>
<p>09/07/08</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Members agreed that Councillor Banks should propose the scrutiny topic she had suggested during the WPPA at a meeting of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Councillor Banks was asked to report back before the Committee in the Autumn of 2008 if she feels that further action is required.</p>	<p>Lead Member, Councillor Banks. (The resolution of this item is subject to Councillor Banks' views about the response of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee).</p>
<p>09/07/08</p> <p>9</p>	<p>Members agreed to consider a scoping document for the proposed review of Housing Mutual Exchange at the following meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p>	<p>The completed scoping document is attached to this agenda and due to be considered by Members during this meeting. (DONE).</p>

<p>09/07/08</p> <p>10</p>	<p>Members agreed to postpone further consideration of a potential review of the Borough's fishing tackle heritage, proposed during the WPPA, until the Role of the Mayor review had been completed.</p>	<p>The proposer for the item, Councillor Hunt, was informed of this decision on 14/07/08. The Work Programme has also been adjusted accordingly.</p> <p>(TO BE DONE). Lead Officers, OSSOs, estimated completion date November 2008.</p>
<p>09/07/08</p> <p>11</p>	<p>Councillor Taylor was asked to complete a scoping document relating to reviews of public transport proposed during the WPPA. Councillor Taylor agreed to do so, though asked to postpone the submission of a scoping document until September 2008.</p>	<p>A scoping meeting for this review is scheduled to take place on 28/08/08. The scoping document should be submitted for the Committee's consideration in September 2008. (TO BE DONE). Lead Member, Councillor Taylor, estimated completion date, September 2008.</p>

Glossary

HSP	-	Head of Strategy and Partnerships
OSSO	-	Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer
WPPA	-	Work Programme Planning Afternoon



Overview & Scrutiny Committee

Scrutiny Scoping Check List

When scoping a review, the Committee will need to consider the following questions:

1. Is there a clear objective for scrutinising this topic?
2. Are you likely to achieve a desired outcome?
3. What resources are available and what timetable do you need to comply with?
4. What are the potential risks?
5. Is this issue strategic and significant?
6. Is the scrutiny activity timely?
7. To what extent is this matter important for local people? For stakeholders? For the Electorate?
8. Does this issue correspond with the council's corporate priorities?
9. How long is it since this issue was last the subject of a review?
10. Is there evidence of real, perceived or imminent failure to a service or policy in this area?
11. What are likely to be the benefits to the council and its customers of this review?
12. What do other members think about this issue?
13. Is there media interest in the issue?

Criteria to reject Items for Scrutiny

Items which have been suggested for review can be rejected if:

1. the issue was dealt with less than two years ago;
2. the issue is already being examined elsewhere in the council (e.g. by full council);
3. new legislation relevant to this issue is expected within the year;
4. there is no scope for scrutiny to add value, or to make any real difference to the service; or
5. policy that is being reviewed; and the objective(s) of the review are unlikely to be achieved in the specified timescale.

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Social Overview & Scrutiny

Housing and Homelessness Appeals



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Social O&S Committee

**Task and Finish Group
Membership** Councillor Juliet Brunner
Councillor David Cartwright
Councillor Jack Field
Councillor Pattie Hill

Committee Membership Councillor Mark Shurmer (Chair)
Councillor Pattie Hill (Vice Chair)
Councillor Kieth Boyd-Carpenter
Councillor Juliet Brunner
Councillor David Cartwright
Councillor Jack Field
Councillor Betty Passingham
Councillor Diane Thomas

**Overview and Scrutiny
Support** Elizabeth Rattlidge



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Executive Summary

Housing and Homelessness Appeals

We set out to investigate the means by which the Council handled second stage appeals by those who were either applicants to the Local Authority's allocation scheme or who considered that they should be eligible for assistance by virtue of their homeless status.

The review that we undertook was brief in that it focussed upon an internal process and one, moreover, that was relatively uncommon. The information upon which we reached our conclusions was gained primarily from interviewing the Officers most closely involved with the process and also the Chair of the Committee in question.

Careful consideration was given to the options open to us. The possibility of moving to a single stage appeal for either one or both of the processes was looked at, as was the necessity of Member involvement. At the conclusion of our deliberations we were not convinced that we wished to see Members relinquishing their role entirely as it was felt to bring a valuable perspective to the process. Conversely, moving to a single stage appeal raised the possibility of a tremendous additional burden on Members' time and was thus considered impractical. A further consideration was the impact of the new allocations policy, which had the potential to significantly alter the numbers of cases going to appeal.

Therefore, we recommend that the present system remains in place, pending a review at the end of the current calendar year.



Recommendations

The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

1. the present arrangement of a two-stage appeals process be retained, subject to further review at the end of 2007; and
2. all new Members of the Council be given training in the conduct of quasi-judicial meetings.



Introduction

Aims A decision was taken by the Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 13th September 2006 to establish a Task and Finish Group to review the Council's two-stage housing appeals process. The Group comprised Councillors Brunner, Cartwright, Field and Hill.

The terms of reference were agreed as follows:

- a) to investigate the benefits or otherwise of the Housing and Homelessness Appeals Processes adopted in the Council; and
- b) to make appropriate recommendations to the Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee at the outcome of the review.

The major question the Task and Finish Group needed to answer was:

Is the second stage of the Council's Housing and Homelessness Appeals process necessary?

Chair It was decided that the Group would not appoint a Chair for the duration of the review.



Background

Legislative Background

The most significant piece of legislation of which the Task and Finish Group had to be aware was the Housing Act 1996 as amended by the Homelessness Act 2002 and the Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Review Procedures) Regulations 1999

HOUSING APPEALS

Under the Housing Act 1996, Part VI, s.167 (as amended) applicants to a Local Authority's allocation scheme have the right to request a review or make an appeal against a decision made by a Local Authority.

In brief, any applicant to the allocation scheme has the right to appeal if they are unhappy with the decision made by the Local Authority on the following grounds:

- Where the applicant has been excluded from registration; and
- Where the applicant has been awarded a lower priority for re-housing than expected.



Background

Legislative Background

HOMELESSNESS APPEALS

The Housing Act 1996, Part VII, s.202 (as amended) gives the applicant the right to request a review of any decision made by the authority in the following circumstances:

- (a) any decision of a local housing authority as to his eligibility for assistance,
- (b) any decision of a local housing authority as to what duty (if any) is owed to him under sections 190 to 193 and 195 and 196 (duties to persons found to be homeless or threatened with homelessness),
- (c) any decision of a local housing authority to notify another authority under section 198(1) (referral of cases),
- (d) any decision under section 198(5) whether the conditions are met for the referral of his case,
- (e) any decision under section 200(3) or (4) (decision as to duty owed to applicant whose case is considered for referral or referred), or
- (f) any decision of a local housing authority as to the suitability of accommodation offered to him in discharge of their duty under any of the provisions mentioned in paragraph (b) or (e) or as to the suitability of the accommodation offered to him as mentioned in s.193(7) (Part VI offer)

The Housing Act 1996, Part VII s.204 (as amended) gives an applicant the right to appeal to the County Court if the applicant has requested a review under s.202 and is dissatisfied with the decision on the review, or has not been notified of the decision within the time prescribed by s.203 (eight weeks) and the appeal is on any point of law arising from the decision or, as the case may be, the original decision.



Discussion

The Council's system for Housing and Homelessness Appeals

Prior to 2003/04 The Council administered the appeals process through the Housing Management Sub-Committee (HMSC). Through the HMSC, Members were able to present cases on behalf of appellants and any subsequent recommendations were submitted to the Housing Committee and Council for consideration. This process led to considerable delays in getting decisions to appellants.

In 2003 the present system was introduced. Under this system, the original decision by Officers could be the subject of an appeal to another Officer of the Authority. Should the tenant or potential tenant still be dissatisfied with the outcome of the process, there was the opportunity for a second appeal to Members of the Housing Appeals Committee. The Housing Appeals Committee operates as a quasi-judicial body and there is therefore no requirement upon it to refer its decisions to a further body.

There is a distinction between the processes involved in dealing with appeals in Housing and Homelessness cases and this is reflected in the operation of the Housing Appeals Committee and also in the involvement of different Officers of the Council.



Discussion

The Group's Actions

In order to progress its review, the Group requested the following information.

1. Figures for the numbers of cases that reach each stage of the Council's Housing and Homelessness appeals processes;
2. Details of the appeals processes adopted at:
 - a) A large Metropolitan Borough; and
 - a) A similar sized authority that has retained its own housing stock.



Discussion

Appeals figures

Homelessness Cases

It was confirmed that there had been 53 reviews since August 2005, 17 of which were from August 2005 - March 2006; and 36 from April 2006 to December 2006.

The reviewing officer had overturned the decision in eight cases.

Three cases had subsequently been through the second stage appeal; in each case the Officer's decision has been upheld.

Housing Cases

It was confirmed that there had been five written requests for second stage appeals; four were upheld and the final case was thrown out.

It is difficult to provide figures for the number of cases reaching the first stage as the Housing Team tended to take a proactive approach; for example, if an Officer receives a phone call by someone not happy with their tenancy they will do a site visit and then produce a discretionary report – if necessary the Housing Services Manager can then award discretionary points without the need for appeal.

In general Housing Services are resolving as and when there is an issue with a tenant.

Many of these cases are related to medical issues; these need not be referred by the tenant themselves but could come from their Doctor, an Occupational Therapist or a Special Needs Officer.



Discussion

Methods used in other Authorities

Large Authorities

Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council's housing stock is now managed by an Arm's Length Management Organisation (ALMO), Sandwell Homes. There appears to be **two stages** to the appeals process, a review stage and an appeal stage, both of which are run by Sandwell Homes.

Leeds City Council has approximately 67,000 properties which are managed by six ALMO's and one Tenancy Management Organisation. Leeds has a **single stage** appeals process which is undertaken by a panel of Senior Officers who were not involved with the original decision.

Similar sized Authorities who have retained their own housing stock

Broxtowe Borough Council owns approximately 4,700 properties and is a small Borough to the south of Nottingham. Broxtowe currently have the same two stage appeals process as Redditch Borough Council, however, they were thinking of changing to a single stage process and were keen to hear the outcomes of the review.

Warwick District Council owns over 5,000 properties; it also has a two stage appeals process similar to Redditch Borough Council.



Discussion

Expert Witness Interviews

The Group decided that two separate interviews would be undertaken to help inform their consideration of the process. These took place on the 6th December 2006.

The first involved Councillor Bill Hartnett, the Chair of the Housing Appeals Committee.

The second involved both Liz Tompkin, Head of Housing Services and Matthew Bough, Housing Policy & Performance Manager.

Members agreed questions for each of the witnesses; details of the agreed questions can be found in Appendices 1 and 2.



Conclusion

The Group considered that a single stage appeals process could be adopted within Redditch but that a number of consequent problems could be foreseen.

There did not appear to be particularly significant benefits in terms of Officer or Member time in moving to a system of single stage appeals. The Group was, on balance, also keen to retain a degree of Member involvement in the process.

The numbers of appeals currently coming before Members was very small and it was therefore concluded that the system was not leading to significant problems and any change would have minimal effect.

Members were keen to see how the new Choice-based letting system affected the numbers of appeals before recommending any changes. It was proposed that a report be submitted to the Social Overview and Scrutiny Committee in November/ December 2007 detailing the outcomes and effects of the new system.

The Group considered that there was merit in extending the pool of Members (and substitute Members) from which the Housing Appeals Committee could be drawn. To this end it was suggested that all new Members receive training in attendance at quasi-judicial meetings as part of their induction with the Council.



Expert Witnesses

**Redditch Borough
Council**

Councillor Bill Hartnett, Deputy Leader and Chair of the Housing Appeals Committee

Matthew Bough, Housing Policy and Performance Manager
Liz Tompkin, Housing Services Manager



Bibliography

Housing Act 1996

Homelessness Act 2002

Statutory Instrument 1999, no.71 – The Allocation of Housing and Homelessness (Review Procedures) Regulations 1999

Redditch Borough Council Housing Allocations Policy

Report to Council 7 July 2003 – Housing Appeals Committee – Allocations

Report to Council 18 April 2005 – Housing Appeals Committee – Terms of Reference etc.



Appendices

Contents Appendix 1: Witness Questions and Answers – Chair, Housing Appeals Committee

Appendix 2: Witness Questions and Answers – Redditch Borough Council Officers



Overview & Scrutiny

For additional copies of this report, or to find out more about Overview & Scrutiny at Redditch Borough Council please contact:

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Appendix 1

Appeals Task & Finish Group

(reporting to the Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee)

Wednesday 6th December 12.15pm Committee Room 1

T&F Membership : Councillor Juliet Brunner (JB)
Councillor David Cartwright (absent)
Councillor Jack Field (JF)
Councillor Pattie Hill (apologies)

Expert Witness : Councillor Bill Hartnett (BH), Chair of the Housing Appeals Committee

Interview Notes

1. Can you explain the actual process for the Council's Housing Appeals Committee in practical terms?

BH Council tenants or potential tenants in housing difficulty can appeal against the original decision to officers; if that outcome is still not to their satisfaction, they are given the opportunity for a second appeal to members. The appellants needs to present their case to members; they can do this alone or be supported by a friend, advocate or elected member. Members hear the case and then come to a decision.

JB Can you provide us with some historical context?

BH Under the old HMSC (Housing Management Sub-Committee) regime it was much easier for members of the public, as members were able to present the case on behalf of the appellant; many may now have an added fear factor to present their own case in front of a committee of elected members.

Members cannot allocate housing but can advise officers to give the appellant additional points; under the HMSC the recommendation had to go to the Housing Committee and full Council for approval and so it could be months before the appellant was informed of the outcome. Under this method, the decision does not need to go anywhere for approval as it is quasi-judicial.

The number of cases that get to members has gone down from approximately 50 a year to 5 a year. The need for housing has not reduced so either it must be more difficult for a tenant to navigate the process or tenants are not aware that there is an appeal mechanism. To request an appeal, tenants need to write to Officers (which may in itself be an issue) outlining grounds for the appeal. There is a danger that if it does not say "I appeal against this decision", then the letter may just appear as a complaint. I encourage tenants to clearly state that they are appealing against a decision.

2. What do you think is the individual's expectation of the appeals process? Is this ever achieved?

BH Yes, clearly the tenant's expectation is to get what they want or be allowed to be on the housing list. I should think that an appellants expectation would be to get what they perceive to be justice. If they are successful they would go further up the list and would eventually be housed by us or a RSL. Under the current process the tenant will know the outcome quicker than before as they will be in the room when the decision is announced.

3. We feel that the most appropriate method for conducting appeals might be a single stage consisting of a panel of one or two members and a senior officer. What are your thoughts on this suggestion?

BH It is always difficult to have an even number of members in a voting situation; if only two members are allowed to vote you could end up with a one-on-one situation. It would be unusual to allow an officer to vote in a member arena. There needs to be a bigger pool of members (in case of ward interest) and the committee itself should have a larger number of people; I would certainly not go for 1, that would be a democratic deficit. The smallest number should be 3, although I would be happier with 5; the Committee needs to have an odd number of members so 5 or 7 would be the ideal although you may need to look at proportionality. Senior officers should be there for advice and policy, particularly as the legislation is constantly changing. A single stage may increase the work flow for Members but I have no view on single or two stage appeals.

4. What are your thoughts as Chair, if the Housing Appeals Committee were to be abolished?

BH In a bold statement, I think that it would be a bad thing to do.
There always needs to be an appeals mechanism. I would not like it if it were just the officer appeal. There needs to be member involvement, we have different perspectives to officers. Officers have to work within the framework given whereas members can amend policy as necessary.

5. Could our suggestions have an adverse effect; if so, what on and how could this be minimised?

It was felt that Councillor Hartnett's answer to question 3 effectively covered this matter.

6. Is there an argument for two separate methods to deal with Housing and Homelessness Appeals, for example a single review panel as mentioned earlier for Housing Appeals, and a single review stage conducted by a senior officer for Homelessness cases?

BH I have no objection for there being two different methods as long as members know what needs to be done for each and are duly qualified for both; there are slightly different legal nuances between the two.

I think that it would save time to have one panel for both. Homelessness cases tend to take more time and are during the day so that does exclude some members.

I do not agree to a single review stage with just Officers present as that would be a democratic deficit.

7. How do you think our suggestions could be practically implemented?

A change to the current Housing Appeals Committee could be simply implemented at the AGM or perhaps it could be possible to change mid stream following a resolution from Council. One would need to check the constitution of the Council.

8. Do you have any other suggestions for improvement?

BH Given that appeals are to help tenants and to justify our policy I think that we should be aiming to show that justice is being done.

I would also suggest running any suggested changes past the Borough Tenants Panel to see if they feel that the alternative model would be an improvement (I am not suggesting that BTP members should be put on the panel).

There is currently no way of assessing how people feel about the Appeals process as there is no exit strategy for; however as Chair, I always ask the appellant if they thought they had a fair hearing.

JF On behalf of the Appeals Task & Finish Group, I would like to thank you for agreeing to be interviewed, we appreciate the time you have spent with us.

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Appendix 2

Appeals Task & Finish Group

(reporting to the Social Overview & Scrutiny Committee)

Wednesday 6th December 1.00pm Committee Room 1

T&F Membership : Councillor Juliet Brunner (JB)
Councillor David Cartwright (absent)
Councillor Jack Field (JF)
Councillor Pattie Hill (apologies)

Expert Witnesses : Liz Tompkin (LT), Head of Housing Services
Matthew Bough (MB), Housing Policy & Performance Manager

Interview Notes

1. Please can you explain about the County Court Appeals process? How many appellants have tried it and have they been successful?

MB On the homelessness side, no one has appealed to the County Court. To access this stage the appellant must have asked for a review with the authority and then if they are still dissatisfied they can appeal to the County Court on a point of law.

JF I am interested to hear that there have been no County Court appeals. In your experience then, do you feel that the people going through the Council's Homelessness Appeals process are satisfied with the procedures?

MB In my opinion, I think we can assume that they are happy.

LT As far as I am aware, no one has ever appealed to the County Court on a housing matter.

2. What is your opinion of Medical points? Are they accurate and do they make the difference people think they are going to make?

LT No, I don't think they do and that is a big problem, Medical Points do not help the housing situation as much as they should do. There is a maximum of 40 points available for medical need, if a person had a very high medical need the medical points may not be enough to move the person up the waiting list as much as may be necessary.

JF Are you therefore suggesting that there should be a different method for applying medical points?

LT We have known for a while that the medical points were not really working as we intended; when there is a perceived medical need Officers will go on a discretionary visit, the Officer would then do a report and then either the Director of Housing and Asset Management or I would be able to award discretionary points so that the person can move up the waiting list. The procedure for applying medical points will

be changed in the new Choice Based Letting programme, instead people will have an assessment and then if deemed appropriate they would be moved up to the Gold band. Assessments will be undertaken by the Special Needs Tenancy Officer and an Occupational Therapist.

JF Where in all this does the Doctor come in?

LT In the existing medical points system, the Doctor rarely says anything medical, they just say that the person needs to move. The problem is that the Doctor does not know what they are like in their home; whereas our Special Needs Tenancy Officer and an OT can make an actual assessment of the person in their home. The joint working between our Special Needs Officer and the OT has made significant savings, we are able to put this money back in to pay for more adaptations.

JB If there is to be a change to medical points, members will need to be updated so that they have the necessary information when advising people.

MB On the Homeless side we do not use medical points, instead we have to assess whether there is a medical need that makes them more vulnerable under the Pereira Test. We use "NOW Medical" to assist in our assessments under vulnerability.

JF How often do you use that service?

MB We use them a lot; I should say at least 5 times a week.

JF How much does that cost?

MB It is £30 an assessment but we apply this information to similar decisions.

3. How much time do you spend on a first stage appeal?

LT In Housing cases, the first stage is normally when we get an Officer to do home visit and look at the housing need in the home. Depending on what report says, that is what we will base the decision on. The time spent on this stage would vary, in some cases Officers may have already done a home visit; generally the first stage is not that time consuming. With the allocations review, Officers have been able to be more proactive and are meeting the tenant before they initiate an appeal. Now because we are more aware of the families that are out there, Officers are picking it up themselves and identifying potential problems. In some cases I cannot easily classify a first stage appeal as it has not come directly from the tenant.

MB I would estimate that a first stage appeal would take on average half a day to a day for homelessness cases.

4. How much time do you spend preparing for a second stage appeal?

MB I would probably spend half a day's work writing the report and preparing the file for a second stage appeal.

LT It would be a similar amount of time for Housing cases; half a day as we may need to gather further evidence or do another site visit, this may be more time consuming for the Tenancy officers rather than myself.

5. Theoretically, would the amount of time spent on appeals be reduced if a single stage appeal process was adopted?

- JB We envision that the single stage appeal would consist of a panel of three or five members and a single officer. Do you feel time spent would be reduced or would it be more labour intensive?
- MB This approach could mean more work or could be the same, it would depend on the process, whether it was an informal meeting looking at the file or a formal quasi-judicial hearing. With a single stage this may mean that members would have to convene every week.
- JF We have not yet explored how this would be managed from a members point of view.
- LT Members would have to be really up to date with the current process and evolving case law.
- JF In your own opinion, would the time saved be insignificant in terms of the work that would need to be done?
- MB It could go either way; it would depend on the requirements of the panel (the amount of paperwork etc.). If the single stage was similar to the existing second stage quasi-judicial hearing then it would take more time; if it was a group of members sat round a table with officers then it would be quicker.
- JF How many first stage appeals with do you deal with?
- MB In the last year or so there have been 53 first stage appeals resulting in 3 second stage appeals.
- JF That would mean that a single stage panel would have to look at 53 separate cases, one a week.

6. We feel that the most appropriate method for conducting appeals might be a single stage consisting of a panel of one or two Members and a Senior Officer. What are your thoughts on this suggestion?

- MB It is certainly an option but would again depend on how it was done; the main problems would be with Members' availability due to the frequency of meetings; and the degree of knowledge that would need to be maintained by a large pool of members to take into account ward member interest.
- LT I can foresee that if everything went to the one stage, it would really increase the work load for everybody, for example: Office Services, Committee Services and Housing Services.
- MB If the single stage was quasi-judicial, there would be a huge increase; some authorities employ a review officer.

7. Could our suggestions have an adverse effect; if so, what on and how could this be minimised?

MB From a customers' point of view, they would lose the ability to appeal again; from an Officer's point of view it would be an increase in resources.

JB Do you think that Complaints would increase as a result?

MB I would be surprised if it altered the number of complaints received.

LT Once Choice Based Lettings are introduced, the process will be far more open and transparent, people can make bids for the properties they want, this will hopefully reduce the amount of appeals we receive for unsuitable accommodation.

8. Is there an argument for two separate methods to deal with Housing and Homelessness Appeals, for example a single review panel as mentioned earlier for Housing Appeals, and a single review stage conducted by the Senior Officer for Homelessness cases?

MB I think that the important thing to ask is how involved do members need or want to be in process. From my point of view, a single Officer stage would be better.

LR Would there be a case for retaining the existing process for housing cases but for homelessness cases stopping at the first stage Officer appeal, as the Council has an obligation to find temporary accommodation for appellants whilst waiting for their appeal?

MB & LT Yes. That could work very well.

MB If people then wanted a second stage, they could appeal to the County Court on a point of law.

9. How do you think our suggestions could be practically implemented?

It was felt that Officer's previous responses covered this matter.

10. Do you have any other suggestions for improvement?

LT Something may come out of the new allocations policy; this will be reviewed as a whole after 12 months as part of the recommendations from the Social O&S Committee's Preventing Homelessness report.

Overview & Scrutiny

No Direct Ward Relevance

Committee

30th July 2008

10. PERFORMANCE OUTTURN REPORT – 2007/08

(Report of Borough Director)

1. Purpose of Report

To report on aspects of the Council's overall performance.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- i) the update on key performance indicators for 2007/08 be noted and commented upon.

3. Financial, Legal, Policy and Risk Implications

Financial

- 3.1 There are no financial implications for the Council.

Legal

- 3.2 Under the Local Government Act 1999, Redditch Borough Council is obliged each year to publish a Best Value Performance Plan (BVPP) by 30th of June. This contains, amongst other things, details of performance against a range of Performance Indicators.

Policy

- 3.3 The Council's Corporate and Performance Plan makes a clear commitment to improve the way in which priority actions are planned and to improve the way in which performance is managed, including setting Service Standards.

Risk

- 3.4 Without adequate performance management the Council cannot review its performance at a corporate or service level adequately.

Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

30th July 2008

Report

4. Background

- 4.1 This report offers some thoughts on the Council's Performance Management Framework. In particular comments and suggestions are encouraged for enhancing the current framework to further monitor Key Service performance targets.
- 4.2 All performance indicators are included on the Council's electronic Performance Management System, showing our current and historic performance and comparisons with other District Councils as provided by the Audit Commission. This is accessible through the Council's intranet and enables Members and Officers to have access to regular information in a more visual format.
- 4.3 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Chairs Steering Committee considered the revised reporting/monitoring arrangements for the first time in September 2006 and subsequently at further rounds of meetings in November of that year and March 2007. Members endorsed the Quarterly Performance Report and Basket of Performance Indicators and noted the clarification of the role of Members in analysing and monitoring performance information and the next steps in developing a revised framework.
- 4.4 Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, at a meeting on the 19th of December 2007, agreed a number of changes to the presentation of performance data before the Committee. Members agreed that a traffic light system for presenting such data be used from 2008/09. Consequently, the style of presentation used for this report will not be used at future meetings.

5. Key Issues

Basis of Quarterly Reporting

- 5.1 In moving the agenda forward, the Council looked to address the following:-
- a) Retaining a tighter focus at a corporate level – with a clearly defined number of PIs reported and monitored.
 - b) Developing capacity for Directorates to strengthen performance management by focusing on service plan commitments.
 - c) Creating opportunities to automate the reporting of performance information using TEN software.

Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

30th July 2008

- d) Continuing to monitor all Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs) at a Member level at least annually.
- e) The development of links to how the Council is performing in its key delivery projects.

Member Role

- 5.2 Member involvement in monitoring performance for the remainder of the year will involve:

Quarter	Period	Meeting Date	Purpose of reporting.
1	Apr – June 2008	August Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<i>Analyse Corporate Basket</i>
2	July – Sept 2008	November Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<i>Analyse Corporate Basket</i>
3	Oct – Dec 2008	February Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<i>Analyse Corporate Basket</i>
4	Jan – Mar 2009	July Overview and Scrutiny Committee	<i>Analyse Corporate Basket. Receive year end PI data</i>

The Corporate basket

- 5.3 The Corporate basket now comprises indicators covering a wide range of Council activity.
- 5.4 They will be the focus of corporate level performance management and will be received by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) and Members on a quarterly basis.

Best Value Performance Indicators (BVPIs)

- 5.5 There continues to be a requirement to collect, calculate and collate all statutory BVPIs as well as a number of useful optional indicators, even though they may be excluded from the Corporate Basket.
- 5.6 Officers undertook a comprehensive analysis of these indicators to determine their scope, purpose, limitations and trend. A review was undertaken on how targets had been determined and projected, and on any difficulties in collating the data. This assisted in collecting and presenting information for the current performance system.

Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

30th July 2008

- 5.7 Members will be reassured to know that it is not the case that revising the reporting frequency for some BVPIs from quarterly to annually should lead to a decline in the Council's ability to collect and calculate them.

Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA)

- 5.8 This process forms an integral part of the Council's CPA Direction of Travel Assessment

6. Conclusion

The report provides Members with an opportunity to review the Council's performance on a quarterly basis.

7. Background Papers

The details to support the information provided within this report are held by Corporate Strategy.

8. Consultation

There has been no consultation other than with relevant Borough Council Officers.

9. Author of Report

The author of this report is Sue Hanley (Acting Borough Director), who can be contacted on extension 3601 (e-mail sue.hanley@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

10. Appendix 1 - Performance Indicators April 2007 – March 2008



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Overview & Scrutiny
Committee

30th July 2008

7.00pm

Committee Room 2, Town Hall

ITEM 10

APPENDIX ONE

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INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	INDICATOR REFERENCE	2007/08		2006/07 outturn	1 year change	BEST QUARTILE 2006/7	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	Notes
		1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008	TARGET 2007/08							
PRIORITY 1 - Community Safety										
Violent crime per year, per 1,000 population in the Local Authority area	BV127a	20.50	22	23.18	▲	11.4			22.71	
The number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population	BV174	30.21		18.915511	N/A		0	0	3.78	
Number of reported incidents of criminal damage	LPSA2	1,505	1,674	1,678	▲		2,232	1,911	1,738	
Number of reported incidents of domestic burglary	LPSA2	349		313	▼			427	332	
Number of reported incidents of theft of vehicles	LPSA2	204	403	187	▼		443	415	235	
Number of reported incidents of interference or tampering of vehicles	LPSA2	109	196	108	▶◀		215	241	129	
Number of British Crime Survey Comparator crimes reported	CS2	3960	5,007	4110	▲		6069	5199	4,350	
PRIORITY 2 - Environment and Transport										
The percentage of household waste arisings which have been sent by the authority for recycling	BV082a	32.38%	25%	20.23%	▲	24.19%	11.44%	15.88%	16.86%	
Kilogrammes of household waste collected per head	BV084a	374	370	409	▲	380.8	405	416.7	415	
Percentage of population resident in area served by a kerbside recyclable collection	BV091a	94.37%	100%	93.73%	▲	100%	44%	65.55%	82.80%	
Percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	BV109a	50.00%	60%	77.27%	▼	80.71%	18%	61%	63.64%	
Percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	BV109b	85.06%	65%	75.69%	▲	83.66%	36%	65%	81.31%	
Percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	BV109c	90.62%	80%	92.46%	▼	90.62%	55%	77%	88.86%	
The proportion of relevant land and highways (expressed as a percentage) that is assessed as having combined deposits of litter and detritus that fall below an acceptable level	BV199a	5.9%	8%	8.3%	▲	6.0%	13.60%	9.22%	8.11%	

INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	INDICATOR REFERENCE	2007/08		2006/07 outturn	1 year change	BEST QUARTILE 2006/7	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	Notes
		1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008	TARGET 2007/08							
Number of public reports of fly tipping	ET05	1,325	934	943	▼		1620	1487	1,017	
Percentage of scheduled high risk food premises inspections that were completed on time	ET07a	100%	100%	100%	▶◀		87%	70%	100.00%	
Number of Dial-A-Ride passenger trips per year	ET09	39,678	33,500	37,707	▲		19,942	26,254	31,471	
Number of concessionary journeys per year	ET15	1,474,325	1,300,000 per year	1,498,838				960,529	1,241,132	

PRIORITY 3 - Housing

The average length of stay (weeks) in hostel accommodation of households with either dependent children or pregnant women and which are unintentionally homeless and in priority need.	BVPI 183b	10.26	6.85	6.87	▼	0.00	7.8	8.7	11.07	1
Average time (days) to re-let Local Authority Housing	BVPI 212 / LIB 240	34.5	40	29.94 days	▼	25	53.19	60.01	66.14	
Rent arrears as a percentage of rent roll	LIB 231	2.98%	3%	3.49%	▲		2.88%	2.67%	2.56%	
Percentage of urgent repairs completed within Government time limits (Categories A, B and C)	HIP 001	78.20%	95%	77%	▲					
Average time taken to complete non-urgent responsive repairs (Categories D&E)	HIP 002	32 days	25 days	20 days	▼					2

INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	INDICATOR REFERENCE	2007/08		2006/07 outturn	1 year change	BEST QUARTILE 2006/7	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	Notes
		1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008	TARGET 2007/08							
Average relet time (days) for dwellings (excluding those where one of the following applies: no waiting list, long term void, difficult to let, undergoing major repairs)	HH 10	23.44	18	20.64 days	▼				18.69	3.00
Care and Repair - average length of time from first contact to completion (weeks)	HH13	22.42	32	23.69	▲		40.1	41.84	29.21	
Percentage of repairs requiring access to a property for which an appointment has been made	HH 17	85.40%	70%	54.00%	▲				57.14%	
Percentage of repair appointments made that were kept by RBC	HH 18	99.00%	97%	98.00%	▲				98.81%	
PRIORITY 4 - Leisure										
The number of visits to/usages to museums per 1000 population	BVPI 170a	469	215	218.8	▲	928	230	235	220.9	
Total concessionary use	LT 1	56,234	62,526	61,909	▼				31,531	
Sport and Leisure overall satisfaction rate	LT 2	80.61%	80%	76.93%	▲				73.08%	
Average number of visits to facilities per head of population	LT 3	9.02	8	8.51	▲		8.64	8.65	7.56	
PRIORITY 5 - Well Managed Organisation										
The quality of an Authority's Race Equality Scheme (RES) and the improvements resulting from its application	BVPI 2b	79%	85%	79%	▶◀	79%	52%	52%	58%	

INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	INDICATOR REFERENCE	2007/08		2006/07 outturn	1 year change	BEST QUARTILE 2006/7	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	Notes
		1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008	TARGET 2007/08							
Percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid by the Council within 30 days of receipt or within the agreed payment terms	BVPI 8	90.6%	94.5%	94.1%	▼	98.00%	91.00%	91.70%	93.71%	4
The percentage of Council Tax collected by the Authority in the year	BVPI 9	96.97%	98.50%	96.67%	▲	98.60%	98.02%	97.57%	97.79%	5
The percentage of Non-Domestic Rates collected by the Authority in the year	BVPI 10	98.88%	99.65%	99.55%	▼	99.36%	99.29%	99.50%	99.65%	5
The number of working days/shifts lost to the local authority due to sickness absence per FTE staff member	BV012	8.53	9.77	10.62	▲	8.08	13	12.94	11.53	
The average processing time (days) taken for all new Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims submitted to the local authority, for which the date of decision is within the financial year being reported	BVPI 78a	30.4	29	34.49	▲	24	45.07	30.45	35.66	
The average processing time (days) taken for all written notifications to the Local Authority of changes to a claimant's circumstance that require a new decision on behalf of the authority	BVPI 78b	11.9	8	12.9	▲	7.1	9.25	7.4	9.13	
The percentage of cases within a random sample for which the authority's calculation of Housing and Council Tax Benefit is found to be correct	BVPI 79a	98.00%	99.00%	97.60%	▲	99.2%	97.20%	99.00%	98.60%	
The amount of Housing Benefit overpayments recovered as a percentage of all HB overpayments	BVPI 79b(i)	69.46%	87%	no figures available	▼	81.71%			85.93%	
Percentage of new Housing and Council Tax Benefit claims where a decision was made within 14 days of receiving all information	HH 16	81.03%	80%	66.81	▲				61.73%	
One Stop Shop: Customer satisfaction	WMO 3	95.05%	95%	95.46%	▼				92.23%	
Switchboard & Contact Centre: Percentage of calls answered within 20 seconds	WMO 5	81.13%	80%	77.84%	▲				77.49%	

INDICATOR DESCRIPTION	INDICATOR REFERENCE	2007/08		2006/07 outturn	1 year change	BEST QUARTILE 2006/7	2003/04	2004/05	2005/06	Notes
		1st April 2007 to 31st March 2008	TARGET 2007/08							
Notes:										
1. Early intervention work from the new Housing Options Team is resulting in less families requiring temporary accommodation. However, these families who are being placed in the Hostel are staying there longer partly due to the 2 offers they are entitled to under the Housing Allocations Policy. Reducing this to 1 offer will be considered in the next review of the Allocations Policy.										
2. One of the issues with the Priority D's is that there used to be a Priority E category of 65 days which meant the non urgent workload could be spread over a longer period however a decision was taken to cancel that priority as it seemed 65 days was too long a time to quote for a repair. However, based on the volume of work, this needs to be reviewed for the next financial year. There are a number of initiatives being introduced from January including the operative phoning on the day to advise of his visit and text messaging for appointments.										
3. Due to a large number of tenancies being returned in a poor state mainly due to abandonment, the length of time to turn these properties around has been increased as more work is required to return them back into a lettable state. Action is being taken to address this by reviewing the role of the tenancy officer and the tenancy management role and the voids team working more closely with the capital team where larger works are required.										
4. New system implemented March 2007 not yet fully utilised and various training issues (now resolved). Some delays in returning signed invoices by managers.										
5. Shortfall due to human resource issues, arrears from previous years being paid off first and poor Court timetable.										

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Overview & Scrutiny

No Direct Ward Relevance

Committee

30th July 2008

12. WORK PROGRAMME

(Report of the Borough Director)

Date of Meeting	Subject Matter	Officer(s) Responsible for report
ALL MEETINGS	REGULAR ITEMS	(LEAD DIRECTOR - CHRIS SMITH)
	Minutes of previous meeting Consideration of the Forward Plan Consideration of Executive Committee key decisions Call-ins (if any) Pre-scrutiny (if any) Consideration of Overview and Scrutiny Actions List Referrals from Council or Executive Committee, etc. (if any) Task & Finish Groups - feedback Committee Work Programme	Borough Director Borough Director Borough Director Borough Director Borough Director Borough Director Relevant Lead Director Borough Director Borough Director
	REGULAR ITEMS Quarterly Performance Report Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report Review of Service Plans 2009 / 12	Borough Director Borough Director Relevant Lead Director

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	<p>REGULAR ITEMS</p> <p>Oral updates on the progress of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Joint Scrutiny Exercise into Flooding 2. the Role of the Mayor Task and Finish Group; and 3. the Third Sector Task and Finish Group. 	<p>Relevant Lead Directors</p> <p>Relevant Lead Directors</p> <p>Relevant Lead Directors</p>
30th July 2008	<p>REGULAR ITEMS</p> <p>Performance Outturn Report</p>	Relevant Lead Directors
20th August 2008	<p>REGULAR ITEMS</p> <p>Quarterly Performance Report</p>	Relevant Lead Directors
20th August 2008	<p>REGULAR ITEMS</p> <p>Quarterly Budget Report</p>	Relevant Lead Directors
26th November 2008	<p>REGULAR ITEMS</p> <p>Quarterly Performance Report</p>	Relevant Lead Directors
26th November 2008	<p>REGULAR ITEMS</p> <p>Quarterly Budget Report</p>	Relevant Lead Directors

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25th February 2008	REGULAR ITEMS Quarterly Performance Report	Relevant Lead Directors
25th February 2008	REGULAR ITEMS Quarterly Budget Report	Relevant Lead Directors
29th April 2009	REGULAR ITEMS Annual Overview and Scrutiny Report 2008/09	Borough Director
OTHER ITEMS - DATE FIXED		
30th July 2008	Housing and Homelessness Appeals – Update Report on Responses to Recommendations	Relevant Lead Directors
30th July 2008	Housing Mutual Exchange – Scoping Document	Relevant Lead Directors
20th August 2008	Jobs, Employment and Economy – review of scrutiny report	Relevant Lead Directors
20th August 2008	Civil Parking Enforcement – Update Report on Responses to Recommendations	Relevant Lead Directors
4th September 2008	Public Transport – Scoping Document	Relevant Lead Directors

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5th November 2008	Proposed Business Centres Scrutiny Exercise – Member Discussion	Relevant Lead Director
5th November 2008	Fees and Charges Task and Finish Group – Update Report on Responses to Recommendations	Relevant Lead Directors
5th November 2008	Role of the Mayor Task and Finish Group – Reporting Recommendations.	Relevant Lead Directors
26th November 2008	Fishing Tackle Heritage – Scoping Document	Relevant Lead Directors
17th December 2008	Third Sector Task and Finish Group – Reporting Recommendations	Relevant Lead Directors
14th January 2009	District Centres Task and Finish Group – Update Report on Response to Recommendations	Relevant Lead Directors
8th April 2009	Communications Task and Finish Group – Update report on response to recommendations	Relevant Lead Directors
OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED		
	Select Committee – Overview and Scrutiny visit	Relevant Lead Directors
	Community Calls for Action – Discussion	Relevant Lead Director
	Economic Development – Discussion	Relevant Lead Director

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	Education attainment levels - Discussion	Relevant Lead Director
	Review of ditches –discussion	Relevant Lead Director

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