



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thu 5 Dec
2019
6.30 pm

Committee Room Two
Town Hall
Redditch

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GUIDANCE ON PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Council has introduced public speaking at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings, which allows members of the public to comment on agenda items due to be considered at the meeting.

The total maximum time permitted for public speaking is 15 minutes and the time limit for individual speakers is 3 minutes.

Only those members of the public who have registered to speak in advance of the meeting will be permitted to do so.

To register to speak you must contact Democratic Services by phone on 01527 64252 ext 3268, or by email at democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk before 12 noon on the day of the meeting.

When registering to speak you must give your name and contact telephone number and indicate which agenda item you wish to speak about.

**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact
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Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

Thursday, 5th December, 2019

6.30 pm

Committee Room 3 - Town Hall
Redditch

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:

Joe Baker (Chair)
Debbie Chance (Vice-Chair)
Salman Akbar
Joanne Beecham
Michael Chalk

Peter Fleming
Andrew Fry
Mark Shurmer
Jennifer Wheeler

1. Apologies and named substitutes

2. Declarations of interest and of Party Whip

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests and / or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests, and any Party Whip.

3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 20)

4. Public Speaking

To invite members of the public who have registered in advance of the meeting to speak to the Committee.

5. Civil Contingencies Annual Report (Pages 21 - 22)

6. Redditch Partnership Annual Report (Pages 23 - 28)

7. Skills in the Local Workforce - Presentation (Pages 29 - 30)

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8. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme - Selecting Items for Scrutiny (Pages 31 - 48)

The minutes from the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11th November 2019 are attached. The next edition of the Executive Committee's Work Programme is due to be published on 2nd December 2019, after the publication of the agenda for this meeting. The work programme will therefore be published in an Additional Papers pack for Members' consideration.

NOTE: Minute 67 of the Executive Committee minutes contains exempt information which will only be made available to Members and relevant Officers.

Should Members wish to discuss any exempt information contained in this minute in any detail, a decision will be required to exclude the public and press from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, as defined in paragraph 3 of Schedule 12 (a) of Section 100 1 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006. (Paragraph 3: Subject to the "public interest" test, information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).)

The next edition of the Executive Work Programme is due to be published on Monday 2nd December 2019, after the publication of the agenda for this meeting. This document will therefore be published for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in a supplementary pack for the meeting.

9. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 49 - 52)

10. Task Group Reviews - Draft Scoping Documents

11. Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel - Chair's Update Report (Pages 53 - 58)

12. Task Groups, Short Sharp Reviews and Working Groups - Update Reports

- a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Wheeler
- b) Parking Enforcement Task Group – Chair, Councillor Mark Shurmer
- c) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Andrew Fry
- d) Suicide Prevention Scrutiny Task Group – Chair, Councillor Debbie Chance

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13. External Scrutiny Bodies - Update Reports

- a) West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Council representative, Councillor Chalk; and
- b) Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) – Council representative, Councillor Chalk.

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MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Joe Baker (Chair), Councillor Debbie Chance (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Salman Akbar, Michael Chalk, Peter Fleming, Andrew Fry, Nyear Nazir, Yvonne Smith and Jennifer Wheeler

Also Present:

Councillor David Thain (Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management)
 Reverend Robin Baker (Oasis Christian Centre)
 Mr Jorden Cooke (Your Ideas Youth and Community Project)
 Mr Ray Groves (RYCE)
 Ms Maureen Hayden (What's Your Point)
 Mr Tom Rossiter (Redditch Boxing Academy)
 Ms Liz Williams (Fighting for Survival Group)

Officers:

Matthew Austin, Lyndsey Berry, Chris Forrester, Sue Hanley, Ostap Paparega, Guy Revans, Judith Willis and Richard Woodward

Senior Democratic Services Officer:

J Bayley

43. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Joanne Beecham and Mark Shurmer and it was confirmed that Councillors Nyear Nazir and Yvonne Smith were attending as their substitutes respectively.

44. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

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 Chair

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45. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Thursday 24th October 2019 be held as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

46. PUBLIC SPEAKING

The Committee welcomed six public speakers to the meeting, who were invited to speak to the Committee in turn. In some cases a written record of the individual's speech was also provided for Council records. The speeches as delivered during the meeting, which lasted for a maximum of three minutes each and might therefore, not reflect the full length of the points residents had recorded in advance of the meeting, are recreated below.

a) Mr Ray Groves – RYCE

"It has often been said that the best decisions are made when you have the clearest and best-informed information possible. Unfortunately, tonight you have got the worst. This report is devoid of any suggestion as to the inevitable costs to Redditch Borough Council that will far exceed these so called savings. There are no risk analyses; what happens if the Batchley Support Group closes? What impact will that have on the area? Will the schools provide meals during the summer break or will the Council have to step in and provide staff and facilities or will you let hungry children wander the streets looking for food? Likewise, if the Boxing Academy closes what happens to the individuals who currently use the facilities?

On the 16th October in the houses of Parliament Rachel Maclean said, as reported by Hansard: "I was delighted to see the focus on youth services because as I have said, anti-social behaviour often happens because there is nowhere for young people to go. We need to focus on those services in our local communities so that there is somewhere constructive for people to go. We have some fantastic services in Redditch. We have a wonderful Boxing Academy that takes young people off the streets and teaches them fun, useful and constructive skills. That is a great initiative but we need more like it across town."

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With over 100 individuals left to wander the streets how many more police will be needed to patrol the area? I could go on and talk about The Space, the shops run by Oasis Church. What happens if these units close? The retail sector is in trouble as has been highlighted by Bon Marche, Maplins and Mothercare; it is very doubtful if they can be let on a strictly commercial basis, meaning even more derelict units will invade our shopping areas.

Why is there nothing in this report about the money that the voluntary groups save the Council? Why isn't the £28k set against this saving? Surely the Council could have looked at the Social Return on Investments – SROI is an internationally accepted way of showing how much worth the voluntary sector provides, that ultimately saves public money.”

b) Ms Liz Williams – Fighting for Survival Group

“For those of you that don't know me I'm Liz Williams, and I am speaking on behalf of the Fighting for Survival Group. Firstly can I just say thank you to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee for listening.

We welcome the decision of the Executive Committee to delay consideration of the Concessionary Rents Policy until their meeting in January 2020, the offer made to talk to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) about the affect this will have on the sector and to try and reach a resolution.

However, having read the Public Document Pack from the Executive Committee meeting held on 29th October 2019 and future papers for the meeting on the 11th November 2019, we believe that the creation of the report has not followed due process and should be withdrawn completely and be brought forward after the negotiations with the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) have been completed and alternative funding methods have been fully examined and implications and costings fully detailed.

Across the documents I have referenced above there appear:

- 1 x Cross Party Working Group
- 1 x detailed budget framework document
- 2 x reviews
- 4 x Advisory Panels

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- 3 x fully costed and 1 partially costed financial implications.
- 6 x fully evidenced legal implications
- 1 x fully detailed service / operational implications
- 5 x sufficient customer / equalities implications
- 1 x full consultation with those affected
- 1 x equality impact assessment, although it is not appended to the report.
- 1 x Action Plan
- 1 x detailed appraisal of costs generated by Council decisions
- 2 x scrutiny groups
- 2 x Task Groups
- 5 x sufficient risk management implications
- 2 x consultants' reports

In the Concessionary Rents report.

And further:

- 1) Ward Councillors were not consulted about this report. Surely something that has the potential to affect so many residents should have been at least talked about with ward Councillors. In particular, focussing on those representing Matchborough, Winyates and Greenlands, where we think six of the nine groups affected are based.
- 2) The Executive Summary contains no reference to why this report was written.
- 3) The recommendations contain no other options to the proposal made.
- 4) There is no financial information about how the shortfall figure was arrived at.
- 5) There is no reference to the Council's strategic purposes when obviously the VCS in Redditch contributes heavily towards the achievement of these.
- 6) There appears to have been no discussion with partner agencies or the Redditch Partnership by Redditch Borough Council, considering this will also impact heavily on them as well.
- 7) There is no detail about how the transitional arrangement in the appendix is arrived at.
- 8) How many properties are actually affected and where are they?
- 9) How many leases have expired? How can expired leases be changed as the occupants of these properties are tenants at will.

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- 10) No letters were ever received advising us that changes to the policy will be made in the near future. This therefore denied the VCS any opportunity to discuss with the Council what this would actually mean?
- 11) An Equalities Impact Assessment has been conducted. Where is it?"

c) Reverend Robin Baker – Acts of Kindness and Oasis Christian Centre

"I am Reverend Robin Baker. I believe that many of you know who I am but for those of you who don't, I set up the charity Acts of Kindness that runs the Redditch Foodbank and I am the Church Minister of Oasis Christian Centre. The church is currently operating two charity shops – one in Winyates that we have had for nearly nine years and one in Woodrow for nearly six years.

I am obviously wanting to talk about the removal of the concessionary rents that affects the three shop units that we use – one for the foodbank and two for our charity shops.

These charity shops are vital to the community. Amongst many benefits for the community, they offer:

- 1) Low-cost retail to people on very low incomes.
- 2) Employment for five people.
- 3) Volunteer opportunities for over 30 people, some of whom have special needs and have not been able to get opportunities elsewhere in Redditch as other support groups have closed down. We also offer many opportunities for work experience students; again some have not been able to get placements elsewhere.
- 4) Meeting places for many people who suffer from social isolation and find it very difficult to engage elsewhere: We have spent years building up their trust and confidence. We offer a lifeline for them. Many of them suffer from mental health issues and have very few other places to go to or feel able to. There are a number of people who have attempted suicide who use our shops. It is impossible to second guess what will happen to them if our shops close, but it will certainly be another major blow for them.
- 5) A core community hub: Many people travel from all over Redditch to benefit from the services provided by the shops.

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- 6) A place free of charge for groups to meet for social interaction. Some examples include PACT and knitting groups.
- 7) Low cost tea, coffee and cakes for those people who cannot afford to go to more expensive cafes and coffee shops.
- 8) Partnership with a number of agencies who often ask us to provide clothes, bedding and kitchen items to people who are being rehoused free of charge.
- 9) Reduction to landfill by recycling clothes and bric-a-brac. This helps save the environment.
- 10) Fully finance other projects: One such example is a weekly feeding programme where up to 50 addicts or lonely people have a warm and friendly place to socialise and eat. For a number of them this is the only hot meal they get a week. We also help fund young people's activities, subsidising activities that would otherwise not be affordable.
- 11) Funding for a youth community worker who has worked with children who struggle with school, and also with mental health issues. Some of the children have attempted suicide. The youth worker has also worked with children who have special needs in schools by running one-to-one sessions on the school premises.

It is important to make you all aware that 100 per cent of all the income generated from these shops comes back into Redditch, for the people of Redditch."

d) Mr Tom Rossiter – Redditch Boxing Academy

"I'm here for Redditch Boxing Academy. I've been a coach for five months and realised how important it is. Over 300 people come a week. We cover areas such as self-defence, raising awareness of how to oppose violence and aggression, and different types of boxing.

I have personally experienced the difference it can make. Last year I was over 18 stone and depressed. I found that the only way to address my mental health issues was to lose weight. I went to the boxing club where I wasn't judged but made to feel better about myself. I lost over 7 stone and my self-esteem improved. A lot of people are in similar situations. If this place closed down who knows where they'd be. It would leave a void that for me was filled by Redditch Boxing Academy.

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Young people, if they're out and about with nothing to do, can get involved in anti-social behaviour and crime. By getting involved with Redditch Boxing Academy it's given me an opportunity to be a youth coach."

e) Ms Maureen Hayden – What's Your Point

"I'm representing the people of Woodrow. We work with people in a high area of deprivation. Their voice often isn't heard. When we have to reorganise we have to think of those in communities with the biggest difficulties. We offer people a first port of call and we save the Council a lot of money.

There's high risk mental health issues and lots of self-harm. Mental health services are very limited. Children are falling through the cracks and families are struggling. We need to be mindful of this."

f) Mr Jorden Cooke – Your Ideas

"I'm a Project Manager for Your Ideas. I have been running the project for 11 years. This will directly impact us at a cost of £14,000 per annum. I'd welcome anyone to see the work we do. I'm keen to showcase our story and to talk through our challenges in the building.

I'm disappointed that we did not find out about the proposals directly from Redditch Borough Council but rather from Liz in a campaign email. We have been commissioned by Redditch Borough Council on a number of occasions to provide youth services in the community. Despite these links there was no communication and we never received the letters.

We support over 300 children per week and provide lots of services. For example we provide youth services supporting young people who are not in employment, education or training (NEETs) and we work with people on the autistic spectrum. Since the news reached the public domain we have had a number of parents and autistic people with anxiety. Parents are worried about losing one of the few organisations they trust.

We'd like to work with Redditch Borough Council."

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47. CONCESSIONARY RENTS - DISCUSSION

The Head of Community Services presented a position statement in respect of the Council's Concessionary Rents Policy. Members were advised that the item had been withdrawn from the Executive Committee's agenda for the meeting of the Committee that took place on 29th October 2019. Officers were proposing to meet with representatives of the VCS. This meeting had not yet been arranged but would provide an opportunity for discussions to take place. A report in respect of the Council's Concessionary Rents Policy would subsequently be considered at a meeting of the Executive Committee due to take place on 14th January 2020.

The Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, Councillor David Thain, who was the Portfolio Holder with lead responsibility for the Concessionary Rents Policy, was also in attendance at the meeting for this item. He confirmed the points raised by Officers and advised all those present that the Executive Committee was listening and would continue to listen to information provided by VCS groups in respect of this matter.

Following the presentation of the position statement for the Council's Concessionary Rents Policy a number of points were discussed by Members:

- The reasons why a report had not been submitted for the consideration of the Committee in respect of this matter. Officers explained, that as discussed at the previous meeting of the Committee, it was not possible to provide a report at this stage as the matter was not due to be considered by the Executive Committee until January 2020.
- The Council's approach to communicating with affected representatives of the VCS prior to the publication of the report that had been withdrawn from the 29th October 2019 and the reasons why many VCS organisations had reported that they had not received any correspondence. Officers explained that they had understood that letters had been issued to groups and apologised for any cases where letters had not been received.
- The potential for representatives of VCS groups to raise concerns about any potential changes to the Council's Concessionary Rents Policy by speaking at that meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- The value of compassion in making decisions that would impact on VCS groups and the people they served.

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- The people who had spoken at the meeting in respect of the Council's Concessionary Rents Policy. Members thanked those who had spoken at the meeting for doing so.

At the end of the debate about this item Members proposed a recommendation. To ensure that the recommendation was considered at the appropriate time Members agreed that this recommendation should be presented for the consideration of the Executive Committee alongside the Concessionary Rents Policy report in January 2020.

RECOMMENDED that

the Executive Committee abolish the idea of removing concessionary rent relief for Voluntary and Community Sector groups and instead looks at alternative methods of funding the shortfall in the Council's budget.

(At the end of this item there was a brief adjournment, which lasted from 7.15 pm to 7.23 pm).

48. PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION (COMMUNITY HUB AND RAILWAY QUARTER) - TO FOLLOW

The Head of the North Worcestershire Economic Development Service presented a report in respect of the regeneration of Redditch town centre. During the presentation of this item the following matters were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- The report captured the outcomes of a master planning exercise and the key points of a business case for a public sector community hub. The reports produced by the consultants Dragongate and BDP had been provided in appendices to the report for Members' consideration.
- BDP had focused on a number of site options that might be appropriate and financially viable.
- The documents provided indicative reviews and high level appraisals in order to enable an understanding of the nature and scale of the opportunities available for the regeneration of the town centre.
- The viability of establishing a community hub as a one-stop-shop had been assessed and there had been three key objectives to this review; to deliver a better, user focused public service, provide business efficiencies and to make better use of public land.

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- The Council had held conversations with a number of partners in the public sector, including the Clinical Commissioning Group (CCG), Worcestershire County Council and representatives of the NHS trust.
- The initial feedback that had been received from partners about the potential to work together to introduce a public sector hub had been very encouraging.
- The government had announced that Redditch would be eligible to bid for up to £25 million in funding from the Towns Fund.
- The prospectus for the Towns Fund had been published after the report before Members. This prospectus clarified that the Council would need to prepare an Investment Plan to access funding from the Towns Fund.
- The Council would undertake consultation with the public, in accordance with the requirements of the Towns Fund, in order to establish what residents felt the funding should be allocated to.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed a number of areas in detail:

- The work that had been undertaken in respect of this matter since the One Public Estate report was considered by Members in March 2018 and the reasons why time was needed to progress with the project. The committee was informed that the process was progressing well and at a speed in line with standard practice.
- The options appraisal that had been undertaken by the consultants and why those particular options had been considered. Officers explained that both officers and the consultants were required to consider all viable options in line with professional standards.
- The State of the Area debates that had been undertaken and whether all wards had been consulted. Officers advised that there had been a two-day event held in May 2019 in the Town Hall, which had been attended by senior Officers and 70 members of the public. Officers had also attended a meeting of the Redditch Community Forum to consult about the plans.
- The extent to which small businesses had been consulted about the proposals for the regeneration of the town centre. Members were advised that further consultation had not yet been undertaken as the plans were only at an indicative stage. When specific proposals were brought forward these would be subject to consultation.

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- The potential for the Council to secure funding from the Towns Fund and the amount of funding that might be available. Officers explained that up to £25 million was available to Redditch and the Council would need to submit an Investment Plan to secure this funding.
- The requirements for applications for funding from the Towns Fund. Members were advised that the guidance for the fund did not stipulate that organisations would have to apply for funding on a competitive bidding basis. There was the potential that this might be a requirement set out in future guidance.
- The additional funding that was available from the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP). Members were informed that the LEP could provide funding from the Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) Enabling Fund to support feasibility studies for the next stage of the development. A call for applications was expected to be launched in the following weeks.
- The inclusion of the Smallwood House site in the plans for regenerating the town centre and the potential for social housing to be provided either in that building or immediately behind the property. The Committee was advised that any decisions about social housing would be determined in accordance with the Council's planning policy rules.
- The extent to which partner organisations were likely to join the Council in a public sector community hub. Officers advised that conversations had been held with partner organisations and would continue to take place.
- The potential for the town centre regeneration project to be delivered according to budget. Officers explained that the preliminary work that was being undertaken was designed to enable the Council to manage risks and identify constraints. This would help the Council to more accurately assess likely costs when any work commenced.
- The need for Redditch town centre to be regenerated and the benefits that this might have in respect of the impact on the local economy and the community.
- The initial plans to introduce a covered walkway between the railway station and the Kingfisher Shopping Centre and the reasons why this had not been progressed. The Committee noted that this proposal had not been considered financially viable. Furthermore, by not acting on this idea alternative schemes that encouraged people to both visit the shopping centre and other parts of the town centre could be explored.
- The financial assumptions in the report and the extent to which the changes to interest rates announced by the Public Works

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Loans Board (PWLB) impacted on this. Officers explained that the figures had been reviewed since the Dragongate report was published to ensure that the projections were based on realistic expectations that reflected current market arrangements. Further assessment of the figures would be required over time in response to any later changes.

- The potential for funding to be provided by the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) to support the project.
- The need for developers to invest in the project as part of the regeneration works.
- The hard work that had already been undertaken by Officers. Members thanked officers for their work.

During consideration of this matter reference was made to the redevelopment of Church Hill district centre some years previously and the outcomes of this project. Concerns were raised that ward Councillors had not been consulted as part of this process and that this would have benefited the redevelopment of the centre. It was therefore proposed that the relevant ward Councillors should be consulted as the redevelopment of the town centre progressed. However, in discussing this proposal Members noted that the regeneration of Redditch town centre would be significant to all Councillors, regardless of the ward that they represented, due to the importance of the town centre to all residents. Members also noted that there was the possibility that all Councillors would be consulted as the plans progressed. At the end of the debate Members agreed that the fourth proposal in the report should be amended to require consultation with all Councillors

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the Council note the BDP Town Centre Sites report and endorses the concept of a comprehensive regeneration scheme for the station quarter, Church Road sites, the Library site and the outdoor market site;**
- 2) **the Council agrees the content of the Dragongate Community Hub Business Case and BDP's Redditch Town Centre Development Sites Final Report be used as a basis for submitting a proposal to the Towns Fund; and**

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- 3) the Council agrees that the content of the Dragongate Community Hub Business Case and BDP's Redditch Town Centre Development Sites Final Report be used as a basis for submitting a bid to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) Enabling Fund.
- 4) the findings of the state of the area debate are noted, officers are instructed to produce a future consultation plan related to the town centre regeneration programme and that all Councillors are consulted;
- 5) the content of the Dragongate Community Hub business case (appendix 2) be noted and the Executive Committee endorse the concept of a Community Hub within the Public Sector and Culture quarter;
- 6) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive after consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships to commission an architect-led professional team to draw up feasible and deliverable design proposals supported by viability appraisals for a Community Hub, to include consideration of partners' requirements; and
- 7) subject to the agreement of recommendation 1 above, authority be delegated to the Chief Executive after consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships to work with key partners on the wider initiatives.

49. RENT ARREARS - BRIEFING NOTE

The Head of Community Services presented a briefing note in respect of rent arrears for Council properties. This briefing note had been drafted for Members' consideration following a request for further information on the subject that had been made at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee in July 2019.

The Council gathered year-end figures for the consideration of the government. The figures indicated that the Council was in the average quartile compared to other local authorities with their own housing stock in terms of rent arrear levels. The rent collection rate was 99.5 per cent at the Council, which was also in line with the

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national average. At the Council the trend was downwards in terms of rent arrears and this was monitored by a measure on the authority's dashboard.

Members noted that in the last 18 months significant progress had been made in reducing the time spent on processing void properties for new tenants which had had a positive impact on income. Officers were anticipating that these faster times for processing void properties would continue as standard practice for the Council.

During consideration of this item reference was made to the fact that tenants were required to pay rent over a 48 week period rather than for the full 52 weeks of the year and the potential to extend the timescales was briefly debated. However, Members were advised that research undertaken by the Council had discovered that the 48 week rent payment period was useful as it provided tenants with an opportunity to catch up with their rent payments.

Reference was also made to the decision that had been taken some years previously to require local authorities to reduce rent for Council tenants by 1 per cent per annum over a four year period. Officers confirmed that 2019/20 was the last year in which this requirement applied and the Council would therefore have the ability to increase rents in future years.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

50. WASTE SERVICES - PRESENTATION

The Head of Environmental Services and the Environmental Services Manager delivered a brief presentation in respect of waste management. During the delivery of this presentation the following points were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- The presentation that had been included in the agenda for the meeting had been presented for the consideration of the Leaders and relevant Portfolios Holders for Herefordshire and Worcestershire Councils earlier in the year.
- Historically there had been good partnership working across Herefordshire and Worcestershire in respect of waste management.
- Waste prevention was at the heart of the approach to waste management adopted by the local authorities in both counties.

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- Prevention was the main priority of the Council, followed by reuse. Disposal of waste at landfill was a last resort.
- The amount of waste disposed of per household in Redditch was slightly higher than the national average.
- The level of recycling per household was slightly lower in Redditch than the national average but levels of dry recycling were slightly higher.
- All of the district Councils in Worcestershire had a system of fortnightly waste collections and a chargeable garden waste service as of 2019.
- Kerbside recycling was delivered to EnviroSort in Norton, Worcestershire where materials were mechanically sorted. Garden waste was delivered to Pershore in Worcestershire.
- The cost of waste collection services across Herefordshire and Worcestershire each year was £61 million.
- The government was in the process of consulting on a new national waste strategy.
- Earlier in the year the government had consulted on a waste responsibility scheme.
- As part of this process the government was considering requiring all responsible local authorities to collect the same items for recycling so that there would be a consistent approach across the country.
- The government had also consulted on the potential to introduce weekly food waste collections.
- A further consultation had been held in respect of the potential to introduce a plastic tax on packaging and to introduce a requirement for all packaging to be recyclable.
- The Council had responded to the majority of consultation processes, except for that in relation to packaging which was less relevant to the work of the local authority.
- The consultation outcomes had been published.
- In the published results it had been revealed that there was overwhelming support across the country for the introduction of a core collection service as this would help to provide clarity to the public in respect of the materials that should be recycled. This had also featured in the Environment Bill that had been progressing through legislative stages until the general election had been called.
- In total 80 per cent of people had thought that a free garden waste collection service would be helpful but only 20 per cent of Councils had welcomed the idea of a free garden waste collection service. The government had announced that this would be reviewed further.

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- In respect of weekly food collections, 80 per cent of people had supported the idea, as had 68 per cent of Councils, though 46 per cent of local authorities already provided this service. The Councils in Herefordshire and Worcestershire had responded to the consultation by suggesting that it would be better to prevent the food waste. The Environment Bill that had been progressing through parliament prior to the announcement of the general election was going to legislate for a weekly food waste collection service.

Once the presentation had been delivered Members discussed the following matters in detail:

- The EnviroSort centre and the potential for Members to visit this facility in order to learn more about the Council's waste management service.
- The possible financial costs to the Council arising from providing a weekly food collection service and how this would be funded. Officers explained that the government had announced that it would cover the net costs of this service but it was uncertain how this would be arranged or how long that funding would be available for in the future. It was anticipated that a weekly food waste collection service in Redditch would cost between £600,000 and £1 million to deliver.
- The levels of reuse in Redditch and how this compared to recycling levels. Members were advised that there were 120 tonnes of waste that was reused each year.
- The history in terms of fortnightly recycling and waste collection services in Redditch.
- The potential for a weekly food waste collection service to encourage waste. The Committee was advised that there were 50,000 tonnes of food waste generated in the area every year.
- The benefits of encouraging residents to reduce the amount of waste generated by each household and the value of taking preventative action. Officers explained that the Council contributed to events arranged by Worcestershire County Council where residents were encouraged to reduce waste. There was also a website that was promoted by the Council entitled "Let's Weigh Less".
- The extent to which food waste collection services had been successfully trialled by other councils. Members were advised that Wychavon District Council had had a food waste collection service some years ago but there had been low take up and this had ceased to be provided.

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At the end of the debate the Committee

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

51. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

The Committee discussed the content of the latest edition of the Executive Committee's Work Programme and identified the following items for pre-decision scrutiny:

- Fees and Charges 2020/21
- Housing / Housing Revenue Account Strategic Improvement Plan Progress Report
- Concessionary Rents Policy
- Members' ICT Policy. The Committee noted that this item was also due to be considered by the Member Support Steering Group and outlined requirements in respect of elected Councillors' ICT provision.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 29th October 2019 be noted; and**
- 2) the items identified from the Executive Committee's Work Programme, as detailed in the preamble above, be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme.**

52. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

Officers advised that the items that had been identified for pre-scrutiny earlier in the meeting would be added to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

It was confirmed that an extra meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been booked to take place on Monday 16th December 2019. This would provide Members with an opportunity to pre-scrutinise reports that were due to be considered by the Executive Committee on Thursday 19th December 2019. There was also a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee due to take place on 5th December 2019. As there were a number of items

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scheduled for consideration on this date Members agreed that this meeting should take place.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

53. TASK GROUP REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

Officers confirmed that there were no draft scoping documents for consideration on this occasion.

54. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS

The following updates were provided in respect of the work of scrutiny Task Groups and Working Groups:

- a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jenny Wheeler

Councillor Wheeler explained that the group had held a number of meetings since the last meeting of the Committee. During these meetings the group had considered information about the Section 24 Notice. Members had concluded that at a challenging time financially for the Council the Budget Scrutiny Working Group had an important role to play in terms of providing assurance to the Executive Committee and scrutinising any plans that might have significant financial implications for the Council.

Redditch Borough Council had an Investment and Acquisition Strategy. Under the terms of this strategy it had been agreed that the Executive Committee should have delegated powers to approve any proposed investments and acquisitions, to ensure that decisions could be taken swiftly in a competitive commercial environment. So far two investments had been approved by the Executive Committee but neither of these had been subject to budget scrutiny. The PWLB had increased borrowing costs and the Council was in a challenging financial position. Councillor Wheeler suggested that in this context the Budget Scrutiny Working Group could add value by scrutinising proposed investments to ensure that the financial projections for each option were sound.

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The group had also noted that, following the publication of the Section 24 Notice, difficult decisions would need to be made in order to balance the Council's budget. To enable Members to make financially viable decisions the group was proposing that additional information needed to be provided in the financial implications of reports to Committee. Officers noted that it would be helpful for this additional information to be required where appropriate and this suggestion was endorsed.

- b) Parking Enforcement Task Group – Chair, Councillor Mark Shurmer

Officers explained that it was unlikely that any further meetings of the group would take place until after the general election had occurred on 12th December 2019. The Chair had therefore requested that the deadline for completion of the review be moved back to 2020.

- c) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Andrew Fry

Councillor Fry advised that there had been no meeting of the group since the previous meeting of the Committee.

- d) Suicide Prevention Task Group – Chair, Councillor Debbie Chance

Councillor Chance explained that there were two meetings of the group due to take place in November. It was unlikely that the group would hold any meetings in December. Therefore, the review was likely to be completed in early 2020.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **business cases for new investment and acquisition opportunities for the Council should all be considered by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group before a decision is taken by the Executive Committee;**
- 2) **the financial implications detailed in reports to the Executive Committee should address the following points as a minimum where appropriate:**
 - a) **the financial costs of the proposed action;**
 - b) **the source of funding for the proposed action;**

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- c) potential alternative options and the financial costs of each alternative option; and
- d) the financial costs to the Council where the proposed action deviates from previous Council policy; and

RESOLVED that

- 3) the deadline for completion of the Parking Enforcement Task Group be postponed to early 2020.

55. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS

Members noted that Councillor Chalk had provided a written update in respect of the latest meeting of the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

There had been no meetings of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) since the previous meeting.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 8.19 pm

CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ANNUAL UPDATE

SCOPE

Following the Civil Contingencies Short Sharp Review Final Report the Overview and Scrutiny Committee considered the group's proposals at a meeting on 5th March 2018. During this meeting the Committee endorsed the group's recommendations that:

- The content of the Council's emergency plan should be reviewed on an annual basis; and
- Receive an annual update in respect of the Council's emergency planning arrangements.

SERVICE UPDATE

The role holder, Rebecca Pritchett undertook maternity leave between the end of December 18 and November 19. During this period maternity cover was provided by Helen Burton from May - November 19, for three days a week.

REVIEW OF INTERNAL ARRANGEMENTS

The following arrangements were published following approval by the Corporate Management Team in November 2018:

- Corporate Emergency Plan
- Corporate Business Continuity Plan
- Redditch Borough & Bromsgrove District Council Rest Centre Operational Annex
- Bromsgrove and Redditch Flooding Response Framework
- Three debrief report suggested action plans.

DUTY OFFICER CADRE

In order to increase the resilience of the duty officer cadre the pool of personnel has been expanded by 12. As such they have all been provided 121 training in the use of the multi-agency Resilience Direct incident response system.

TRAINING & EXERCISING

RESILIENCE DIRECT- MONTHLY

Each member of staff on RD are also being asked to participate in the monthly 'Exercise Telstar' as a means to keep familiar with the system. This requires 5 minutes on the first Thursday of each

**CIVIL
CONTINGENCIES
ANNUAL
UPDATE
(CONTINUED)**

month, to login & complete an agency report.

REST CENTRE PLAN – JUNE 19

A real time communication test of the contacts listed within the plan was carried out and identified errors and areas for training. The contact details were updated in the plan.

LOGGIST TRAINING- OCT 19

Four officers undertook training provided by Worcester City Council.

BUSINESS CONTINUITY EXERCISE: CYBER INCIDENT

The exercise scheduled for December 19 to test the Corporate Business Continuity Plan regarding a Cyber scenario has been rescheduled to 2020 due to a conflict with the General Election.

Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy – Overview and Scrutiny Monitoring Report – December 2019

Redditch Community Sustainable Strategy (SCS)

The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy is the strategy produced by Redditch Partnership which sets out the strategic direction for Redditch and how partners can contribute to achieving a shared vision for the Borough. The current Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) was pre-scrutinised in March 2011 with the final Strategy gaining approval by full Council on 28th March 2011. Originally the Strategy was in place for 3 years. A mini refresh of the SCS priorities was undertaken during 2015 with the outcome that a few minor changes were made to the priorities. Since then there has been a short assessment of the priorities undertaken each year by the Partnership.

The current vision of the Strategy is:

‘Redditch will be successful and vibrant with communities that have access to good job opportunities, good education, good health and are communities that people will be proud to live and work in’.

The four current priorities of the SCS are:

Priority One	Health Inequalities	Focus is on following issues: smoking, alcohol, drugs; obesity / healthy lifestyles and mental health and wellbeing.
Priority Two	Education attainment, school readiness and raising aspirations of young people.	Focus is on three issues: improving literacy and numeracy; raising aspirations; and improve statistical levels of attainment particularly for Early Years and Key Stage 2.
Priority Three	The economy of Redditch with a focus on providing a larger and more diverse job offer.	Focus is on three broad issues: promotion of Redditch as a business location; jobs and worklessness; and fostering economic ambition in young people.
Priority Four	Lead on transformational change of services for citizens in Redditch	Focus is on carrying on some of the legacy work of the Connecting Families programme and identifying any further opportunities for transformational work across partners systems.

Redditch Partnership

The SCS is overseen by a group of strategic partners working in Redditch (see structure diagram appended to this report). This group used to be known as the Redditch Partnership Board but since April 2014, the group has been slightly reconfigured and is now known as Redditch Partnership Executive Group (RPEG). The Group is chaired by Naomi Manning from Worcestershire Health and Care Trust.

Sitting underneath this group are other groups including the Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust (RCWT). This is a Thematic Group looking at issues regarding children and young people and also health issues. This group oversees the Redditch Health and Wellbeing Plan. Please see the appended structure chart which shows the groups linked into Redditch Partnership.

Redditch Partnership Executive Group (RPEG)

The role of RPEG is to provide strategic direction in Redditch on the priorities and also provide guidance and influence on key commissioned services, projects and initiatives rolled out across Worcestershire which have an impact of the residents of Redditch.

In March 2017 RPEG held an away day with the purpose of refocussing its work. The key message to come out of the this away day was that RPEG should focus on one issue for a time limited period to make as big an impact on that issue as possible. It was decided during 2017-18 that for the foreseeable future the focus of the group should be on mental health and wellbeing in Redditch. Some of the work conducted in 2018 focussed on this and utilised systems transformation processes and the Connecting Families approach to look at a case study. This case study was of a single male who lived in RBC housing stock and who was receiving support from a number of agencies including mental health services and drug and alcohol services. Journey mapping of his life was undertaken and points where he could have been assisted more effectively were identified. RBC is now looking at this case study further with locality officers with a view to identifying how as an authority we can work better with cases such as these.

Redditch Economic Development Theme Group (REDTG)

This group is currently in the process of being refreshed. Previously this Group was chaired by Elected Members and included business reps, and officers from North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration.

There was an Action Plan with four priorities which were:

- Enterprising - nurturing existing businesses. Encouraging future entrepreneurs to start up their own business.
- Vibrant - enhancing the retail, leisure and residential offer within Redditch town centre. Improving the environment and urban fabric of the area.
- Confident - Positively promoting Redditch as a place to live, work, invest and visit and help to change perceptions of the area, encourage new inward investment into Redditch and positioning Redditch on the regional and national stage.
- Skilled - Improving the aspirations of our younger population, re-skilling and up-skilling our workforce to meet the future demands of employers, and creating a higher wage economy.

The new group is looking to carry on some of these work streams but is starting out with a different approach. The group is being grown by businesses themselves and being chaired by a local businessman (the CEO of FaunZoeller). The aim of the group is to focus on skills especially in young people and starting with a specific project around business mentors working with children in schools.

Redditch Community Wellbeing Trust (RCWT)

The RCWT holds meetings every two months. Meetings consist of discussion of items for information around health inequalities, children and young people and older people and also an element of identifying needs and actions to help with their action planning. Recent issues discussed at the RCWT include the work of Papyrus around suicide in young people, BARN's young people's volunteering project, and the Early Help Strategy.

The Positive Activities Sub Group used to exist as a group as part of the Partnership but has been superseded by the Youth Forum. This was developed by the community in particular by community member Sue Yeng. It is now chaired by Pete Sugg who is the lead officer for Young Solutions (an umbrella group for VCS organisations whose focus is on children and young people). They are currently focusing on bidding for the next tranche of Positive Activities funding from Worcestershire County Council.

Information and Data

One aspect of the Redditch Partnership Manager role is to, where possible, disseminate information and data about Redditch. One useful document produced yearly which gives information about priorities for the area around wider determinants of health is the Health Profile. The 2019 version can be found [here](#). There is also a useful tool which enables users to look find data at small area geographies called "Local Health" – this is available [here](#).

Wellbeing in Partnership Newsletter

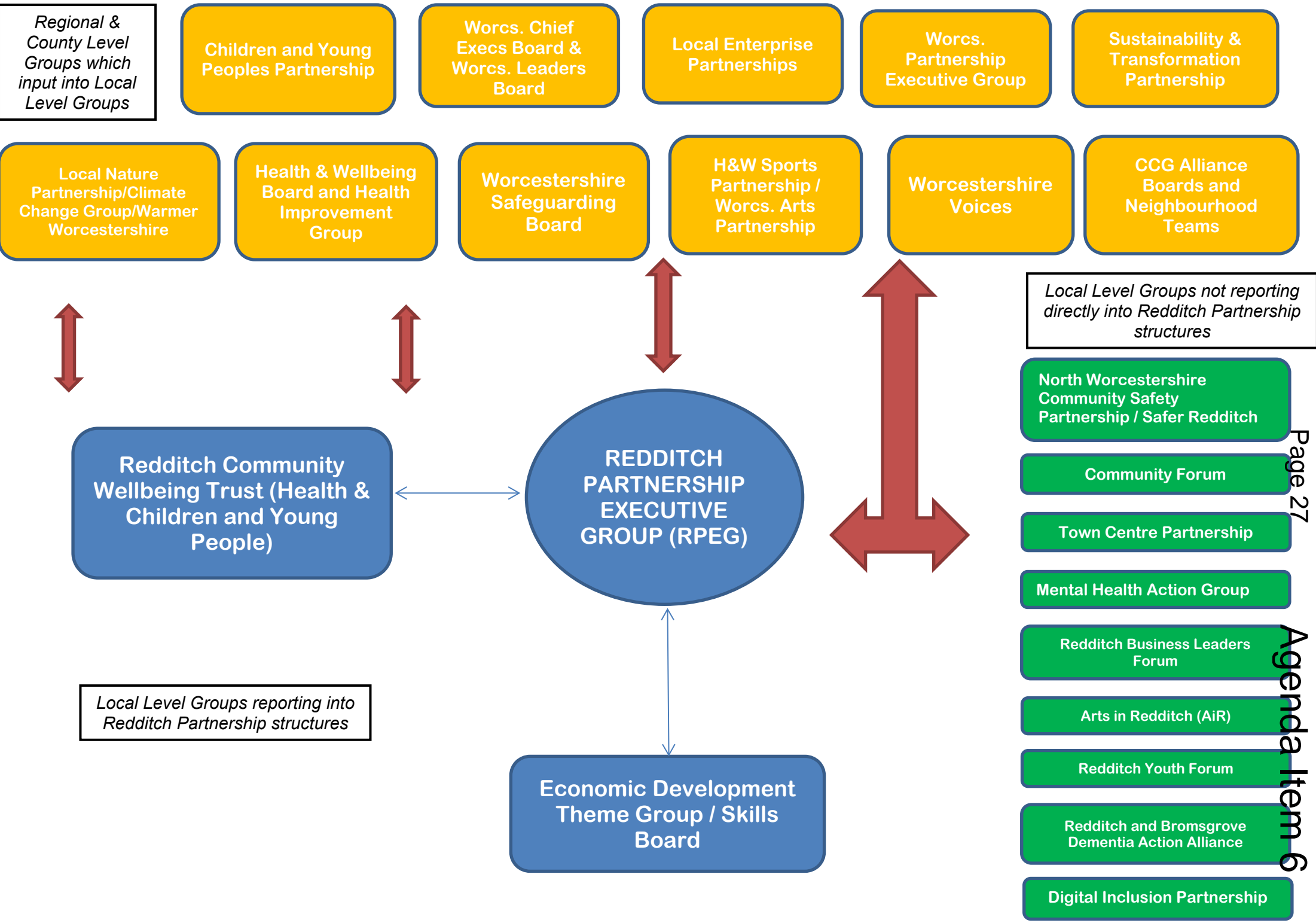
The "Wellbeing in Partnership" Newsletter continues to be published on a monthly basis with the aim of providing information about strategic issues and local projects/initiatives being undertaken across both Redditch and Bromsgrove. It was envisaged the newsletter would act as one way of ensuring partners and locally elected Members were better informed about activity in their local area. Both Bromsgrove and Redditch Members should be receiving this newsletter but the current and previous copies can be accessed on the Redditch Partnership website.

Redditch and Bromsgrove Directory of Services (Knowledge Bank)

A directory of services building on current directories produced by the Council's Customer Service Team and the Parenting and Family Support Service has been created. The Council's IT development team assist on the technical side of this while officers including Customer Services, Parenting and Family Support, Redditch and Bromsgrove Partnership Managers are working to populate this with all services from the statutory, voluntary and community sector available in Redditch and Bromsgrove. The fully searchable directory is available on the Council's webpages for the public and local partners to use. Local organisations can contact the administrating team and add their organisations details to the directory if not already on there. The administrating team will also work to keep the directory as up to date as possible. The link for the Knowledge Bank is <http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/knowledgebank>

Further information: - please contact Helen Broughton, Helen.broughton@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk, ext.3237 or look at the Redditch Partnership webpages at www.redditchpartnership.org.uk

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SKILLS IN THE LOCAL WORKFORCE**SUMMARY OF KEY LABOUR MARKET ISSUES FOR REDDITCH**

- Employment and unemployment
- Low wages for residents employed locally.
- Productivity of local businesses and employees.
- Competitiveness of the local economy.
- Educational and Skills attainment.
- Low job density.
- Aligning and connecting the needs of schools and businesses.
- Promoting and ensuring the quality of training provision.
- Pupil, employee and employer aspiration.
- Raising the productivity potential of Redditch via inward investment and land development opportunities.

Andy Bywater
Employment and Skills Officer
North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration

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Executive Committee

Monday, 11 November 2019

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor David Thain (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Julian Grubb, Bill Hartnett and Mike Rouse

Also Present:

Councillor Joe Baker, Jennifer Wheeler, Joanne Beecham, Peter Fleming and Ann Isherwood

Officers:

Lyndsey Berry, Kevin Dicks, Chris Forrester, Sue Hanley, Georgina Harris, Amar Hussain and Ostap Paparega

Senior Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

57. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Craig Warhurst.

58. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

59. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader circulated a written record of his announcements at the meeting.

.....
Chair

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60. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 29th October 2019 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

61. BUDGET SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP - RECOMMENDATIONS

The Chair of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group, Councillor Jenny Wheeler, presented a report outlining the background to two recommendations that had been proposed by the group at a recent meeting.

During 2019 the group had held a number of meetings. At the latest meeting of the group Members had considered information about the Section 24 Notice that had been issued by the external auditors, Grant Thornton, to the Council in July 2019 and the action plan that the Council had developed to address the points raised by the auditors. The group had concluded that scrutiny Members had a key role to play in providing assurance to the Executive Committee in respect of the Council's budget position and any decisions that might have significant budget implications for the Council.

The first recommendation proposed by the group focused on the Council's investments and acquisitions. Since the approval of the Council's Investment and Acquisition Strategy in 2017 the Executive Committee had been invited to consider two proposed investments. Neither of these investments had been subject to budget scrutiny. Councillor Wheeler suggested that at a time when the Council's financial position was challenging the budget Scrutiny Working Group should consider all proposed investments and acquisitions as standard policy at the Council. Members were advised that the group recognised that commercial decisions needed to be taken quickly in order to enable the Council to be competitive and therefore the group was prepared to meet at short notice to consider any proposed investments and acquisitions to avoid holding up the decision-making process.

The second recommendation focused on the information in respect of the financial implications of proposed action that was detailed in reports presented at Committee meetings. The recommendation proposed that more detail needed to be provided about the financial implications of alternative options and the sources of funding for proposed actions as this would help the Executive Committee when making decisions. At the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7th November 2019 when the report had been

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considered Members had suggested that this proposal should apply where appropriate, in recognition that all of this information would not always be required for every report considered at an Executive Committee meeting.

Following the presentation of the report Members thanked the Budget Scrutiny Working Group for their hard work. In response to questions from the Committee Councillor Wheeler confirmed that the recommendations had been approved by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group in October 2019 and that a majority of Members had approved the recommendations at the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7th November. The evidence basis for the group's proposals was also discussed and Councillor Wheeler explained that the group had considered the content of reports that had been debated by the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee at meetings in July and September 2019 as well as information about the Council's budget. The recommendations were designed to support the Executive Committee and would enable the Budget Scrutiny Working Group to act as a constructive critical friend.

RESOLVED that

- 1) business cases for new investment and acquisition opportunities for the Council should all be considered by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group before a decision is taken by the Executive Committee; and**
- 2) the financial implications detailed in reports to the Executive Committee should address the following points as a minimum where appropriate:**
 - a) the financial costs of the proposed action;**
 - b) the source of funding for the proposed action;**
 - c) potential alternative options and the financial costs of each alternative option; and**
 - d) the financial costs to the Council where the proposed action deviates from previous Council policy.**

62. TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION (COMMUNITY HUB AND RAILWAY QUARTER)

The Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development presented a report which outlined the outcomes of a master planning exercise for the regeneration of Redditch town centre and the vision for the town moving forward. During the presentation of the report the following matters were highlighted for Members' consideration:

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- The consultants BDP had reviewed options available for the use of a number of sites, including the railway quarter, Church Road and the former covered market area.
- Potential development across the sites had an estimated value of between £200 and 250 million, which could involve development of both residential and commercial properties.
- The community hub had been conceived as a one-stop-shop in terms of public service provision to local residents. The hub could provide integrated services, enable business efficiencies within the public sector and ensure good use of public land.
- Dragongate had held conversations with a number of partner organisations about the potential to introduce a community hub. Initial feedback received from partner agencies had been very positive.
- Partner agencies had overwhelmingly been in favour of building a new property to house the community hub, rather than using an existing building. This would ensure that the varying needs of each organisation could be met through bespoke building design work.
- The next step would be for a tender process to be undertaken to procure an architect-led team to start design work for the community hub.
- Work was still required to clarify the space requirements of each organisation that would take part in the hub as well as operational requirements.
- Officers were focusing on the area encompassing the Redditch library, former covered market area and Redditch Town Hall as the potential location for a future community hub, though the exact site remained to be determined.
- Redditch had been announced as one of 100 towns that would be eligible for funding from the Town's Fund.
- Guidance for the Town's Fund had been published after the publication of the report in respect of the regeneration of Redditch town centre.
- Redditch could potentially receive up to £25 million from the Town's Fund. In order to secure funding from this source public consultation about potential use of the funding would be required and the Council would need to develop a Town Investment Plan and a business case. The government would make a decision about the level of funding that would be awarded to Redditch based on these submissions.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- The need for Redditch town centre to be regenerated.
- The hard work of officers to date in respect of the regeneration of Redditch town centre.

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- The length of time that had elapsed since the original plans to regenerate the town centre had been considered by Members in March 2018.
- The state of the area debates, how these had been advertised, the number of people who had attended and whether there was an intention for these to occur in every ward in the Borough. It was suggested that further information about the state of the area debates should be provided for Members' consideration after the meeting.
- The potential future use of the Redditch Town Hall site for housing, retail and as the site for a hotel and the fact that no decisions had yet been taken in respect of this matter.
- The extent to which the Council was likely to secure funding from the Town's Fund for the regeneration of Redditch town centre. Members were advised that the guidance did not specify that there would be a competitive process. However, the Council would need to demonstrate that Redditch should receive funding and it was important therefore to include the right information in the Town Investment Plan. The work that had already been undertaken in respect of the regeneration of Redditch town centre would place the Council at an advantage in this respect.
- The timeline for securing financial support from the Town's Fund. The Committee was informed that the Town Investment Plan would need to be submitted for the consideration of the government by summer 2020 and a decision would then be taken by the government in respect of funding in 2020/21.
- In the meantime, further work was required in respect of technical requirements.
- The £173,000 funding that the Council had already received for the regeneration of Redditch town centre.
- The potential to secure financial support from other organisations, in addition to funding from the Town's Fund, to support the regeneration of Redditch town centre. Officers explained that the Council would not be excluded from applying for funding from other sources alongside the financial support from the Town's Fund and this could include funding from the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) and the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership (GBSLEP).
- The negative perceptions some people had of Redditch and the positive impact that the regeneration of the town centre would have on civic pride.
- The combination of residential and commercial opportunities within the plans.

During consideration of this item the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Councillor Joe Baker, was invited to speak on behalf of the Committee about recommendations that had been

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made by Members following pre-scrutiny of the report at a meeting on 7th November 2019. During this meeting the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had noted their support for plans to regenerate Redditch town centre. Councillor Baker explained that the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee was to act as a critical friend and as such concerns had been raised by the Committee about the need to learn lessons from past redevelopment exercises. In particular, reference had been made to the redevelopment of Church Hill district centre some years previously and the limited engagement that had been undertaken with ward Councillors. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee had concluded that, due to the relevance of the town centre to all Councillors they should all be consulted as part of work on the redevelopment of Redditch town centre and this had featured in the Committee's recommendations on the subject to the Executive Committee. These points were noted.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Council note the BDP Town Centre Sites report and endorses the concept of a comprehensive regeneration scheme for the station quarter, Church Road sites, the Library site and the outdoor market site;**
- 2) the Council agrees the content of the Dragongate Community Hub Business Case and BDP's Redditch Town Centre Development Sites Final Report be used as a basis for submitting a proposal to the Town's Fund;**
- 3) the Council agrees that the content of the Dragongate Community Hub business case and BDP's Redditch Town Centre Development Sites Final Report be used as a basis for submitting a bid to the Greater Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership's Strategic Economic Plan (SEP) Enabling Fund;**

and RESOLVED that

- 4) the findings of the state of the area debate are noted and officers are instructed to produce a future consultation plan related to the town centre regeneration programme;**
- 5) the content of the Dragongate Community Hub business case be noted and the Executive Committee endorse the concept of a community hub within the public sector and culture quarter;**

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- 6) authority be delegated to the Chief Executive after consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships to commission an architect-led professional team to draw up feasible and deliverable design proposals supported by viability appraisals for a community hub, to include consideration of partners' requirements; and
- 7) subject to the agreement of recommendation 1 above, authority be delegated to the Chief Executive after consultation with the Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships to work with key partners on the wider initiatives.

63. SECTION 24 - MONITORING UPDATE REPORT

The Financial Services Manager presented an update in respect of the progress that had been achieved by the Council in addressing the points that had been raised by the external auditors in the Section 24 Notice. The Committee was informed that Officers had been working hard in the second quarter of the financial year and the implications of this work for the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) would be reported for Members' consideration in the Financial Monitoring report in December 2019.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

64. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Officers confirmed that there were no outstanding recommendations from the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24th October 2019 that required consideration.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24th October 2019 be noted.

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

The recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 7th November 2019 in respect of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group and the regeneration of Redditch town centre were considered under the relevant item on the agenda.

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The Senior Democratic Services Officer (Redditch) confirmed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendation in respect of the Council's Concessionary Rents Policy, agreed at the meeting of the Committee on 7th November 2019, had not been made available for consideration at this meeting. This was because the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had agreed that the recommendation should be referred to the Executive Committee for consideration in January 2020 alongside the report that was due to be considered on this subject at that time.

66. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

The following verbal updates were provided in respect of the Executive Advisory Panels:

- a) Climate Change Cross Party Working Group – Chair, Councillor Brandon Clayton

Councillor Clayton confirmed that the first meeting of this group was due to take place on Tuesday 19th November 2019.

- b) Constitutional Review Working Party – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

Councillor Dormer confirmed that the following meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party (CRWP) was due to take place on 13th January 2020.

- c) Corporate Parenting Board – Council Representative, Councillor Juliet Brunner

Members were advised that there had been no meetings of the Board since the previous meeting of the Executive Committee. The next meeting of the Board was scheduled to take place on 27th November 2019.

- d) Member Support Steering Group - Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

Councillor Dormer advised that the following meeting of the Member Support Steering Group was due to take place on 4th February 2020.

- e) Planning Advisory Panel - Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer

Councillor Dormer explained that there were no meetings of the Planning Advisory Panel scheduled to take place.

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67. UNIT 17, BROAD GROUND ROAD, REDDITCH AND THE REDDITCH BUSINESS CENTRES

The Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development presented a report which summarised the findings of a review of the three business centres that were operated by the Council; Greenlands Business Centre, Hemming Road Business Centre and Rubicon Business Centre. During the presentation of the report the following points were highlighted for the consideration of the Committee:

- Management of all three of the business centres matched the Council's strategic purposes.
- GJS Dillon had undertaken a review in 2018 of industrial spaces in Worcestershire, which had been considered on a district by district basis. The findings in that report had helped to inform the review of the business centres.
- Two of the centres, at Hemming Road and the Greenlands Business Centre, generated a financial surplus for the Council whilst Rubicon Business Centre operated at a financial loss.
- Expenditure on the business centres was higher in cases where occupancy rates were lower as the authority then had to take on greater responsibility for business rates commitments.
- Analysis of Rubicon Business Centre had revealed that in order for the Council to break even when managing the centre with a 70 per cent occupancy rate, rents for businesses would need to be increased by a minimum of 66 per cent.
- There was the possibility that existing businesses would be willing to agree a 66 per cent increase in their rent and Members could explore this option further. However, there was also the possibility that this would make the Rubicon Business Centre uncompetitive.
- The Council could take no further action, but this was not considered to be a viable option because of the significant financial losses associated with operating the Rubicon Business Centre.
- Another alternative option could include exiting the Rubicon Business Centre lease, subject to clarifying the legal implications for the Council.

Once the report had been presented Members noted that the original intention of the business centres had been to provide start-up businesses with affordable premises until they became successful. There was a lower level of start-up companies in Redditch compared to other parts of Worcestershire and many small businesses were located in the Borough.

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During consideration of this item an amendment was proposed by Councillor Bill Hartnett. This amendment was seconded by Councillor Greg Chance. The amendment proposed the following:

“Consideration be given to options for improving the viability of the Rubicon Centre, including increasing the rent levels charged for both office and industrial / workshop space.”

In proposing the amendment Councillor Hartnett explained that he was concerned it would be premature to consider exiting Rubicon Business Centre at this stage. He suggested that consultation was needed with affected tenants and all options needed to be considered before the Council vacated the property. There was the possibility that tenants would appreciate the financial difficulties facing the Council and would be willing to increase their rents by a significant amount in order to continue to work with the authority.

In seconding the proposal Councillor Chance commented that all options needed to be explored to ensure that the business centres remained viable. Furthermore, Councillor Chance raised concerns that Members were being asked to make a decision in respect of this subject before consultation had taken place with the tenants who would be affected.

Members discussed the amendment and in so doing noted the significant financial losses to the Council associated with current arrangements for the operation of Rubicon Business Centre. The industry average, in order to break even when managing a business centre, involved a 65 per cent occupancy level. However, it was noted that if the Council increased rents by 66 per cent this occupancy level would be difficult to achieve. The increase in rent would also mean that rents would be well above market value which would potentially impact on the competitiveness of the centre in terms of attracting new businesses. Existing businesses might also struggle with the increase in rent costs. In addition to these points, Members noted that rather than start-up companies, 41 per cent of businesses in the Rubicon Business Centre had rented space for 10 years or more.

On being put to a vote the amendment was lost.

Members noted that the Council would seek to provide support to existing businesses to enable them to secure suitable alternative premises for their business if needed.

A further amendment was subsequently proposed by Councillor Mike Rouse. This amendment was seconded by Councillor David Thain. The amendment proposed that businesses in the Rubicon

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Business Centre should be provided with no less than three months' notice to quit. This amendment was agreed.

RESOLVED

- 1) that the review of the business centres is noted including the financial performance of the centres (two make a surplus and one makes a loss); and**
- 2) to exit the Rubicon Centre and that no business be given less than three months' notice to quit.**

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to the financial affairs of any particular body (including the authority holding that information)).

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm
and closed at 8.05 pm

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

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WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20

(Report of the Chief Executive)

Date of Meeting	Subject Matter	Officer(s) Responsible for report
ALL MEETINGS	REGULAR ITEMS	(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)
	Minutes of previous meeting	Chief Executive
	Consideration of the Executive Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive
	Call-ins (if any)	Chief Executive
	Pre-scrutiny (if any)	Chief Executive
	Task Groups / Short, Sharp Review Groups – feedback	Chair of Task Group / Short, Sharp Review
	Working Groups - feedback	Chair of Working Group
	Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive
	REGULAR ITEMS	
	Update on the work of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel	Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel
	Tracker Report	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
	Updates on the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Redditch Borough Council representative on the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
	Annual Monitoring Report – Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service

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MEETING DATE	ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED	RELEVANT LEAD
5 th December 2019	Redditch Partnership Annual Report	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service.
5 th December 2019	Civil Contingencies Annual Report	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service.
5 th December 2019	Skills in the local workforce presentation	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service.
16 th December 2019	Pre-Decision Scrutiny - Fees and Charges 2020/21	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service.
16 th December 2019	Housing / Housing Revenue Account Strategic Improvement Plan Progress Report	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service.
16 th December 2019	Pre-Decision Scrutiny - New Cemetery Provision	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service.
16 th December 2019	Pre-Decision Scrutiny - Redditch Council Plan	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service.
16 th December 2019	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Review of the One Stop Shops	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
9 th January 2020	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Concessionary Rents	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service

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9th January 2020	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme 2020/21	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
9th January 2020	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Homes England Asset Transfer	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
9th January 2020	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Housing Strategy	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
20th February 2020	Parking Enforcement Task Group – Final Report	Councillor Mark Shurmer
20th February 2020	Consideration of the Executive Committee's Budget Proposals	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
19th March 2020	Finalising the content of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
19th March 2020	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Leisure and Cultural Services Strategy	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
19th March 2020	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Members ICT Policy	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
June 2020	Redditch Community Lottery – Six Months' Update	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service

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OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED		
	Suicide Prevention Task Group – Final Report	Councillor Debbie Chance



Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel

Wednesday, 25 September 2019

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Jennifer Wheeler (Chair), and Councillors Gareth Prosser and Mark Shurmer

Officers:

Bev Houghton and Judith Willis

Committee Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

1. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Wanda King and Pattie Hill. Councillor Mark Shurmer attended as a substitute for Councillor King.

2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

3. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel held on Wednesday 26th September 2018 be approved as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

4. NORTH WORCESTERSHIRE COMMUNITY SAFETY PARTNERSHIP - UPDATE ON WORK IN REDDITCH

The Community Safety Manager presented an update on the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership in Redditch from September 2018 to August 2019.

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Chair

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During the presentation of the report the following points were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- The partnership worked to resolve community safety issues in Redditch Borough, Bromsgrove District and Wyre Forest District.
- There were a number of sub-groups of the partnership which addressed specific community safety themes.
- The Safer Redditch Group was in the process of being reviewed as there had been some capacity issues in terms of providing support to the group following the departure of an experienced member of staff.
- There was an Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) and Complex Cases Group which provided problem solving solutions to many community safety issues. Many of the issues addressed by this group involved neighbour disputes.
- There was also a Multi-Agency Targeted Enforcement (MATE) group which was being piloted in Redditch and was addressing many of the issues that would previously have been handled by the Safer Redditch Group.
- The strategic assessment outlining key issues for the three districts had been presented in draft form at the latest meeting of the partnership board. Once the document had been signed off the partnership would enter a planning stage.
- The West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) was not a member of the partnership. However, there was a statutory duty for the partnership to work closely with the PCC and for there to be a cross reference between the partnership's and the PCC's plans.
- The PCC's terms of office were due to come to an end shortly and all of the PCC's grant funding had now been spent. The partnership, which had received some of this funding, needed to ensure that all funds, which were paid in arrears, were spent.
- There was a new public health duty to prevent and tackle serious violence. This had been subject to Government consultation.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- The focus of the partnership and the extent to which it delivered projects in the community. Members were advised that the partnership was not just strategic and got involved in matters such as resolving specific ASB cases.
- The review of the Safer Redditch Group and the timescales for completing this review. Members were advised that there

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were no timescales for this, however, if the MATE was retained then the ASB and Complex Cases Group would also be retained and it was unlikely that the Safer Redditch Group would then be required.

- The potential for the officer who had left the organisation to be replaced. Members were advised that a new Officer would be recruited using grant funding.
- The PCC's funding of a CCTV upgrade and how this scheme was progressing. Members were advised that the partnership was confident that this scheme would be delivered as scheduled.
- The Government consultation in respect of the new legal duty to support a multi-agency approach to preventing and tackling serious violence and the implications locally. Members were informed that the partnership had submitted a response as part of this consultation exercise and the preferred option locally would be for Community Safety Partnerships to assume responsibility for this duty.
- The home security assessments that had been undertaken and which properties these could be applied to. The assessments could be undertaken in cases where the police had made referrals, for example for victims of domestic violence. Assessments were also frequently undertaken of Council houses as well as housing association properties.
- The number of residents participating in the Nominated Neighbour Scheme, which protected vulnerable residents from doorstep crime. Officers explained that 90 residents had participated since the scheme was established two years previously.
- The information packs that were issued to participants in the Nominated Neighbour Scheme. Officers confirmed that copies of these packs could be sent to Members and that referrals to this scheme would also be accepted from Members.
- The methods used to advertise the Nominated Neighbour Scheme. Members were informed that Officers tended to promote the scheme to vulnerable groups that were most likely to benefit from participation, including through attending Residents Association and older people's forum meetings.
- The Community Trigger/ASB Case Review process and the standard timescales for resolving each case. Officers explained that this process presented challenges, particularly as the partnership had received five such cases in close succession, though all had been addressed within the required timescales.
- The workload of the Community Safety Officer working in Redditch and the potential for further support to be provided to him. The Panel was informed that once recruited the new

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officer would provide support, though additional help was also available from partner organisations.

- The process for handling ASB cases and the difficulties with addressing these cases when none of the parties involved were Council tenants. Members were informed that the Council could address such cases where at least one party was a Council tenant. Officers had also worked with housing associations and private tenants to resolve such issues. The biggest challenge was resolving a neighbour dispute where both parties were owner occupiers and there was no illegal activity that would justify the involvement of the police.
- The ASB that could arise from people begging and the fact that not all of the people who were begging were homeless.
- The involvement of the Council's various housing teams in the work of the partnership and the support that these teams could provide in terms of housing homeless people.
- The difficulties that could be encountered with housing people who had been homeless for some time and the need for ongoing support to be provided to people in this position.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **Nominated Neighbour Scheme information packs be circulated for the consideration of Members; and**
- 2) **the report be noted.**

5. ANTI-SOCIAL BEHAVIOUR - UPDATE ON THE WORK OF THE PARTNERSHIP

The Community Safety Manager presented an update on the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership since the previous meeting of the Panel to address ASB in the Borough. This report had been provided at the request of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In presenting the report the Community Safety Manager highlighted a number of points for Members' consideration:

- The data provided in the report compared ASB incidents reported to the police in 2017/18 to those incidents that had been reported in 2018/19.
- ASB was not a crime and therefore was recorded on the police database as an incident rather than a crime.
- The data only reflected incidents that were reported by the public or organisations to the police. There would potentially be cases of ASB that were not reported.

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- An analysis of the data revealed that there had been a reduction in most types of ASB incident reported to the police.
- The exceptions to this reduction were neighbour disputes and fights and arguments where there had been a slight increase.
- An analysis by season revealed that reported ASB incidents were higher in the summer months than in the winter months. However, there was a downward trend in the rates of reporting over recent years.
- The ASB data per ward for 2017/18 compared to 2018/19 had been provided for comparative purposes. This revealed that ASB incidents were higher in Abbey and Greenlands wards, which contained the town centre and the hospital respectively.
- There had been a significant decrease in the number of ASB incidents reported in some wards, including Batchley and Brockhill, Matchborough and Winyates.
- ASB levels in the Borough compared well to Wyre Forest District but were higher than in Bromsgrove District. However, the reductions in ASB over the last 12 months were slightly higher in Redditch than in the other two districts.
- The Community Safety team had provided two days of training recently in respect of ASB and environmental crime. This training had been well received and a housing association had requested further training on the subject.
- The Council had drafted one community protection order since new powers were introduced in 2014. This had not been used as the Council's Legal Department had advised that Officers should serve notice in that instance. However, the draft order could be used as a future template if needed.
- More data in respect of ASB at a ward and neighbourhood level could be accessed by Members on the police website.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed the reasons for the decrease in reports of ASB incidents over the years, including when comparing the summer season in 2018/19 to the previous year. Officers explained that there would be no single reason though specific incidents, such as a football World Cup, in one year could lead to a spike in incidents being reported.

At the end of the discussions in respect of this matter the Chair noted that there tended to be one meeting of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel to review the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership in Redditch each year and questions were raised about whether this was sufficient. Officers advised that it was standard practice nationally for one meeting to take place a year of the scrutiny Committee designated with responsibility for reviewing the work of the local Community Safety Partnership. When one meeting took place a year the

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Community Safety Partnership could provide clear information for a 12 month period as well as any additional information requested by Members when reporting to the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel. There had been two scheduled meetings of the Panel for the previous two years but the second meeting had always been cancelled due to lack of business. One meeting a year would therefore appear a sensible option to adopt in future.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 6.45 pm
and closed at 7.28 pm