



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thu 19 Mar  
2020  
6.30 pm

Committee Room Two  
Town Hall  
Redditch

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# Overview and Scrutiny

Thursday, 19th March, 2020

6.30 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

## 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 - 10)

**4.** Registered Public Speakers

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

**5.** Parking Enforcement Task Group Final Report

(Report to follow).

**6.** Finalising the content of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20 (Pages 11 - 30)

**7.** Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme - Selecting Items for Scrutiny (Pages 31 - 44)

**8.** Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 45 - 48)

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

a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jennifer Wheeler

b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Andrew Fry

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c) Parking Enforcement Task Group – Chair, Councillor Mark Shurmer

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

## 10. External Scrutiny Bodies - Update Reports (Pages 49 - 52)

- 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.

## 11. Exclusion of the Press and Public

Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, during the course of the meeting to consider excluding the public from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:

“That, under S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (to be specified) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act”.

These paragraphs are as follows:

Subject to the “public interest” test, information relating to:

- Para 1 – any individual;
- Para 2 – the identity of any individual;
- Para 3 – financial or business affairs;
- Para 4 – labour relations matters;
- Para 5 – legal professional privilege;
- Para 6 – a notice, order or direction;
- Para 7 – the prevention, investigation or prosecution of crime;  
and may need to be considered as ‘exempt’.



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## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Joe Baker (Chair), and Councillors Salman Akbar, Tom Baker-Price, Michael Chalk, John Fisher, Peter Fleming, Andrew Fry, Mark Shurmer and Jennifer Wheeler

### Also Present:

Councillor David Thain (Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management)

### Officers:

Sue Hanley and Jayne Pickering

### Senior Democratic Services Officer:

J Bayley

## 91. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Joanne Beecham and Debbie Chance. Officers confirmed that Councillors Tom Baker-Price and John Fisher were attending as their respective substitutes.

## 92. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

Councillors Tom Baker-Price and Andrew Fry declared other disclosable interests in Minute Item No. 95 in their capacity as Worcestershire County Councillors and members of the Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority as these organisations would receive funding from Council Tax once the Council Tax Resolutions had been agreed.

There were no declarations of any party whip.

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Chair

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## 93. MINUTES

### RESOLVED that

**the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Thursday 9<sup>th</sup> January 2020 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 94. MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN

The Executive Director of Finance and Resources presented the Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) 2020/21 to 2023/24 and in so doing highlighted the following matters for Members' consideration:

- The external auditors, Grant Thornton, had issued a Section 24 Notice to the Council in 2019. In this notice three recommendations had been made to the Council.
- The first of these recommendations focused on the budget for 2019/20 and the external auditors had urged the Council to deliver the savings set out in the MTFP earlier that year.
- The second recommendation had focused on the need for the Council to have a balanced budget in 2020/21.
- The third recommendation had urged the Council to have a sustainable budget for 2021/22 to 2023/24.
- The external auditors had raised concerns about the need for Members to make difficult decisions in order to balance the budget.
- The financial framework for the authority had been agreed in the autumn in 2019. This had outlined the Council's aim over the four year period to increase balances in the general fund to £1.5 million and balances in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) to £1 million.
- A number of difficult decisions had been taken by Members during the municipal year including in respect of the Rubicon Business Centre, changing support for Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) groups and the closure of the One Stop Shops.
- The MTFP showed a balanced budget for 2020/21 with £82,000 returned to balances. This would increase the Council's balances to over £1 million.
- However, there remained a total of £1.6 million to save over the following three years. To address this gap, further difficult decisions would need to be taken by Members.
- Officers had identified a number of potential savings during the year.

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- Savings had been achieved through negotiating a new insurance contract as part of a group with other local authorities.
- Further savings would be achieved as a result of a review of the Dial a Ride operating model, which would result in the reduction in the number of buses in operation from six to five and the introduction of a voluntary car scheme. The proposed changes to the Dial a Ride scheme would result in an increase in the efficiency of the service and it was anticipated that there would be a corresponding increase in income.
- The actuaries for the Worcestershire Pension Fund had reported that the investments that had been made for the fund had performed well over the previous three years resulting in a reduction in the level of pension contributions that would need to be made by the Council moving forward.
- The Council had received New Homes Bonus (NHB) funding for 2020/21 which had not been anticipated. However, the Government had been clear that no legacy payments would be provided to the Council for the NHB.
- There remained a lot of uncertainty for the future in terms of local government funding. The Council did not know what terms would be included in the Government's Fair Funding Review for district Councils.
- There was the potential that the Government would reset the business rates growth level and this would again result in a loss of income for the Council.
- The Council Tax Resolutions still remained to be finalised. Whilst the Council had heard back from some of the preceptors the authority was still waiting to hear from West Mercia Police on the date of the meeting.
- The Council was anticipating that there would be the minimum level of balances in the HRA for 2020/21.
- The HRA had been affected by the 1 per cent rent reductions over four years that had been required by the Government, though in 2020/21 the Council would be increasing rents by CPI plus 1 per cent.
- By 2023/24 the HRA would be in a stronger position as a result of accumulated rent rises over the four year period.

During consideration of this item the Chair invited the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, Councillor David Thain, to comment on the budget. Councillor Thain explained that difficult decisions had had to be taken but the budget was balanced for 2020/21. The external auditors had been kept informed about the budget and the decisions that had been taken by Members and they would continue to be notified about developments. Councillor Thain concluded by thanking Officers working in the financial

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services department as well as Heads of Service for their hard work in respect of achieving savings and balancing the budget.

Members subsequently discussed the report in detail and in so doing noted the following points:

- The reasons why the budget gap in 2023/24 was much higher than in previous years. Officers explained that this was partly a consequence of the Council losing NHB legacy payments in this year as well as a result of the impact of the pay awards.
- The impact that the loss of NHB funding would have on Councils across the country. Officers explained that nationally NHB had resulted in local Councils receiving more in funding than had originally been anticipated when the scheme was introduced and this was not considered to be sustainable.
- The reserves that had been set aside for the Council's pensions liabilities and for a Transformation Fund and the reasons that this funding had not been returned to balances. Officers explained that there were concerns amongst Treasurers across the county that the investments for the pensions fund might not always perform as well as they had in the past three years and it would be prudent to have a reserve that could be used if needed for this purpose. The Council Transformation Fund would provide the Council with greater flexibility.
- The choice not to include the negative grant in the budget projections and the reasons for this. The Committee was informed that there were risks to the Council in relation to predicting the Council's future funding settlement as the Government's plans for local government funding would be uncertain until the Fair Funding Review was finalised. However, there would need to be a transition period and some funding from Government for Councils if the negative grant was reintroduced.
- The increased income that was anticipated from the Council's investments moving forward. Officers agreed to provide further information to Members in respect of this matter.
- The potential for the Council to achieve further financial savings moving forward. Officers explained that there would need to be a mix of savings and an increase in income. For some services further savings would potentially impact on the quality of the service.
- The surplus that would be achieved in terms of income from Council Tax in the first year of the plan.
- The lower revenue that Redditch Borough Council received from Council Tax compared to other district Councils in



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Worcestershire where there were more Band D properties and above.

- The potential for the Council to encourage developers to build more Band D properties and above in the Borough.
- The possibility that NHB funding might be redesigned so that funding would be redistributed in future from Councils in areas where more Band D properties were built.
- The difficult decisions that would need to be made in the future and the potential services that might be affected by these decisions. Officers explained that some ideas had been included in the report, though no decisions had been taken.
- The proposed changes to the Dial a Ride scheme, the cost of the voluntary car scheme and the insurance implications for the Council. Officers agreed to provide further information in respect of this matter after the meeting.
- The number of customers using the Dial a Ride service. The Committee was informed that there were 560 registered users. By February 2020 there were 2,100 journeys a month and Officers were anticipating that as a result of the changes to the operating model there would be 2,400 journeys in future.
- The £100,000 funding in respect of a café at Morton Stanley Park that had been included in the capital programme. Officers explained that additional funding would be available to pay for this café from Section 106 money that had been allocated to infrastructure projects in the park. Leisure Officers had undertaken research into the project and as part of this process public consultation had taken place, the results from which had indicated that there would be interest in a café in the park.
- The potential for further income to be generated by the Council operating in a more commercial manner in the future.
- The need for the Council to share savings with Bromsgrove District Council in cases where savings were secured for shared services.
- The option for the Council to sell Council assets and which assets were likely to be sold. Officers explained that the Council would only sell assets that were declared surplus and there were no plans to sell assets such as the Palace Theatre.
- The potential for the Council to report the financial difficulties impacting on local government and the need for certainty to be provided by the Government. Officers explained that there had been a portal launched in January 2020 which provided Councils with an opportunity to report concerns to the Government and the Section 151 Officer had submitted comments on behalf of the Council.
- The movement of a capital reserve to the general fund for the HRA in order to balance the budget. The Committee was

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advised that this arrangement had been made on the proviso that the funding would be paid back within three years.

- The need for greater efficiencies to be made in respect of the HRA in future years. Officers explained that over the following 18 months the new Housing IT System would be introduced and service reviews would be taking place within the Housing Department, which would contribute efficiency savings.

At the end of a lengthy debate in respect of this item the Committee

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

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

Members considered the minutes from the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020. The Committee noted that the Budget Scrutiny Working Group had made recommendations to this meeting in respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24 which had been approved by the Executive Committee.

During consideration of this item Members also considered the content of the Executive Committee's Work Programme for the period 1<sup>st</sup> March to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020.

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 be noted; and**
- 2) the content of the Executive Committee's Work Programme for the period 1<sup>st</sup> March to 30<sup>th</sup> June 2020 be noted.**

**96. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

The content of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme was considered by Members. Concerns were raised about the number of items that were due to be considered at the meeting of the Committee that was scheduled to take place in March 2020. Whilst the Homes England Asset Transfer item would not be available to consider until June 2020 the other items were scheduled to be reported to Members.

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Members discussed the items that were on the work programme for consideration in March and noted that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's annual report and the final reports of the Scrutiny Task Groups needed to be considered as soon as possible. However, Members noted that the Members' IT Policy and Bring Your Own Device (BYOD) Policy had already been considered by the Member Support Steering Group, prior to any report being made in respect of these matters to the Executive Committee. In this context Members agreed that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee did not need to pre-scrutinise the Members' IT Policy and BYOD Policy. However, the Committee noted that ICT support for elected Members could have financial implications for the Council, particularly if Members' iPads were replaced with more expensive IT equipment. Members suggested that wherever possible the Council should strive to ensure that financial expenditure on Members' IT equipment was kept to a minimum.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the Members' IT Policy and Bring Your Own Device Policy be removed from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme and no longer made subject to pre-decision scrutiny; and**
- 2) **the content of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

## **97. TASK GROUP REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS**

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

## **98. TASK GROUPS, SHORT SHARP REVIEWS AND WORKING GROUPS - UPDATE REPORTS**

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

Councillor Wheeler advised that during the latest meeting of the group Members had pre-scrutinised the Medium Term Financial Plan 2020/21 to 2023/24. During this meeting Members had proposed two recommendations which had subsequently been agreed by the Executive committee. The first called for Officers to present the capital programme in a different way in future, which would involve grouping the items in accordance with the strategic purposes. Members were

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advised that this would be a more logical approach to presenting the capital programme than the present format.

The second recommendation had focused on the Section 24 Notice that had been issued by the external auditors, Grant Thornton, to the Council. At the latest Audit, Governance and Standards Committee meeting the external auditors had indicated that the Section 24 Notice might be lifted in the autumn, subject to the Council successfully submitting its accounts and receiving a positive Value for Money assessment. However, no formal letter would be issued by the external auditors regarding this matter. The Budget Scrutiny Working Group had concluded that the Council had a responsibility to notify the public that the Section 24 Notice no longer applied to the Council and this had formed the basis of their recommendation.

During consideration of this item Members noted that to date 100 per cent of the recommendations that had been proposed by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group during the year had been approved by the Executive Committee. On behalf of the Executive Committee the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management thanked the group for their hard work and noted that the recommendations that had been made through the budget scrutiny process had been very helpful.

b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Andrew Fry

Councillor Fry advised Members that the group had met since the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. During this meeting Members had discussed performance monitoring arrangements for the authority moving forward. An update had been provided by Councillor John Fisher about the evidence he had gathered when monitoring measures for the strategic purpose help me find somewhere to live in my locality and Councillor Yvonne Smith was due to provide an update in respect of her findings for the strategic purpose 'help me be financially independent at the following meeting.

The group had decided at their latest meeting that in future they should monitor the performance of Council services collectively, rather than each Member monitoring a different strategic purpose. This would start with a focus on housing Services at the following meeting of the group, due to take place in March 2020.

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

Councillor Shurmer confirmed that the group was aiming to complete their review in time to report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting that was scheduled to take place on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> March 2020.

## 99. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS

The following updates were provided in respect of external scrutiny bodies:

- a) West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Redditch Member, Councillor Michael Chalk

Councillor Chalk circulated an update from the latest meeting of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee. He advised that a young woman, rather than young man as suggested in the written update, had attended the meeting.

During the meeting Members had discussed the HS2 project. The Committee had been advised that there would be opportunities available to Small and Medium Enterprises (SMEs). As there were many businesses in Redditch that could be classified as SMEs there could be opportunities available to companies based in the Borough as part of this project.

- b) Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Redditch Member, Councillor Michael Chalk

The Committee was informed that the following meeting of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) was scheduled to take place on Wednesday 19<sup>th</sup> February 2020. This meeting would provide Members with an opportunity to prepare for an interview with representatives of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust that was due to take place at a later date.

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm  
and closed at 7.28 pm

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Redditch Borough Council  
Overview and Scrutiny Committee  
Annual Report 2019 – 2020



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## **CHAIR'S FOREWORD**

Over the last year it has been a privilege and a pleasure to be the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. It has been a good year as there has been a lot of cross-party working. This is significant in a number of different ways; the importance of cross-party decision-making when representing the community as a whole, in addition it shows that by working together in partnership we can move things forward as a Council. The majority of the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee were cross-party recommendations, however the Executive Committee have not agreed all of them.

It is noted that there have been two specific Task Groups established during the year, the Suicide Prevention Task Group and the Parking Enforcement Task Group. We have had in-depth group discussions at meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Frequently we discussed individual items put forward by the whole Committee and raised issues that mattered to the community.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee used its powers to scrutinise decisions made by the Executive Committee in a cross-party way. There have been changes implemented over the municipal year. /this year it was decided that a regular meeting be set up with the Chief Executive Officer and Leader of the Council which has been useful in the support of the scrutiny process. It was also encouraging when scrutinising the Overview and Scrutiny Select Committee Findings and New Governance Guidance, published in May 2019, to see that the Committee is working in line with best practice.

I would like to take this opportunity to thank Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee who have contributed their time and energy to make this a successful year for Overview and Scrutiny. Further thanks are extended to those councillors who have chaired Task Groups and Working Groups during the year, Councillors Debbie Chance, Andy Fry, Mark Shurmer and Jenny Wheeler as well as to Councillor Mike Chalk who has provide excellent written updates on the work of the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee and Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee during the year. I am proud that I have been able to continue in my role as Chair.

**Councillor Joe Baker**

**Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee**



## INTRODUCTION

This report outlines the work undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee of Redditch Borough Council during 2019 – 2020.

## THE ROLE OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY

The role of overview and scrutiny is an important one in the Council's governance structure, in providing challenge and driving improvement. It is often referred to as the "critical friend" of the Council and can review any issues of concern or real interest to local residents.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee has a number of roles within the Council. These include:

- Holding the Executive Committee to account by thoroughly scrutinising their decisions to ensure that the Council continues to provide the best services possible for Redditch residents. As part of this role, the Committee has the power to 'call-in' decisions made by the Executive Committee and to request that the Executive Committee review the original decisions, taking into account the issues raised by the Committee.
- Acting as a 'critical friend' to the Executive Committee by reviewing Council policies and strategies, making recommendations where appropriate.
- Performance and financial monitoring, to ensure the Council's services are sustainable and to the highest possible standard.
- Commissioning reviews of services/topics that impact on the Council or on the lives of Redditch residents.
- Pre-scrutiny of items prior to a decision being made by the Executive Committee.
- Setting up Task Groups to focus on specific subjects and recommend ways to improve existing practices within the Council and community as a whole. A flow chart on how to consider potential scrutiny reviews can be found at Appendix A and the Council's scoping form at Appendix B.

**MEMBERSHIP**

The Committee appoints individual Members to oversee the work of Overview and Scrutiny. Membership of the Committee for 2018/2019 is as follows:



Cllr Joe Baker (Chair)



Cllr Debbie Chance (Vice Chair)



Cllr Salman Akbar



Cllr Joanne Beecham



Cllr Michael Chalk



Peter Fleming



Cllr Andy Fry



Cllr Mark Shurmer



Cllr Jennifer Wheeler

## ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES DURING 2019/20

Non-Executive Members attended Overview and Scrutiny training in May 2019 and during this session the Councillors identified priority issues to add to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme.

The Committee considered the potential items for scrutiny that had been identified during the training. In addition, Members considered topics suggested by the Corporate Management Team (CMT) for potential review.

Based on the items detailed in the report Members agreed that the following subjects would be suitable for scrutiny:

- Poverty – Members agreed that this subject might be suitable for a Short Sharp Review or Task Group exercise.
- Mental Health Services - to include loneliness, in particular, with older people.
- Skills in the local workforce – training needs for young people entering the workforce, skills and training for adults seeking to move careers and local employees' salaries.
- Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) – Through the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel members would consider the work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership to address anti-social-behaviour in Redditch.

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee monitors the impact of all of its recommendations that have been endorsed by the Executive Committee. A tracking report is presented to the Committee during the year stating progress made to date.

During consideration of the Executive Committee's Work Programme, Members agreed to pre-scrutinise the following items:

- Disposal of HRA Asset at Green Lane, Studley
- Redditch Council Plan
- National Waste Strategy - Implications for the Council.
- Housing Strategy report
- Review of the One Stop Shops.
- Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Programme 2020/21.
- Leisure and Cultural Services Strategy.

Further information about the issues discussed by the Committee during the year and Members' findings are detailed below.

### **PRIVATE SECTOR HOME REPAIR ASSISTANCE POLICY – 6 JUNE**

Representatives from the Strategic Housing and Private Sector Housing Teams presented the private sector housing assistance report for members' consideration. This report outlined changes to an existing policy.

The policy had been updated in line with recommendations from an internal audit that was conducted during 2017/2018. There were a number of proposed changes included in the report which reflected changes around loan limits and local land charges.

Members discussed the proposed changes to the policy and highlighted a number of points including the need for increased communication with partner organisations and the public in order to make them aware of the grant's existence. This updated policy was welcomed by Members as it offered a wider range of assistance to people with disabilities and would potentially benefit the local community.

### **TENANCY CONDITIONS FOR COUNCIL HOUSING TENANTS AND TENANTS HANDBOOK PRESENTATION – 4 JULY 2019**

Members pre-scrutinised a report providing an update in respect of proposed changes to the Council's Housing Tenancy Agreement and Conditions.

The new conditions of tenancy detailed the tenant's rights and responsibilities as well as the Council's rights and responsibilities as a landlord. The Committee was informed that the Tenants' Handbook was being revised and contained more detailed information on managing a tenancy.

The presentation made reference to the new Recharge Policy for tenants, their rights and responsibilities as Council tenants, information for tenants on how to mitigate issues and dealing with tenants who suffer mental health issues.

A recommendation was made by the Committee that the Council should be more proactive in their enforcement with tenants particularly with regards to rubbish deposited in gardens. This recommendation was approved by the Executive Committee.

## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY SELECT COMMITTEE FINDINGS AND NEW GOVERNANCE GUIDANCE – PRESENTATION – 4 JULY**

In May 2019, a report had been presented to the Committee which highlighted the areas in the Overview and Scrutiny Statutory Guidance which had been produced by the Department of Housing, Communities and Local Government. Members were pleased when looking through the guidance as the council was already primarily compliant with scrutiny best practice.

Members considered the need for greater and more formal engagement between the Executive Committee and the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Following discussion at the Constitutional Review Working Party it was decided that there would be quarterly meetings between the Leader of the Council and the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. .

The Leader of the Council subsequently met with the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny committee, the Chief Executive and Senior Democratic Services Officer (Redditch) to discuss the scrutiny process and how the Committee could assist the governance process at the Council more effectively. At the first meeting in November 2019 it was decided that the relevant Portfolio Holder should be invited to attend future meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to speak on items within their remit. This has occurred at every meeting since that date and has worked very well. The next meeting between the Leader and Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee is due to take place in April 2020.

During consideration of the report there were also discussions regarding communicating Scrutiny's role and purpose to the wider Authority and to the public. There was discussion that the Communications team would be invited to a future meeting to help discuss actions that could be taken to help raise public awareness of the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

## **DISPOSAL OF HRA ASSET AT GREEN LANE, STUDLEY - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY – 5 SEPTEMBER**

A report was presented to Members in respect of the disposal of a Council asset in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) located at Green Lane, Studley and the removal of a railway bridge from an adjacent site. The project would require a significant amount of expenditure from Redditch Borough Council to make the bridge properly fit for purpose. Officers proposed that the bridge structure should be completely removed, and the site realigned to allow for two new four-bedroom properties to be built at the site.

Members discussed the options for the site and endorsed the proposals brought forward by Officers in respect of the site. These recommendations were subsequently agreed by the Executive Committee.

### **HEREFORDSHIRE AND WORCESTERSHIRE SUSTAINABILITY AND TRANSFORMATION PARTNERSHIP – 24 OCTOBER 2019**

The Director of Strategy and Partnerships for Worcestershire Health and Care Trust presented an update on the Herefordshire and Worcestershire Sustainability and Transformation plan (STP). This was the latest update in respect of this matter, which had also been discussed in previous years, and enabled Members to learn more about plans for local health services moving forward.

### **CONCESSIONARY RENTS – 7 NOVEMBER 2019**

On 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 a position statement was presented in respect of the Council's Concessionary Rents Policy. Public speakers were in attendance at the meeting in order to express their views on the possibility of a change in Council policy for concessionary rents.

A recommendation was made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at the end of the meeting that was held on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 which proposal that the Executive Committee abolish the idea of removing concessionary rent relief for Voluntary and Community Sector groups and instead look at alternative methods of funding the shortfall in the Council's budget. It was decided that this item would be discussed again at a future meeting of Overview and Scrutiny on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020. This recommendation was not approved by the Executive Committee.

### **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - SUPPORT TO THE VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR 2020/21 – 9 JANUARY 2020**

Further to the report that was presented to the Committee on 7<sup>th</sup> November 2019 this was an additional presentation that covered the Support to the Voluntary Sector. It was a policy that divided the Council however the Committee acknowledged that due to the financial position of the Council difficult decisions needed to be made. There were registered public speakers at this meeting who expressed their opinions regarding the proposed policy and how it would affect the Voluntary Sector.

There was a lengthy discussion which included comments about the consultation period with the sector and the revised funding model that was proposed. The discussions consisted of what options should or could be left in and which ones should or could be removed from the proposal. It was a long and difficult discussion for the Committee on a subject matter that had created much debate in the community and across Members. A recommendation was made to the Executive

Committee regarding the exemption of 'meanwhile type' leases in any proposed options. This recommendation was not agreed by the Executive Committee.

### **PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - TOWN CENTRE REGENERATION (COMMUNITY HUB AND RAILWAY QUARTER) – 7 NOVEMBER**

A report was received on the regeneration of Redditch Town Centre. In the course of the presentation Members were advised that 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 following was discussed at length by the Committee:

- 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.
- A submission of an Investment Plan by the Council in order to help secure funding from the Towns Fund
- The regeneration of Redditch Town Centre would be significant for all Councillors due to the importance of the town centre to all residents
- Further consultation had not yet been undertaken as the plans were only at an indicative stage. Specific proposals would be subject to consultation once they were brought forward.

The Committee made a number of recommendations in relation to this presentation including endorsing the concept of a comprehensive regeneration for the station quarter, Church Road sites, the library site and outdoor market sites. Another recommendation that was agreed to during this presentation which was that authority be delegated to the Chief Executive 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. These recommendations were approved by the Executive Committee

### **WASTE SERVICES – PRESENTATION – 7 NOVEMBER 2019**

A brief presentation was delivered in respect of Waste Management. The presentation focussed mainly on the approach that Redditch Borough Council took in Waste Management and the communications that are currently underway in order to encourage residents to reduce the amount of waste generated by each household and the value of taking preventative action. Members were also informed about changes to waste and recycling collection services, including garden waste collections, that had been the subject of Government consultation earlier that year.



**CIVIL CONTINGENCIES ANNUAL REPORT – 5 DECEMBER 2019**

The Civil Contingencies Annual Report was presented to the Committee and provided an update for Members on matters that had been carried out over the past year. This annual report was delivered in accordance with recommendations made by the Civil Contingencies short Sharp Review Group in a previous municipal year.

There had been extensive work around the updating of Business Continuity Plans and Rest Centre Plans across the Authority. A test was carried out on the Rest Centre Plan which had highlighted some errors within the plan that officers had then updated to ensure that the plan contained the most up to date and accurate information. Members were also provided with information on a multi-agency test exercise that had been carried out by officers at the West Midlands Safari Park. It was an opportunity to test the emergency plan with partner organisations.

**REDDITCH PARTNERSHIP ANNUAL REPORT – 5 DECEMBER 2019**

A report was presented to the Committee in relation to the Redditch Partnership Annual report. Again this report was presented in accordance with a proposal by the Local Strategic Partnership Task Group some years ago that the partnership should provide an annual update to the Committee.

The partnership is made up of from a range of organisations in Redditch who have identified priorities for the Borough including health inequalities, education attainment, raising aspirations of young people and the economy of Redditch.

The Redditch Partnership worked with local businesses to look at the skills available in the Borough and distributed data and knowledge to Members and partner organisations.

**SKILLS IN THE LOCAL WORKFORCE – PRESENTATION – 5 DECMEBER 2019**

The Committee received a report in relation to Skills in the Local Workforce and were advised on key areas including employment and local business initiatives, education and engagement with young people in the Borough and the work that Members could undertake in order to increase the engagement of local schools, pupils and their parents / care givers.

Members requested that a further presentation take place later in the year in order to clarify some of the data and receive an update on the initiatives that were currently underway.

**PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY- HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT STRATEGIC IMPROVEMENT PLAN PROGRESS REPORT – 16 DECEMBER 2019**

Members were updated on the progress of the Housing/Housing Revenue Account report and questioned officers regarding progress that had been made.

There had been significant changes since the previous update including the consultation and implementation of a review of the Housing and Community Services Management Team and consultation of a review of Housing Capital/ Property/ Compliance Team(s). The Committee was also updated that non-essential electrical work had been suspended and that significant work was being carried out by officers regarding cultural change within the service. The Committee were interested in receiving information regarding the backlog of Void properties and the Housing IT System Project Plan going forward.

Members were advised that compliance work including Fire Safety Orders, the control of asbestos, electricity and gas safety checks were being regularly disseminated to Portfolio Holders and Executive Committee Members. The new Housing IT system had been procured and would provide a more robust control of the Council's housing stock in addition to linking with the Council's new Finance system.

**PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - REDDITCH COUNCIL PLAN – 16 DECEMBER 2019**

The Redditch Council Plan was presented by the Policy Manager for Members' consideration. This was the new plan and contained 5 new Strategic Purposes that provided strategic direction for the Borough. In order to support Climate Change issues there was a 'Green Thread' that ran through the new plan.

**PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - REVIEW OF THE ONE STOP SHOPS – 16 DECEMBER 2019**

A report on the Review of the One Stop Shops was presented to the Committee.

The falling customer numbers at One Stop Shops (OSS) in Batchley, Winyates and Woodrow had resulted in the proposal that they would be closed. The proposal would not affect the Locality offices who would still have a presence within the communities along with other support teams including Financial Independent Teams (FIT).

Members were concerned with the potential loss of access for vulnerable and older residents concerning the making of payments. The Committee were reassured that there were plenty of locations for payments to be made and the cashiers at the Town Hall were still available to customers.

The Committee did recommend that Executive Committee note they had concerns regarding the content of this report.

**PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - ESSENTIAL LIVING FUND POLICY – 9 JANUARY 2020**

The Essential Living Fund report was presented for Members 'consideration, which proposed an update of the current policy. The new policy would provide clarity for customers and officers and provided a more targeted approach to enable customers to work towards long term financial stability and a consistency of service. Members recommended that the policy should be adopted.

**PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY - FEES AND CHARGES 2020/21 – 9 JANUARY 2020**

The Fees and Charges report was pre-scrutinised prior to its consideration at the Executive Committee and then Council. The Heads of Service were present at this meeting in order to explain any changes to fees and charges in their service area. Members were largely in agreement with the changes and noted the report. They did, however, request that more detail be provided in the report in future years.

## **TASK GROUPS AND SHORT SHARP REVIEWS**

Task Groups are established by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to conduct an in-depth review of any service, policy or issue that affects the Borough. The work carried out by Task Groups in 2019/20 is summarised below.

### **REVIEW OF PARKING ENFORCEMENT CONTRACT – 6 JUNE 2019**

At the start of the year Members decided to launch a review of parking enforcement arrangements in the borough. This subject had been raised as an area of concern at a meeting of the Audit, Governance and standards Committee in April 2019. Members had concerns regarding the Council's parking enforcement arrangements, in particular, dangerous and illegal parking around schools and hospitals. The review would include engagement with both Wychavon District Council, which provided a parking enforcement service on behalf of the Council, and Worcestershire County Council in respect of the legal agreement which shaped what the Council could do.

The meetings have included interviews and consideration of evidence submitted by with the following officers and representatives from partnership organisations:

- Representative from West Mercia Police
- Head of Environmental Services (Redditch Borough Council)
- Environmental Services Manager (Redditch Borough Council)
- Representative of Worcestershire County Council

A survey was undertaken and distributed to Members to gauge the extent to which parking enforcement problems were reported by residents to Councillors and whether there were any variances between wards.

The group has agreed their recommendations and will report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on their findings at the first meeting of the new municipal year.

### **SUICIDE PREVENTION**

Six Members were appointed to the Task Group and the first meeting of the Task Group took place on 27th June, 2019, and a work programme was produced. To ensure that Members could undertake an effective review of an important subject Members agreed that the deadline for the Suicide Prevention Task Group should be extended to 2020.

In the course of this review the task group has interviewed the following:

- Representatives of Worcestershire County Council

- Local community group experience in helping people mental ill health.
- NHS Practitioners
- The Redditch Partnership manager and other Council officers

The group is due to report their findings to the overview and scrutiny committee at the first meeting in the new municipal year.

### **CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY PANEL – 25 SEPTEMBER**

Local authorities are required to have a Committee designated with responsibility to review the work of the local Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership and this Committee must meet at least once a year to discuss the work of the partnership. In Redditch this role is undertaken by the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel, which is a permanent sub-committee of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Panel holds the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership to account for its work in Redditch.

A meeting of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel took place in September 2019. During the meeting Members received an update on the work of the partnership in the Borough in the preceding 12 months, this included Anti-Social Behaviour and data surrounding the reporting of it in the Borough. There was also discussion and information circulated to Members regarding the Nominated Neighbour Scheme.

## **BUDGET SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP – CHAIR, COUNCILLOR JENNY WHEELER**

The Budget Scrutiny Working Group held a number of meetings in 2019/20. The model of the working group had been considered successful in the previous year and therefore a similar approach would be undertaken in 2019/20. Members concluded that this was a challenging time financially for the Council and that 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.

During the year the Budget Scrutiny Working Group considered the following matters:

- Medium Term Financial Plan which outlined the potential budget gap for 2020/21 – 2023/24.
- Commercialism Programme Board including the progress within the Authority with delivering commercial services and the role of Black Radley. Professor Peter Latchford OBE, from Black Radley presented to the group and it was recommended that there be a presentation organised for all Council Members in respect of the budget.
- Section 24 Notice and the implications of this for the Council's financial position moving forward – including difficult decisions that needed to be made in order to help balance the council's budget.
- Enterprise Finance system
- Fees and Charges
- Financial Monitoring reports
- Investment and Acquisition Strategy

During the municipal year all recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group have been accepted.

## **PERFORMANCE SCRUTINY WORKING GROUP**

The group has an important role in scrutinising the delivery of the Council's priorities. The group agreed that for 2019/20 Members would monitor performance of services in relation to the strategic purposes. Each Member was allocated responsibility for taking a lead on monitoring the Council's performance in relation to a single strategic purpose. The Group met seven times in 2019/20. This represented a significant improvement on the previous year when only three meetings took place. The group had agreed at the start of the year that they would have at least six meetings and a quorum of three. Every meeting of the group was quorate.

During these meetings the following items were discussed:

- Corporate Performance report in respect of one of the strategic purposes 'Help me be Financially Independent'.
- Interviewed the Chief Executive and Head of Economic Development for North Worcestershire about work in respect of the strategic purpose 'help me run a successful business'.

At the end of the year members decided that in future the group should review the performance of services collectively. Heads of Service will be invited to meetings of the group in 2020/21 in turn to discuss the performance of services within their remit.

### **EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES**

#### West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny Committee – Council representative, Councillor Michael Chalk

The Committee received regular updates from Councillor Chalk, the Council's representative on the West Midlands Combined Authority Overview and Scrutiny Committee. During the year Councillor Chalk frequently provided written updates about the work of the Committee and highlighted the following points:

- Members considered the content of the WMCA Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Annual Report for 2018/19.
- 5G network and how this should be rolled out across the region#
- Homelessness – including Housing First initiatives

#### Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) – Council Representative, Councillor Michael Chalk.

The Committee received regular updates from Councillor Chalk about the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC). Some of the issues highlighted during the year included:

- Acute stroke services - Members discussed stroke service provision in the County
- Interview with the Chief Executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospital Trust

## CONCLUSION

This has been a busy year for Overview and Scrutiny in Redditch. In particular Members have undertaken a significant amount of pre-scrutiny work and many of the Committee's recommendations have influenced the decisions reached by the Executive Committee and Council.

The Committee welcomed the report in respect of the Overview and Scrutiny Guidance that was published in 2019. Members were pleased to learn that the majority of points detailed in the report were already in place in Redditch, indicating that the Council's scrutiny function is compliant with national best practice.

To ensure that the Council's Overview and Scrutiny process continues to meet the needs of Redditch residents whilst complying with legislative requirements, a scrutiny training session will be provided in the new municipal year. All non-Executive Members will be invited to attend.

**The Chair of Overview and Scrutiny Committee express his thanks to all Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, recognising in particular the valuable contribution made by Members through Task Group investigations and on the Budget and Performance Scrutiny Working Groups.**

For any background information on the work of Overview and Scrutiny Committee in Redditch, please visit <https://www.redditchbc.gov.uk/council/the-council.aspx>

Democratic Services, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH  
Tel: 01527 64252 Ext 3031 email: [joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)



## Appendix A

**Scrutiny Proposal Form**

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

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

Proposer's name and designation		Date of referral	
Proposed topic title			
Link to local priorities including the strategic purposes			
Background to the issue			
Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)			
How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)			

Please return this form to: Jess Bayley, Jo Gresham or Amanda Scarce, Democratic Services Officers, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH

Email: [jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)  
[joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)  
[a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

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## Executive

### Committee

Monday, 24 February 2020

## MINUTES

#### Present:

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

#### Also Present:

Councillors Salman Akbar, Juliet Brunner, John Fisher, Peter Fleming, Andrew Fry, Ann Isherwood, Anthony Lovell, Gemma Monaco, Nyear Nazir, Gareth Prosser, Mark Shurmer, Yvonne Smith and Jennifer Wheeler

#### Officers:

Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton, Sue Hanley, Jayne Pickering and Deb Poole

#### Senior Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley

#### 110. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence, though Members noted that Councillor Bill Hartnett would be arriving slightly later.

#### 111. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 112. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

A written record of the Leader's announcements was circulated at the meeting.

.....  
Chair

**113. MINUTES****RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.**

**114. COUNCIL TAX RESOLUTIONS**

The Executive Director of Finance and Resources presented the Council Tax Resolutions. Members were advised that following the Executive Committee meeting that had been held on 11<sup>th</sup> February 2020 all of the preceptors had provided information to the Council, including Feckenham Parish Council, Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority, Worcestershire County Council and the West Mercia Police and Crime Commissioner. The detail provided had informed the Council Tax Resolutions.

Members discussed the Council Tax Resolutions and noted that Council Tax was an important source of income for local government. However, Redditch Borough Council, though it was the collecting authority, would only retain a small portion of the funding from council Tax, the majority of which would be distributed amongst the other preceptors.

During consideration of this item concerns were raised about the funding available for local authorities and the challenges facing local government. Members noted that Council across the country were struggling financially and it was suggested that the Government needed to consider providing more funding to Councils moving forward.

**RESOLVED to NOTE**

**that at a meeting held on 14<sup>th</sup> January 2020, the Executive Committee calculated the Council Tax Base 2020/21 as:**

- a) **for the whole Council area as 26,276.50 [Item T in the formula in Section 31B of the Local Government Act 1992, as amended (the “Act”)]; and**
- b) **for dwellings in those parts of its area to which a Parish precept relates; this being Feckenham Parish as 367.50.**

and RECOMMENDED that Council APPROVE:

- 1) the calculation for the Council Tax requirement for the Council's own purposes for 2020/21 (excluding Parish precepts) as £6,415,355;
- 2) that the following amounts be calculated for the year 2020/21 in accordance with sections 31 to 36 of the Act:
  - a) £44,214,467 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (2) of the Act (taking into account all precepts issued to it by Parish Councils) (*i.e. Gross expenditure*);
  - b) £37,789,112 being the aggregate of the amounts which the Council estimates for the items set out in Section 31A (3) of the Act. (*i.e. Gross income*);
  - c) £6,425,355 being the amount by which the aggregate of 3 (a) above exceeds the aggregate at 3 (b) above, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31A (4) of the Act, as its Council Tax requirement for the year. (Item R in the formula in Section 31B of the Act);
  - d) £244.53 being the amount at 3 (c) above (Item R), all divided by Item T (1(a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 31B of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year (including Parish precepts);
  - e) £10,000 being the aggregate amount of all special items (Feckenham Parish precept) referred to in Section 34 (1) of the Act;
  - f) £244.15 being the amount at 3 (d) above less the result given by dividing the amount at 3 (e) above by Item T (1 (a) above), calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 34 (2) of the Act, as the basic amount of its Council Tax for the year for dwellings in those parts of its area to which no Parish precept relates;
  - g) £271.36 being the amount given by adding to the amount at 3(f), the amount of the special item relating to the Parish of Feckenham 3(e), divided by the amount in 1(b) above;

# Executive Committee

Monday, 24 February 2020

- h) the amounts below given by multiplying the amounts at 3(f) and 3(g) above by the number which, in the proportion set out in Section 5(1) of the Act, is applicable to dwellings listed in a particular valuation band, divided by the number which in that proportion is applicable to dwellings listed in Band D, calculated by the Council, in accordance with Section 36(1) of the Act, as the amounts to be taken into account for the year in respect of categories of dwelling listed in different valuation bands;

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Parish of Feckenham £	All other parts of the Council's area £
A	6/9	180.91	162.77
B	7/9	211.05	189.89
C	8/9	241.21	217.02
D	1	271.36	244.15
E	11/9	331.67	298.41
F	13/9	391.96	352.66
G	15/9	452.27	406.92
H	18/9	542.72	488.30

- 3) it be noted that for the year 2020/21, Worcestershire County Council, Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia and Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority have issued precepts to the Council in accordance with Section 40 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 for each category of dwelling in the Council's area as indicated below:

	Valuation Bands							
	A	B	C	D	E	F	G	H
	£	£	£	£	£	£	£	£
Worcestershire County Council	874.03	1,019.71	1,165.38	1,311.05	1,602.39	1,893.74	2,185.08	2,622.10
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	150.13	175.16	200.18	225.20	275.24	325.29	375.33	450.40
Hereford and Worcester Fire Authority	57.33	66.88	76.44	85.99	105.10	124.21	143.32	171.98

# Executive Committee

Monday, 24 February 2020

- 4) that having calculated the aggregate in each case of the amounts at 4(h) and 5 above, that Redditch Borough Council in accordance with Sections 30 and 36 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 hereby sets the amounts shown below as the amounts of Council Tax for 2020/21 for each part of its area and for each of the categories of dwellings:

Valuation Band	Proportion of Band D tax paid	Parish of Feckenham £	All other parts of the Council's area £
A	6/9	1,262.40	1,244.26
B	7/9	1,472.80	1,451.64
C	8/9	1,683.21	1,659.02
D	1	1,893.60	1,866.39
E	11/9	2,314.40	2,281.14
F	13/9	2,735.20	2,695.90
G	15/9	3,156.00	3,110.65
H	18/9	3,787.20	3,732.78

- 5) that the Executive Director of Finance and Resources be authorised to make payments under Section 90(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund by ten equal instalments between April 2020 to March 2021 as detailed below:

	Precept £	Surplus on Collection Fund £	Total to pay £
Worcestershire County Council	34,449,805.00	615,263.00	35,065,068.00
Police and Crime Commissioner for West Mercia	5,917,373.31	105,668.00	6,023,041.31
Hereford & Worcester Fire Authority	2,259,515.68	41,638.00	2,301,153.68

- 6) that the Executive Director of Finance and Resources be authorised to make transfers under Section 97 of the Local Government Finance Act 1988 from the Collection Fund to the General Fund the sum of £6,543,127 being the Council's own demand on the Collection Fund (£6,415,355.00) and Parish Precept (£10,000) and the distribution of the Surplus on the Collection Fund (£117,772);

- 7) **that the Executive Director Finance & Resources be authorised to make payments from the General Fund to Feckenham Parish Council the sums listed above (£10,000) by instalment after 1 April 2020 in respect of the precept levied on the Council;**
- 8) **that the above resolutions 3 to 5 be signed by the Chief Executive for use in legal proceedings in the Magistrates Court for the recovery of unpaid Council Taxes; and**
- 9) **Notices of the making of the said Council Taxes signed by the Chief Executive are given by advertisement in the local press under Section 38(2) of the Local Government Finance Act 1992.**

#### **115. CONSTITUTION REVIEW**

The Head of Service for Transformation, Organisational Development and Digital Strategy presented a report outlining proposed amendments to the Officer Scheme of Delegations. Members were asked to consider delegating authority to Officers in respect of the following:

- To determine the Council's IT policies.
- To determine equalities, engagement and performance policies.
- To determine service restructures.

In all cases the delegated authority would enable the Council to update policies and procedures at the Council more quickly than at present. The proposed delegations would also enable the Council to adapt in a fast changing environment, including with respect to modern technology. The changes had been reviewed at a recent meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party (CRWP) and the proposals detailed in the report reflected the conclusions reached by the group.

Members discussed the proposed delegations and in doing so noted that this followed previous reviews of the Officer Scheme of Delegations in recent years. As had been the case at the CRWP meeting there was general consensus that the proposed delegation for Officers to determine IT policies should be supported, as this was an internal operational matter. However, concerns were raised about proposals to delegate authority to Officers to determine equalities and engagement policies. Members noted that the Council in the past had frequently adopted progressive policies in respect of these areas prior to legislation being passed that required such action and Members would potentially want to



continue to do so. In respect of service restructures concerns were raised that this could result in staff redundancies as well as impact on services provided to the local community.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **the proposed change to the Officer Scheme of Delegations for the Business Transformation and Organisational Development Department, in respect of delegating authority to Officers to determine all the Council's policies and strategies relating to Equalities, Engagement and Performance be approved;**

**and RESOLVED that**

- 2) **the proposed changes to the Officer Scheme of Delegations for the Business Transformation and Organisational Development Department, in respect of delegating authority to Officers to determine all the Council's IT policies be approved; and**
- 3) **the proposed changes to the Officer Scheme of Delegations for the Business Transformation and Organisational Development Department, in respect of delegating authority to Officers to determine restructures within agreed budgets be approved.**

**116. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chair noted that there were no recommendations arising from the latest meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, held on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> February 2020, requiring Members' consideration.

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

The Chair explained that there were no further recommendations requiring Members' consideration on this occasion.

**118. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT**

The following updates were provided in respect of Executive Advisory Panels and other bodies:

# Executive Committee

Monday, 24 February 2020

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

Councillor Clayton advised that there were no updates to provide on this occasion.

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

Councillor Dormer noted that the outcomes of the latest meeting of the CRWP had been discussed earlier in the meeting.

- c) Corporate Parenting Board – Redditch Borough Council Representative, Councillor Julian Grubb

Councillor Grubb explained that there were no updates to provide in respect of the work of the Board on this occasion.

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

Councillor Dormer thanked every Member who had attended a data protection training session that had been held on 18<sup>th</sup> February 2020. Positive feedback had been received from both Members and Officers about this training. Those Members who had not yet attended data protection training in the 2019/20 municipal year were urged to attend an additional training session that was scheduled to take place on the evening of Thursday 27<sup>th</sup> February 2020.

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

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

The Meeting commenced at 6.31 pm  
and closed at 6.46 pm

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER'S

## WORK PROGRAMME

1 April 2020 to 31 July 2020

(published as at 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020)



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

This Work Programme gives details of items on which key decisions are likely to be taken by the Borough Council's Executive Committee, or full Council, in the coming four months. "Key Decisions" are ones which are likely to:

- (i) result in the Council incurring expenditure, foregoing income or the making of savings in excess of £50,000 or which are otherwise significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (ii) be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in the area comprising two or more wards in the Borough;
- (iii) involve any proposal to cease to provide a Council service (other than a temporary cessation of service of not more than 6 months).

If you wish to make representations on the proposed decision you are encouraged to get in touch with the relevant report author as soon as possible before the proposed date of the decision. Contact details are provided. Alternatively you may write to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, The Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH or e-mail: [democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

The Executive Committee's meetings are normally held at 7pm on Tuesday evenings at the Town Hall. They are open to the public, except when confidential information is being discussed. If you wish to attend for a particular matter, it is advisable to check with the Democratic Services Team on (01527) 64252, ext: 3268 to make sure it is going ahead as planned. If you have any other queries, Democratic Services Officers will be happy to advise you. The full Council meets in accordance the Council's Calendar of Meetings. Meetings commence at 7.00pm.

### EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP

Councillor Matthew Dormer, Leader and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships

Councillor David Thain, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management

Councillor Brandon Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services

Councillor Julian Grubb Community Services and Regulatory Services

Councillor Michael Rouse, Portfolio Holder for Leisure

Councillor Craig Warhurst, Portfolio Holder for Housing

Councillor Greg Chance

Councillor Bill Hartnett

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Housing / Housing Revenue Account Strategic Improvement Plan Progress Report <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Not before 1st Apr 2020		Report of the Deputy Chief Executive	Sue Hanley, Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director (Leisure, Environmental & Community Services) Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3601
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20 <b>Key:</b> No	Council 6 Apr 2020		Report of the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	Jess Bayley, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Redditch) Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3268
Matchborough and Winyates District Centres - Procurement Process to Secure a Development Partner <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive Not before 1st May 2020	This report may contain exempt information which would need to be considered in private session.	Report of the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
New Cemetery Provision <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Not before 1st May 2020  Council Not before 1st May 2020		Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Michael Birkinshaw, Bereavement Services Manager Tel: 01527 62174
Domestic Abuse Policy - Identifying Abuse and Responding Effectively <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 9 Jun 2020  Council 22 Jun 2020		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Bev Houghton, Community Safety Manager (Redditch and Bromsgrove) Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3656

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Homes England Asset Transfer <b>Key: Yes</b>	Executive Not before 9th Jun 2020	<p>Consideration of this item is the subject to agreement of certain matters with Homes England in January 2019.</p> <p>This report will contain commercially sensitive information and therefore parts of the report may need to be considered in private session.</p>	Report of the Chief Executive	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Tel: 01527 881429
Housing Policies <b>Key: No</b>	Executive Not before 9th Jun 2020		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Judith Willis, Head of Community and Housing Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3284

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Parking Enforcement Task Group - Final Report <b>Key: No</b>	Executive 9 Jun 2020	The report will be considered by the Executive Committee, subject to the prior approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Jess Bayley, Senior Democratic Services Officer (Redditch) Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3268 Councillor Mark Shurmer
Suicide Prevention Task Group - Final Report <b>Key: No</b>	Executive 9 Jun 2020	The report will be considered by the Executive Committee, subject to the prior approval of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Sarah Sellers, Democratic Services Officer Tel: 01527 64252 Councillor Debbie Chance

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**Overview & Scrutiny**

Committee

19<sup>th</sup> March 2020**WORK PROGRAMME 2019/20**

(Report of the Chief Executive)

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Subject Matter</b>	<b>Officer(s) Responsible for report</b>
<b>ALL MEETINGS</b>	<b>REGULAR ITEMS</b>	<b>(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)</b>
	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
	<b>REGULAR ITEMS</b>	
	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

**Overview & Scrutiny**

Committee

19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

<b>MEETING DATE</b>	<b>ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED</b>	<b>RELEVANT LEAD</b>
<b>19<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>	Finalising the content of the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report 2019/20	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>19<sup>th</sup> March 2020</b>	Parking Enforcement Task Group – Final Report	Councillor Mark Shurmer
<b>May 2020</b>	Pre-Decision Scrutiny - New Cemetery Provision	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service.
<b>June 2020</b>	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Housing Strategy	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>June 2020</b>	Suicide Prevention Task Group – Final Report	Councillor Debbie Chance
<b>June 2020</b>	Redditch Community Lottery – Six Months' Update	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>June 2020</b>	Pre-Decision-Scrutiny - Homes England Asset Transfer	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
<b>June 2020</b>	Skills in the Local Workforce Update	Andy Bywater

# Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

19<sup>th</sup> March 2020

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<b>OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED</b>		
<b>December 2020</b>	Civil Contingencies Annual Report	Rebecca Pritchett
<b>December 2020</b>	Redditch Partnership Plan	Helen Broughton

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## SCRUTINY BULLETIN

### OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE ACTIVITIES – 9 MARCH

#### SCRUTINY REVIEW INTO THE EFFECTIVENESS OF TRANSPORT DELIVERY COMMITTEE

Earlier this year the WMCA Board considered the recommendations of a scrutiny review undertaken to determine the effectiveness of the Transport Delivery Committee.

The WMCA Board welcomed the report and the Portfolio Lead for Transport agreed to formally respond to the proposals within the report.

Tim Martin advised that a response was being prepared by the Portfolio Lead Member Cllr Ward and should be provided to committee before the next meeting of the WMCA Board on 20 March.

#### FEEDBACK FROM MAYORAL Q&A SESSION: WMCA DRAFT BUDGET 2020/21

A response from the Mayor on the committee's recommendations presented with the WMCA Draft Budget 2020/21 to the WMCA Board on 17 January was considered. A copy of the letter received can be accessed here [👉](#)



AS.MS.jb - Cllr Lisa  
Trickett - 28.01.20.pdf

There was some concern that the response did not adequately address the issues raised and lacked detail about the specific actions that would be taken in response to these issues.

#### SPOTLIGHT SESSION WITH WM5G

Members held a spotlight session with WM5G and discussed how 5G could benefit SMEs, the role it will play in delivering innovative new projects, funding structures that underpin the trial, and the need to establish awareness of the difference between 5G consumer and 5G core.

Members stressed that all communities should be able to benefit from the delivery

#### SINGLE ASSURANCE FRAMEWORK PROJECT

The committee discussed the need to ensure that appropriate, suitable and transparent processes were in place for Investment Programme approvals.

Linda Horne advised that discussions were being held with local authority Leaders on the future prioritisation of the Investment Programme and the development of set criteria.

#### SCRUTINY REVIEW: EFFECTIVENESS OF THE WMCA GOVERNANCE ARRANGEMENTS

The review had now concluded and discussions on the key findings that would form the recommendations were being agreed with members of the review group. The final report will be submitted to SLT for consideration and would be shared with the Mayor following the election.

### MAYORAL Q&A SESSION: CONNECTIVITY - 13 FEBRUARY

The committee approved the conclusions arising out of the responses received from the Mayor. The summary will be submitted to the WMCA Board on 20 March for consideration.

A copy of the summary can be accessed here:



Report.pdf

### WORKSHOP: ANNUAL DELIVERY PLAN

The committee held a workshop that was led by Paul Clarke and Mike Lewis on the process and principles being adopted by the WMCA on the development of the 2020/21 Annual Delivery Plan.

### ADULT EDUCATION BUDGET – UPDATE ON SCRUTINY RECOMMENDATIONS

In February 2019, the committee had undertaken a review of the Adult Education Budget in conjunction with Cabinet Members for Education and Skills from each of the constituent authorities. A series of recommendations were agreed by the Skills Advisory Board and WMCA Board.

The committee welcomed the progress made to date and asked for a report back in March 2021 on the progress with AEB and on the developments of the budget in supporting learners with additional needs and those being home schooled.

*“OSC recommendations have really helped us to drive a different approach with ΔFR”*



Keep up  
to date!

- Tweet the Overview & Scrutiny Committee @WMCA\_Scrutiny
- Or email us with any questions or topic's you'd like to suggest for scrutiny via [lyndsey.roberts@wmca.org.uk](mailto:lyndsey.roberts@wmca.org.uk)

**Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - 2<sup>nd</sup> March 2020**

Members initially attended a pre-meeting in order to determine what outcomes they hoped for from the session.

The first organisation that presented was the **Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust**. Mr Hopkins, representing the Trust, explained that it was a different Care Quality Commission (CQC) inspection that had given the poor result and that in May 2019 things were acceptable but by December the situation had deteriorated.

Members were also informed that there had been an 8% increase in Accident & Emergency (A&E) demand and that the A&E department at The Royal Worcester Hospital was too small and needed additional buildings. The Alexandra Hospital is to lose 6 theatres during a refurbishment and it is anticipated that there will be more building at The Royal Worcester Hospital. The IT system needs major improvement but there would be no initial move to 5G. The main problem was through flow of the hospitals with more 'out' than 'in' needed and approximately 40 patients who do not need an acute bed. The opinion of the Committee was that the CQC report showed that any improvements being made were taking too long.

**Worcestershire County Council (WCC)** – Adult services at WCC were learning from other authorities and intervening with regular patients who are admitted to hospital to try to reduce their admissions. WCC are working to improve the general health of the population but the data for Worcestershire was complex and therefore it is difficult to move forward. They had managed to reduce hospital stays from 8 to 5 days by working with patients from admission. They have 3 pathways to move patients on from hospital but they are reliant on patient's wishes, particularly when it comes to moving to the self-financing accommodation. NHS care is free, care homes cost the resident, this results in a delay.

**Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust** relate to the Community Hospitals who find it difficult to fill the beds due to limited access to specialist care. They have 31 neighbourhood teams that are active 24/7. They would like to see more specialist care in community hospitals (Persore has fractures and Evesham has stroke care). They would like to be able to pre-order care packages.

**HealthWatch Worcestershire** is an independent organisation that has the ability go into hospitals and talk to the patients with the anticipation of improving the system at a strategic level. They are able to attend a range of Committees, investigate various issues and produce targeted reports. They have put forward suggestions to help with trollies in corridors by asking for more communication, signage and access to food and drink. They have also made recommendations for

fracture clinics to be more patient focused. What they want is consistency, and have suggested that the regular change in executive positions gives rise to problems.

**West Midlands Ambulance Service** - The 111 service takes 22 seconds to answer and 999 takes 4 seconds so there is no delay whichever number you use. Their clear, long-term plan for the future is to own their buildings have a clear career path. The service has told the CQC that there are problems with the hand over. They are disappointed not to have won the "Moving On "contract and are concerned for patient care.

West Midlands Ambulance Service would like everyone to have the "respect form", so that the ambulance staff will know how to treat the patient.

Worcestershire Clinical Commissioning Group has been trying for 3 to 4 years to reduce the demands on admission but there is still a 3% increase per annum. There is more work with primary care and an extra 130 beds available. With a new board they are holding all areas to account.

Mr Hopkins of the **Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust** returned to say that the board was making improvements and these were sustainable. On coronavirus there are plans in place with an increase in the number of respiratory beds with experts at a national level to help. Overall there is a need for a culture change.

The O&S Committee came to the following conclusions:

1. There is a lack of space in both A&E departments.
2. There is a lack of space in paediatrics.
3. IT must be improved.
4. Access to care packages more choice/options would reduce bed blocking.
5. Extra beds available in community hospitals.
6. Leadership needs to manage the situation to produce improvements.
7. Develop the "Respect" agenda.
8. More consistency.