



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thu 4 Jun
2020
6.30 pm

Virtual Meeting

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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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

Thursday, 4th June, 2020

6.30 pm

Virtual Meeting - Skype - Virtual

Committee

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Joe Baker (Chair)	Peter Fleming
	Debbie Chance (Vice-Chair)	Andrew Fry
	Salman Akbar	Mark Shurmer
	Joanne Beecham	Jennifer Wheeler
	Michael Chalk	

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. Public Speaking

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

5. Discretionary Business Grant Policy

(Report to follow)

6. Work Programme and Planning (Pages 11 - 14)

7. Parking Enforcement Task Group - Final Report (Pages 15 - 42)

8. Annual Report 2019 - 2020 (Pages 43 - 62)

9. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme - Selecting Items for Scrutiny (Pages 63 - 70)

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

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

Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

Thursday, 4th June, 2020

11. 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.

12. 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’.



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

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.

.....
Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

93. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on Thursday 9th 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.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

- 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

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

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

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

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

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

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 11th 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 1st March to 30th June 2020.

RESOLVED that

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

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

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

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

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.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Monday, 17th February, 2020

- 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 19th 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 19th 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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Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

4th June 2020**WORK PROGRAMME 2020/21**

(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

Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

4th June 2020

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

Overview & Scrutiny

Committee

4th June 2020

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

Possible Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Items

Links between Housing and Health in Redditch (data obtained from the Worcestershire JSNA Strategic Housing Partnership?)

- Influenza vaccinations
- Vegetable consumption
- Alcohol admissions
- Reception children overweight
- Dementia diagnosis

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Overview & Scrutiny

Parking Enforcement Task Group's Final Report

March 2020

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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CONTENTS

	Page Number
Chair's Foreword	2
Summary of Recommendations	3
Introduction/Background Information	5
Chapter 1: Parking Around Schools	11
Chapter 2: Highways	15
Chapter 3: Member Development	16
Conclusion	19
Appendix 1 - Terms of Reference	20
Appendix 2 - Witnesses	22
Appendix 3 - Timeline of Activities	23
Appendix 4 – Borough Councillors - Survey	24
Appendix 5 – Glossary	26

Membership of the Task Group

Councillors Mark Shurmer (Chair), Salman Akbar, Joanne Beecham and Jenny Wheeler.

Support Officer

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Completed

March 2020

Contact

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Email: scrutiny@redditchbc.gov.uk

FOREWORD

It gives me great pleasure to present the report of The Parking Enforcement Task Group to the Council.

Parking, and especially school parking, provide a large proportion of complaints dealt with by Councillors and our partners. This issue was originally raised at a meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee and it was suggested that this would be a suitable topic for a Task Group investigation.

All members of the group have remarked that the subject is far more complex than we first thought and that a lot has been learned throughout the process by all concerned.

The recommendations tabled within this report were all carefully considered and have been reached through input from the Police, Worcestershire County Council, Wychavon District Council and the staff at Redditch Borough Council. Members have also taken up the opportunity to accompany our Parking Enforcement Officers as they go about their duties.

I would like to thank all members of the group for their hard work in bringing forward this report and for the Officers involved for their help and guidance.



Councillor Mark Shurmer
Chair of the Parking Enforcement Task Group

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS**CHAPTER 1: PARKING AROUND SCHOOLS****Recommendation 1**

We recommend that at a meeting of Worcestershire Leaders' Board the Leader should raise the need to introduce Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for all zigzag road markings outside schools in the county. As part of this process the Leader should request that Worcestershire County Council write to the Secretary of State for Transport to request that additional, ring-fenced funding be provided to Worcestershire County Council that can be invested in introducing these additional TROs.

Financial Implications: There are no financial implications for Redditch Borough Council. The proposed action could result in Worcestershire County Council receiving additional funding.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications.

Recommendation 2

We recommend that, subject to the successful implementation of Recommendation 1 above, Redditch Borough Council should fund an additional Civil Enforcement Officer post dedicated to enforcement action around schools, to work term-time only.

Financial Implications: The estimated cost to the Council of an additional Civil Parking Enforcement Officer working term-time only is approximately £23,000 per annum. Members have been advised that once TROs are in place on zigzags outside schools and, given the level of complaints about problem parking outside schools, income from enforcement action undertaken by this Officer may not be sufficient to cover the total cost of the additional post. With the officer being present in the location, drivers do not tend to park illegally. Hence there is an improvement in parking but limited income.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications.

Recommendation 3

We recommend that Officers from Redditch Borough Council work with Worcestershire County Council, local schools and West Mercia Police to develop a strategy to tackle problem parking near schools.

Financial Implications: There would be the cost of Officer time.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications

CHAPTER 2: HIGHWAYS**Recommendation 4**

We recommend that the need for road markings to be replaced as soon as possible after resurfacing work has been undertaken should be discussed at a forthcoming Redditch Highways Forum meeting. All Worcestershire County Councillors representing a Redditch division should be provided with a copy of the group's final report to facilitate a discussion of this subject.

Financial Implications: There will be the cost of printing copies of the group's final report for the consideration of all the County Councillors representing a Redditch division.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications

CHAPTER 3: MEMBER DEVELOPMENT**Recommendation 5**

We recommend that training in respect of parking enforcement arrangements in the Borough should be provided in a single training session each municipal year as part of the member induction programme. New elected Members should be offered the opportunity to shadow a Civil Parking Enforcement Officer.

Financial Implications: There would be the cost of organising the training as well as the arrangements for Members to shadow the Civil Enforcement Officers. In addition, Members can claim an attendance allowance for travelling to attend training, which is reimbursed at 45 pence per mile. As each Councillor lives in a different location in the Borough and not all make claims the exact costs are difficult to calculate.

Legal implications: There are no legal implications

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND INFORMATIONIntroduction

The subject of parking enforcement was raised by Members during a meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 25th April 2019. During this meeting concerns were raised about problems with parking in the Borough, particularly in the town centre and around schools. The Committee requested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee investigate this matter further.

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 6th June 2019 Councillor Mark Shurmer, Vice Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee and a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, presented a scoping document which set out proposals to review parking enforcement arrangements in the Borough, including the Council's contract to deliver a parking enforcement service on behalf of Worcestershire County Council (Appendix 1). Based on the information contained in the document Members agreed to launch the review.

Members were tasked with reviewing the following areas:

- To review the content of Redditch Borough Council's parking enforcement contract with Wychavon District Council.
- To consult with relevant Council Officers and partner organisations, including Worcestershire County Council and West Mercia Police, about parking enforcement issues in the Borough.
- To scrutinise the financial implications of the parking enforcement contract and of enforcement action in Redditch.
- To investigate action that could be taken to improve parking enforcement in the Borough.
- To review the action taken by the Council to communicate the Council's approach to parking enforcement and the powers available to the local authority in respect of dangerous and irresponsible parking.

Approach to Evidence Gathering

During the review Members gathered evidence from a range of sources. Information about parking enforcement in Redditch was obtained from the following:

- A presentation from the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services and the Environmental Services Manager in respect of parking enforcement arrangements in the Borough.
- An interview with the Operations Manager from Wychavon District Council, with responsibility for managing the parking enforcement service on behalf of Redditch Borough Council.
- An interview with Inspector Mark Chappell of West Mercia Police regarding parking enforcement in the Borough.
- Reviewing relevant documentation relating to parking enforcement in Redditch, including information on the subject on the Council's website and a previous scrutiny report that recommended decriminalisation of civil parking enforcement.
- Consideration of written information submitted by Worcestershire County Council in response to questions about parking enforcement asked by the group.
- Reviewing the content of scrutiny reports in respect of parking enforcement and residential parking schemes undertaken by other Councils in the country. The group

considered scrutiny reports that had been published by Bromsgrove District Council in 2018, East Hertfordshire Council in 2014, Portsmouth City Council in 2019, Worcester City Council in 2012 and York City Council in 2019.

- Shadowing a Civil Enforcement Officer (CEO) during a shift at work in the Borough. Each Councillor shadowed a CEO on a different date in order to observe the service in action and to find out about the challenges impacting on the service. Members learned that CEOs often encounter resistance to their work and this can be aggressive in nature. The group wanted to be clear that they welcome the CEOs and feel that they should be supported in their work.
- Consulting with other Borough Councillors in respect of parking enforcement issues in their wards. A survey was developed to enable the group to consult with other Borough Councillors, which was circulated for Members' consideration both electronically and in a paper format (Appendix 4). A total of 18 Borough Councillors, representing both political parties on the Council and a range of wards across the Borough, submitted feedback to the group in completed surveys.

History of Parking Enforcement in Redditch and Contractual Arrangements

In September 2006 the former Environmental Overview and Scrutiny Committee established a Task and Finish Group to review the potential to introduce Civil (Decriminalised) Parking Enforcement in Redditch. At the time of this review there was one Traffic Warden operating on behalf of the police and a number of residents' parking schemes in the Borough. The Task and Finish Group concluded in 2007 by recommending that the Council should consult with the public about the potential to introduce Civil Parking Enforcement in the Borough.

Civil Parking Enforcement means that local authorities are responsible for enforcing on-street parking controls instead of the police for the majority of parking contraventions. In a two-tier authority area, the County Council is the responsible authority. Borough and District Councils can deliver this service on behalf of a County Council in accordance with a service agreement.

Worcestershire County Council discharged responsibility for civil parking enforcement to Redditch Borough Council in an agency agreement for on street enforcement of parking control in 2009. Redditch Borough Council adopted civil parking enforcement on 23rd March 2009. On this date the Council entered into a ten-year service level agreement (SLA) with Wychavon District Council to deliver the service on the authority's behalf. Under the terms of the SLA Wychavon District Council manage the Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) operating in the Borough, administration of the team, recovery of outstanding Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs), work on appeals, adjudication cases and warrant instructions in respect of PCNs and provide overall management of the parking enforcement service.

In 2019 the Council extended the SLA with Wychavon District Council for another three years. The end of this three-year period will coincide with the end of Bromsgrove District Council's SLA with Wychavon District Council for parking enforcement. At this stage Members have been advised that Officers are proposing to undertake a joint review of future parking enforcement needs across both the Borough and the District. Redditch Borough Council already works with Bromsgrove District Council in a shared service in respect of management arrangements for monitoring the SLA with Wychavon District Council. Members have been advised that this shared management arrangement has enabled the Council to reduce management costs for the service.

Worcestershire County Council is responsible for implementing parking restrictions while Redditch Borough Council is responsible for enforcement action. Worcestershire County Council is also responsible for ensuring that there are relevant Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) in place to legally enable enforcement action to be taken. Any requests for additional restrictions, changes to restrictions or the background regarding the introduction of restrictions are determined by Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department.

If the Council should decide in future to cancel the agreement with Worcestershire County Council, under the terms of the contract Redditch Borough Council would need to give two years' notice of termination from the beginning of the new contractual year in March. The group are not proposing that the Council should terminate this contract.

Parking Contraventions and Enforcement Arrangements

The legal framework for enforcement authorities in England and Wales is set out in Part 6 of the Traffic Management Act 2004. Local Authorities with enforcement responsibilities must refer to a single list of parking contraventions when issuing PCNs. The list of parking contraventions is issued nationally by the Secretary of State for Transport to local Civil Enforcement Authorities to enforce. Local authorities can select which contraventions to apply in their local area of responsibility.

Redditch Borough Council enforces the following parking contraventions on the public highway where a TRO is in place:

Code	Contravention
01	Parked in a restricted street during prescribed hours.
02	Parked or loading / unloading in a restricted street while waiting and loading / unloading restrictions are in force.
16	Parked in a permit space without displaying a valid permit.
21	Parked in a suspended bay / space or part of a bay / space.
22	Re-parked in the same parking space or zone within one hour (or other specified time) after leaving.
23	Parked in a parking space or area not designated for that class of vehicle.
24	Not parked correctly within the markings of the bay or space.
25	Parked in a loading place during restricted hours without loading.
26	Vehicle parked more than 50cms from the edge of the carriageway and not within a designated parking space.
30	Parked for longer than permitted.
40	Parking in a designated disabled person's bay without clearly displaying a valid disabled person's badge.
45	Parked on a taxi rank.
47	Parked in a restricted bus stop / stand.
99	Parked on a pedestrian crossing and / or crossing area marked by a zigzag.

CEOs must be present to witness a parking contravention in order to issue a PCN. Unfortunately, this means that CEOs cannot issue PCNs in relation to parking contraventions reported by another person nor can they act retrospectively. Enforcement action can also only take place where a TRO is in place. CEOs are required to undertake an observational period before they can issue a PCN. In cases where a car is parked on double yellow lines the CEO must observe for a period of three minutes whether the vehicle is loading or unloading or simply parked on the double yellow lines before a PCN can be issued. This time is extended to ten minutes in cases

involving a van parked on double yellow lines. The CEO cannot take enforcement action if the driver is in the vehicle in the driver's seat.

The routes of CEOs are not set, and staff work a variety of shift patterns, Monday to Sunday. Busy periods are prioritised for enforcement work, though quieter areas are checked to ensure compliance with parking requirements. The route on any given day is partly governed by limited waiting bays and the need for the CEO to take initial observations and then to recheck those bays again once permitted waiting times are due to expire.

At the time of the review there were 1.8 full time equivalent (fte) CEOs operating in Redditch. Members were advised that the CEOs were not issued with targets in terms of the number of PCNs they issued to drivers. Instead, CEOs were expected to educate drivers and to only take enforcement action as a last resort where necessary.

PCNs are issued by the CEOs throughout the year, where a parking contravention is identified, and the correct enforcement procedures have been followed. The numbers issued varies from year to year in accordance with the number of contraventions that are identified. The number of PCNs issued over the five years up to 2018/19 are detailed below.

	2014-2015	2015-2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019
Number of PCNs	2,132	933	1,488	1,809	1,664

The CEOs only undertake parking enforcement in relation to on street parking in the Borough. The Council does not currently charge residents and visitors to park in Council owned car parks and therefore no enforcement action is undertaken at those locations. The Council also does not provide a parking enforcement service to privately owned car parks. However, Members were advised that private car park owners may commission private parking enforcement companies to take enforcement action on their behalf. On street obstructions are still managed by the Police and the Council's CEOs cannot issue tickets in relation to these offences. On street parking obstructions include vehicles parking on the pavement in locations where there are no road markings in place and where a parked car causes obstruction on the pavement preventing a pushchair or wheelchair from passing. Members felt that this should be clarified in the report as it is important to note that not all parking enforcement action undertaken in the Borough involves the Council.

Appeals

Drivers who have been issued with a PCN can appeal against the decision. This might occur if the driver feels there were mitigating circumstances. Information about the appeal process is provided on both the PCN paperwork and on the Council's website for drivers' information. Appeals at the first stage are considered by Wychavon District Council on Redditch Borough Council's behalf. If this local appeal fails the driver can subsequently appeal to the Traffic Penalty Tribunal, which is an independent body. The Traffic Penalty Tribunal's decision in respect of an appeal is final.

The number of PCNs that have been appealed and / or cancelled in the five-year period between 2014/15 to 2018/19 are outlined in the table below:

	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019
No. of Appeals	607	266	339	409	444
No. Cancelled	139	74	126	162	143

The group was advised that there is a low cancellation rate for PCNs in Redditch compared to other districts in the county. However, Members were informed that there tended to be a higher rate of write offs in Redditch than in other parts of the county, in terms of writing off debts from unpaid PCNs. Write offs can occur for a number of reasons including in cases where the owner of a vehicle cannot be traced.

Financial Implications

The Council agreed to enter into a contract with Worcestershire County Council to deliver Civil Parking Enforcement for on street parking in the Borough on the understanding that the service would be cost neutral. Whilst there is a cost to the Council of contracting the service out to Wychavon District Council this cost can be offset by income from issuing PCNs. The table below sets out the costs of delivering the service compared to income over a five-year period from 2014/15 to 2018/19.

	2014 - 2015	2015 - 2016	2016 - 2017	2017 - 2018	2018 - 2019
Cost	£97,109.00	£34,319.03	£44,265.87	£62,768.84	£42,296.54
Income	£18,026.00	£23,471.53	£51,149.96	£52,930.84	£53,733.24
	£79,184.76*	£10,531.85*	£6,855.09	£9,868.25*	£11,346.85

(*The total figures in bold show the net cost to the Council of providing the service that year).

The Council's agreement with Worcestershire County Council to provide a civil parking enforcement service in the Borough states that Redditch Borough Council can cover the costs of undertaking enforcement. However, any excess income from issuing PCNs must be returned to Worcestershire County Council. The County Council does not reimburse Redditch Borough Council if, at the end of a financial year, income from the service did not cover the costs of delivering the service.

The group was advised that the same contractual arrangement is in place between Worcestershire County Council and other district Councils in the county. However, Redditch Borough Council is in a different position to the other district Councils inasmuch as the authority does not have Pay and Display car parks and therefore cannot split parking enforcement costs for this with off-street parking enforcement costs. Despite this Members are not proposing that the Council should reintroduce Pay and Display car parks in the Borough.

Members considered very carefully the financial costs involved in providing the parking enforcement service in the Borough. The group was advised that there was a need for a balanced approach in terms of parking enforcement which required the authority to not only consider potential income from enforcement but also the purpose of the service. On the one hand there is the potential for the Council to receive income from PCNs which will cover the costs of providing the service in cases where drivers are found to have committed a parking contravention. However, on the other hand the service can

be viewed as successful where people have been deterred from parking inappropriately in the Borough; but this results in a loss of income.

The group concluded that it would be appropriate for the Council to continue to provide the parking enforcement service on behalf of Worcestershire County Council as this would enable the authority to work in the local community's interests. Furthermore, Members concluded that based on the evidence provided they were satisfied that the authority was receiving a good service from Wychavon District Council. However, a number of areas were identified where the group agreed improvements could be made to the parking enforcement service and these areas are the focus of the group's final recommendations.

CHAPTER 1: PARKING AROUND SCHOOLS

Recommendation 1	We recommend that at a meeting of Worcestershire Leaders' Board the Leader should raise the need to introduce Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) for all zigzag road markings outside schools in the county. As part of this process the Leader should request that Worcestershire County Council write to the Secretary of State for Transport to request that additional, ring-fenced funding be provided to Worcestershire County Council that can be invested in introducing these additional TROs.
Financial Implications	There are no financial implications for Redditch Borough Council. The proposed action could result in Worcestershire County Council receiving additional funding.
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications.

During the review the group was informed that parking problems are frequently reported in respect of schools, especially at school drop off and collection times. All the witnesses interviewed by the group acknowledged that parking near schools could be problematic and that some drivers committed parking contraventions at school opening and closing times. For example, Members were informed that:

"Parking concerns associated with school drop off/pick up is also a common complaint across the board."

Many of the Councillors who completed the group's survey in respect of parking issues in the Borough also reported that parking around schools was a problem. In a number of cases schools within a Councillor's ward were referenced, though a decision has been taken not to name particular schools in this report as this was an issue in the majority of wards across the Borough, rather than being confined to one or two schools. Examples of more general comments included the following statements:

"Schools are a big problem."

"The junction is plagued by inconsiderate drivers dropping off/collecting schoolchildren."

"It's a large issue at school drop off times every day, with illegal and inconsiderate parking being a regular complaint."

"Residents... have complained about careless parking during school times, residents are finding that parents are blocking drives, parking on the grass kerb (and) spoiling the grass."

The group therefore quickly concluded that parking near schools was a problem in Redditch. This has been recognised by the parking enforcement team operating in the Borough. Members were advised that the CEOs have undertaken enforcement action

around schools, on occasion in conjunction with West Mercia Police. However, Members were advised that the CEOs' ability to undertake enforcement action near schools was constrained by the fact that only one TRO is in place for the zigzag lines outside a single school in Redditch. As CEOs can only undertake enforcement action in respect of parking contraventions where a TRO is in place this curtails the ability of the Officers to deter parking on zigzag lines outside most schools.

As Worcestershire County Council is responsible for issuing TROs the group consulted with representatives of the County Council about the potential for TROs to be introduced for the zigzag lines outside all schools in the Borough. Members were advised that there was limited capacity within the resources available to enable Worcestershire County Council to introduce TROs for all zigzags outside schools in the Borough. In stating this Members were informed that "*...All sites would have to be surveyed to establish such things as the length of markings, their physical condition and their compliance with regulations before the TRO process could begin.*" Therefore, this would require significant work from County Officers. Furthermore, Members were advised that the same problem, in terms of limited TROs for zigzag lines outside schools, applied to schools across the whole of the county.

The group was informed that at a meeting of the Civil Parking Enforcement Working Group in October 2019 the issue with respect to the lack of TROs on zigzag lines outside schools had been discussed by partner organisations. During this meeting it had been suggested that in each district the top five schools where complaints in respect of parking had been received should be identified and nominated for the introduction of TROs for the zigzags located outside the schools. The group welcomed news that the top five schools in Redditch had been identified by the time that this review was completed, and that Worcestershire County Council had been notified of those schools.

The group concluded that it would be difficult for Worcestershire County Council to justify fast tracking the introduction of TROs for schools in Redditch ahead of schools in other parts of the county. Members also understood the capacity issues raised by Worcestershire County Council, which they recognised as impacting on many Councils at a time when local government finances are challenging. However, Members were very concerned to learn about the lack of TROs for the zigzag lines outside the majority of schools in the Borough. In particular, the group was concerned about the community safety implications of this situation, especially for school children.

In this context the group is proposing that the Leader of Redditch Borough Council should raise the subject of school safety and TROs outside schools at a forthcoming meeting of the Worcestershire Leaders' Board. Members agreed that this would be an appropriate subject for the Board to discuss as the limited availability of TROs outside schools has safety implications across the county, not just in Redditch. The group is also requesting that at this meeting of Worcestershire Leader's Board, The Leader should ask Worcestershire County Council to write to the Secretary of State for Transport, the Rt Hon Grant Shapps MP, to request additional ring-fenced funding to pay for the introduction of TROs outside schools in the county. Should this proposal receive other Leaders' support at the Worcestershire Leaders' Board meeting this would help the County Council to demonstrate collective agreement on the need to introduce TROs for zigzags outside schools in order to enhance the safety of children in Worcestershire.

Recommendation 2	We recommend that, subject to the successful implementation of Recommendation 1 above, Redditch Borough Council should fund an additional Civil Enforcement Officer post dedicated to enforcement action around schools, to work term-time only.
Financial Implications	The estimated cost to the Council of an additional Civil Parking Enforcement Officer working term-time only is approximately £23,000 per annum. Members have been advised that once TROs are in place on zigzags outside schools and, given the level of complaints about problem parking outside schools, income from enforcement action undertaken by this Officer may not be sufficient to cover the total cost of the additional post. With the officer being present in the location, drivers do not tend to park illegally. Hence there is an improvement in parking but limited income.
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications.

During the review Members were advised that the Council considered there to be an appropriate number of CEOs providing the parking enforcement service in Redditch. However, some Members and other expert witnesses suggested that by employing more CEOs the Council could improve the enforcement service in Redditch.

As detailed in this report parking contraventions near schools have been identified as a problem by both elected Members and the expert witnesses interviewed by the group. However, without the TROs for the zigzag lines outside schools, the potential for the CEOs to undertake enforcement action outside schools was limited. Members recognise that should the TROs be introduced, demand for enforcement by the CEOs outside schools, particularly during school opening and closing times, will increase. Members were also in agreement that drivers will only be deterred from committing parking contraventions near schools if enforcement action is seen to be taken. Therefore, the group is suggesting that an additional CEO should be employed dedicated to providing a parking enforcement service near schools.

The group has been advised that an additional CEO would cost the Council £23,000 per annum, if they were employed to work on a term-time only basis. The group is suggesting that the officer is recruited to work term-time only as this will be the time when demand for enforcement action to address parking contraventions committed near schools will be highest. Members were aware that the Council agreed to deliver the Civil Parking Enforcement service on behalf of Worcestershire County Council on the understanding that the service would be cost neutral. Whilst Members recognise that there is a cost to employing the additional CEO, income from enforcement action undertaken by this Officer may not be sufficient to cover the total cost of the additional post. With the officer being present in the location, drivers do not tend to park illegally. Hence there is an improvement in parking but limited income.

Recommendation 3	We recommend that Officers from Redditch Borough Council work with Worcestershire County Council, local schools and West Mercia Police to develop a strategy to tackle problem parking near schools.
Financial Implications	There would be the cost of Officer time.
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications.

The group noted that the CEOs are not able to resolve parking issues alone and cannot be in more than one place at any one time. If the Council employed significantly more CEOs across the Borough, they might be able to deter problem parking close to more schools. However, the employment of more CEOs would significantly increase the costs of providing the service and this would result in the service operating at a cost to the Council. Furthermore, a significant increase in the number of CEOs might be counterproductive inasmuch as it could impact on the reputation of the Council by presenting the service as punitive and focused on income generation rather than on educating the public about how to park safely and in accordance with the law.

Members recognise that many parents need to drop off and collect their children from school using their vehicles, rather than by walking or using public transport. In Redditch there is a three-tier system of education and parents may need to travel quickly between schools, if they have children of different ages, as school opening and closing times may be similar. Furthermore, Members have noted there will always be drivers who commit parking contraventions near schools. This could be for a range of reasons including people being late for work, a lack of awareness of parking contraventions and limited availability of parking spaces for parents and guardians to use near schools. However, Members feel that parents and guardians should be able to travel between schools and park without jeopardising the safety of their and other people's children.

In this context the group has concluded that an overarching strategy needs to be developed in respect of parking close to schools. Members have concluded that problems with parking near schools can only be tackled effectively if the Council works in partnership with other organisations that can influence the behaviour of drivers. This could include working with the police, schools and Worcestershire County Council to develop a joint strategy.

Members have been advised that this collaboration with partner organisations could be instigated in a variety of different ways by the Council. One option suggested to Members was that the Redditch Community Safety Tasking Group should take a lead on developing the strategy. An alternative option that has been suggested would be for the former School Safety Group, that worked to resolve parking issues at Ipsley RSA Academy a few years ago, to be reestablished to review arrangements at all schools in the Borough. Members did not have a specific view about which body should initiate this work on behalf of the Council as they felt this was an operational matter. Should this recommendation be approved by the Executive Committee, Members are proposing that Officers should determine how this strategy should be developed in collaboration with partner organisations.

CHAPTER 2: HIGHWAYS

Recommendation 4	We recommend that the need for road markings to be replaced as soon as possible after resurfacing work has been undertaken should be discussed at a forthcoming Redditch Highways Forum meeting. All Worcestershire County Councillors representing a Redditch division should be provided with a copy of the group's final report to facilitate a discussion of this subject.
Financial Implications	There will be the cost of printing copies of the group's final report for the consideration of all the County Councillors representing a Redditch division.
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications.

During the review Members shadowed one of the CEOs during shifts working in the Borough. Whilst shadowing the CEO Members observed that there were some roads where enforcement action legally could not be taken as the road markings on the highway had not been replaced since the road was resurfaced. This included instances where the CEO was aware that usually vehicles would not be permitted to park in a particular location because road marking such as double yellow lines would usually prevent a person from parking on that street. Members were concerned that this could endanger public safety and concluded that road markings should be replaced as soon as possible after resurfacing work has taken place.

In Worcestershire the County Council's Highways Department is responsible for maintaining the public highway, including repainting road surfaces and installing replacement signs. Redditch Borough Council works closely with Worcestershire County Council and reports any remedial works needed on the public highway. Officers at Redditch Borough Council, who were consulted about this recommendation, reported that they were in full agreement with the proposal.

The Highways Department at Worcestershire County Council works closely with County Councillors. There is a Highways Forum in Redditch, meetings of which are attended by Officers from the Highways Department and County Councillors, where issues impacting on the public highways are discussed. The group has concluded that their findings would be of interest to the County Councillors, particularly with respect to replacing road markings on roads in Redditch after resurfacing works have been carried out. Members therefore urge all County Councillors representing Redditch to read through the group's findings and to raise the matter at a forthcoming meeting of the Highways Forum.

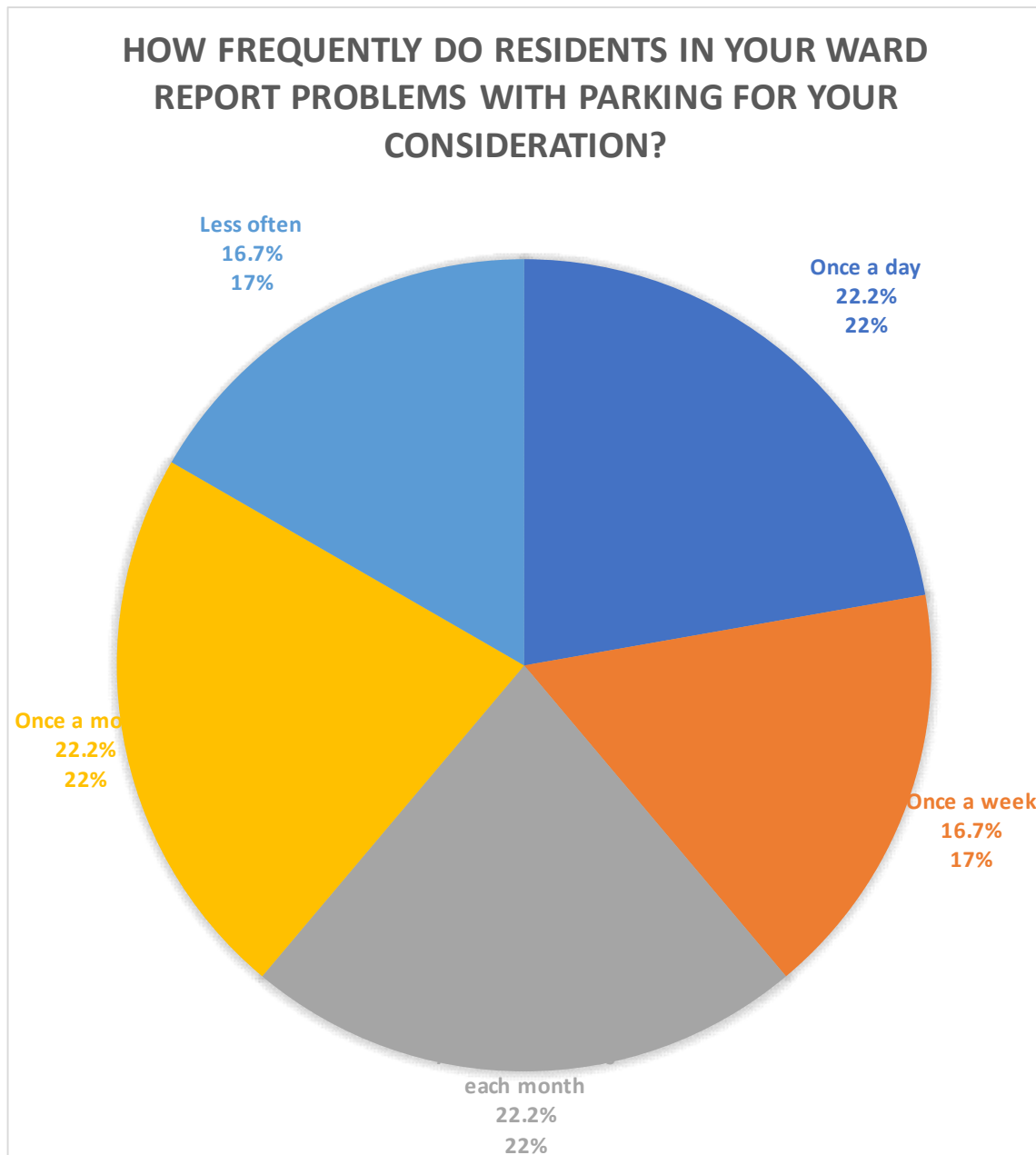
The group is proposing that all County Councillors representing Redditch should be provided with a paper copy of this report to enable them to assess parking enforcement issues and the need for road markings to be updated in a timely manner. There is a cost to printing paper copies of the report for the consideration of the eight County Councillors who represent Redditch. To minimize the printing costs the reports will be printed in black and white, as colour printing is more expensive.

CHAPTER 3: MEMBER DEVELOPMENT

Recommendation 5	We recommend that training in respect of parking enforcement arrangements in the Borough should be provided in a single training session each municipal year as part of the member induction programme. New elected Members should be offered the opportunity to shadow a Civil Parking Enforcement Officer.
Financial Implications	There would be the cost of organising the training as well as the arrangements for Members to shadow the Civil Enforcement Officers. In addition, Members can claim an attendance allowance for travelling to attend training, which is reimbursed at 45 pence per mile. As each Councillor lives in a different location in the Borough and not all make claims the exact costs are difficult to calculate.
Legal Implications	There are no legal implications.

At the start of the review the group agreed that it would be important to consult with other elected Borough Councillors about the parking issues impacting on residents and businesses in their wards. Members recognised that it was likely that there would be issues that other Councillors would want to report as this subject had been raised as a matter of concern by Members not serving on the Task Group at a meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee in April 2019. The group also felt Councillors, as the elected representatives of their wards, could act as the voice for their communities in respect of any parking problems that were raised for their attention by local residents.

Completed copies of the survey were returned for the group's consideration by 18 Councillors, representing 62 per cent of all Councillors at the authority. Members have been advised that this is a good response rate for scrutiny Task Groups in Redditch. Members concluded that there was a high response rate for this survey due to a significant level of interest in the subject amongst Members and their residents. Indeed, in response to one of the group's questions about the frequency with which problems with parking were reported for Members' consideration, 39 per cent of Councillors reported that they were contacted by residents about parking issues either every day or once a week, 22 per cent reported that they were contacted a couple of times a month about parking matters and 22 per cent were contacted once a month. Only 17 per cent of Councillors reported that they were contacted by residents about parking matters less than once a month.



Given the frequency with which Members reported that they were contacted by residents regarding parking matters the group concluded that it was important that Members were informed about the parking enforcement service in Redditch. As part of this Members need to be informed about the circumstances in which CEOs might not be able to undertake enforcement action, such as in relation to on street obstructions which the police would enforce or in cases where no TROs are in place.

In this context the group is proposing that a training session should be available for all Members to attend each year as part of the Member Induction Programme. There would be financial implications to this proposal arising from Officer time involved in organising and delivering the training, though Members would expect this training to be delivered in house as it relates to a Council service.

In addition, Members concluded that it would be helpful if new Members could be offered an opportunity to shadow a CEO early in their term of office. Concerns have been raised by Officers that there might not be capacity within the parking enforcement team to enable every Member to shadow a CEO. However, Members noted that in Redditch there is a system of elections by thirds, whereby a maximum of ten Councillors are elected in three out of every four years. Each year it is likely that some existing Members would be re-elected and some of the new Councillors might not be able to participate for personal reasons. Therefore, the group concluded that in any given year it was unlikely that more than five new Members would want to take up the opportunity to shadow a CEO. As all four members of the Task Group shadowed a CEO on different occasions in 2019 the group concluded that it would be reasonable to arrange for five new Members to shadow a CEO each year.

CONCLUSION

The Parking Enforcement Task Group have undertaken an extensive review of parking enforcement arrangements in the Borough over the past nine months.

Members discovered that the work of the parking enforcement team was shaped by legislation and that there were many instances in which CEOs could not take action to address parking contraventions. In particular, the group was concerned to learn about problems with parking around schools in the Borough and the implications that this has for the safety of school children. It is for this reason that many of the group's recommendations focus on action that could be taken to improve parking near schools.

The group's recommendations have been informed by the evidence that they gathered during the review. Members urge the Executive Committee to approve their recommendations.

APPENDIX 1**Scrutiny Proposal Form**

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

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

Proposer's name and designation	Councillor Mark Shurmer	Date of referral	13 May 2019
Proposed topic title	Review of Parking Enforcement Contract		
Link to local priorities including the strategic purposes	Keep my place safe and looking good. - Child protection issues around parking.		
Background to the issue	<p>Numerous complaints have been received by Members from residents from across the Borough over several years regarding dangerous and irresponsible parking. There is a need to ensure that support is provided to the Police in enforcement of parking problems, particularly at school sites in the morning and afternoons.</p> <p>This problem was raised during a meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee in April 2019. During the meeting members agreed that this subject would be suitable for further scrutiny and the intention of this scoping document is to raise the issue for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny committee.</p> <p>A range of partners have roles in respect of parking enforcement including Wychavon District Council, which delivers a parking enforcement service on behalf of Redditch Borough Council, West Mercia Police and Worcestershire County Council, as the local highways authority. A proper review of this subject would require consultation with partner organisations.</p>		
Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) To review the content of Redditch Borough Council's civil parking enforcement contract with Wychavon District Council. 2) To consult with relevant Council Officers and partner organisations about parking enforcement issues in the Borough. 		

	<p>3) To scrutinise the financial implications of the parking enforcement contract and of enforcement action to Redditch Borough Council.</p> <p>4) To investigate action that could be taken to improve parking enforcement in the Borough.</p> <p>5) To review the action taken by the Council to communicate the Council's approach to parking enforcement and the powers available to the local authority in respect of dangerous and irresponsible parking.</p>
<p>How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)</p>	<p>This review should take 4 – 5 months.</p>

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 /

jo.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk /

a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

APPENDIX 2
Acknowledgements

Members would like to thank the following people for providing evidence during their review:

- Inspector Mark Chappell, West Mercia Police Force
- Stephen Forshaw, Contracts Supervisor, Wychavon District Council
- Kelly Griffin, Operations Manager, Wychavon District Council
- Kevin Hiron, Environmental Services Manager, Redditch Borough Council
- Guy Revans, Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services
- Gary Williams, Worcestershire County Council

The group would also like to thank the 18 Councillors who completed a copy of their survey. The information provided in these completed surveys helped to inform the group's final recommendations.

Finally Members would like to thank the CEO, Carys ?, who Members shadowed to learn more about the parking enforcement service.

APPENDIX 3
Timeline of Activities

Date	Task Group Activity
11/07/19	Initial meeting to discuss the scope of the review and evidence gathering.
25/07/20	Presentation from the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services and the Environmental Services Manager in respect of parking enforcement arrangements in Redditch.
08/08/19	Consideration of the content of the report by the previous scrutiny group focusing on the introduction of civil parking enforcement in Redditch as well as information about the authority's parking enforcement arrangements published on the Council's website. Also, consideration of scrutiny reports by other Councils focusing on parking enforcement and parking zones.
09/09/19	Interview with Inspector Mark Chappell, West Mercia Police
02/10/20	Interview with the Operations Manager at Wychavon District Council. In addition, consideration of the Worcestershire local Transport Plan, Worcestershire Residents' Parking Policy and the Parking Policy in England briefing paper, published by the House of Commons Library in August 2018.
16/10/19	Councillor Jenny Wheeler shadowed a CEO during a shift in Redditch.
02/11/19 (am)	Councillor Salman Akbar shadowed a CEO during a shift in Redditch.
02/11/19 (pm)	Councillor Mark Shurmer shadowed a CEO during a shift in Redditch.
11/11/19	Councillor Joanne Beecham shadowed a CEO during a shift in Redditch.
06/02/20	Consideration of written evidence submitted in response to the group's questions by Worcestershire County Council as well as written feedback received from elected Members in completed surveys. Members also proposed a list of draft recommendations at this meeting.
25/02/20	Consideration of feedback from Council Officers in respect of the group's draft recommendations and agreement of final recommendations.

APPENDIX 4
Redditch Borough Councillors – Parking Survey

Parking Enforcement Task Group Questionnaire

The Parking Enforcement Task Group was recently established to review parking enforcement arrangements in the town. The group is keen to hear from other Members about the issues with parking enforcement that residents may have raised, current parking enforcement arrangements and any suggestions about improvements that could be made to parking enforcement arrangements in the Borough.

- 1) To what extent is parking a problem in your ward? (Please name your ward)

- 2) How frequently do residents in your ward report problems with parking for your consideration?

- 3) What type of parking problems do residents report for your consideration as ward Councillor?

- 4) Where are parking issues occurring in your ward?

- 5) What parking enforcement measures currently in place in the Borough do you think work well?

- 6) What additional action do you think needs to be taken in respect of parking enforcement in the town and / or your ward?

- 7) Is there anything else that you would like to add for our consideration?

Thank you for taking the time to complete this questionnaire.
Please could you return this document to Jess Bayley by 10.00am on Wednesday 25th September 2019.

Paper copies of this questionnaire can be returned to:

Jess Bayley
Democratic Services,
Redditch Borough Council,
Redditch Town Hall,
Walter Stranz Square,
Redditch
B98 8AH.

An electronic version of this survey will also be circulated for Members' consideration.



APPENDIX 5: GLOSSARY

CEO – Civil Enforcement Officer

PCN – Penalty Charge Notice

SLA – Service Level Agreement

TRO – Traffic Regulation Order

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



CONTENTS

TITLE	PAGE NO.
CHAIR'S FOREWORD	3
INTRODUCTION	4
THE ROLE OF OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY	4
MEMBERSHIP	5
ACTIVITIES AND OUTCOMES DURING 2019/20	6
TASK GROUPS AND SHORT SHARP REVIEWS	14
CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY PANEL	15
WORKING GROUPS	16
EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES	17
CONCLUSION	18
SCRUTINY PROPOSAL FORM – APPENDIX B	19

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 7th 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 7th 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 14th 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 7th 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

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
joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
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 11th 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 11th 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 14th 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 17th 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

- 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 18th 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 27th 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