



# Executive Committee

Tue 7 Dec  
2021  
6.30 pm

Council Chamber,  
Redditch Town Hall

**REDDITCH** BOROUGH COUNCIL

*making  
a  
difference*

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

**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact  
Jess Bayley-Hill**

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## **GUIDANCE ON FACE-TO-FACE MEETINGS**

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**Due to the current Covid-19 pandemic Redditch Borough Council will be applying social distancing arrangements for holding face-to-face meetings.**

**Please note that this is a public meeting and is open to the public to attend**

**If you have any questions regarding the agenda or attached papers, please do not hesitate to contact the officer named above.**

### **GUIDANCE FOR ELECTED MEMBERS ATTENDING MEETINGS IN PERSON**

In advance of the Committee meeting, Members are strongly encouraged to consider taking a lateral flow test, which can be obtained from the NHS website. Should the test be positive for Covid-19 then the Member must not attend the Committee meeting, should provide their apologies to the Democratic Services team and should self-isolate in accordance with national rules.

Members and officers are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings during the Executive Committee meeting, unless exempt. Face masks should only be removed temporarily if the Councillor or officer is speaking or if s/he requires a sip of water and should be reapplied as soon as possible. As Councillors may remove their masks from time to time during the meeting, seating will be placed two metres apart, in line with social distancing measures to protect meeting participants.

Hand sanitiser will be provided for Members to use throughout the meeting.

The meeting venue will be fully ventilated and Members and officers may need to consider wearing appropriate clothing in order to remain comfortable during proceedings.

### **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE**

Members of the public will be able to access the meeting if they wish to do so. However, due to social distancing requirements to ensure the safety of participants during the Covid-19 pandemic, there will be limited capacity and members of the public will be allowed access on a first come, first served basis. Members of the public in attendance are strongly encouraged to wear face coverings, to use the hand sanitiser that will be provided and will be required to sit in a socially distance manner at the meetings. It should be noted that members of the public who choose to attend in person do so at their own risk.

In line with Government guidelines, any member of the public who has received a positive

result in a Covid-19 test on the day of a meeting must not attend in person and must self-isolate in accordance with the national rules.

**Notes:**

**Although this is a public meeting, there are circumstances when Council might have to move into closed session to consider exempt or confidential information. For agenda items that are exempt, the public are excluded.**

# Executive

## Committee

Tuesday, 7th December, 2021

6.30 pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

## Agenda

### Membership:

Cllrs:

Matthew Dormer  
(Chair)  
Gemma Monaco  
(Vice-Chair)  
Joanne Beecham  
Aled Evans  
Peter Fleming

Anthony Lovell  
Nyear Nazir  
Mike Rouse  
Craig Warhurst

### 1. Apologies

### 2. Declarations of Interest

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.

### 3. Leader's Announcements

### 4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 8)

### 5. Mobile Homes Act 2013 - Introduction of Licensing Fees (Pages 9 - 16)

### 6. Financial Outturn 2020/21 - Housing Revenue Account (Pages 17 - 24)

### 7. Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25 Update (Pages 25 - 36)

### 8. Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 37 - 46)

Members are asked to note that the recommendations listed in the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021 have already been considered by the Executive Committee. There are no outstanding recommendations for the Executive Committee's consideration.

### 9. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc.

To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.

## **10. Advisory Panels - update report**

Members are invited to provide verbal updates, if any, in respect of the following bodies:

- a) Climate Change Cross-Party Working Group – Chair, Councillor Anthony Lovell;
- b) Constitutional Review Working Panel – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer;
- c) Corporate Parenting Board – Council Representative, Councillor Nyear Nazir;
- d) Member Support Steering Group – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer; and
- e) Planning Advisory Panel – Chair, Councillor Matthew Dormer.

## **11. To consider any urgent business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chair, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting**

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## MINUTES

# Executive Committee

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Tuesday, 26th October,  
2021

### Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), and Councillors Brandon Clayton, Anthony Lovell, Nyear Nazir, Mike Rouse, David Thain and Craig Warhurst

### Officers:

Ruth Bamford, Kevin Dicks, Mike Dunphy, Clare Flanagan, Chris Forrester and Sue Hanley

### Senior Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill

## 26. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Peter Fleming and Gemma Monaco.

Councillor David Thain arrived after the start of the meeting, during consideration of Minute Item No. 29.

## 27. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

## 28. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader explained that a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had taken place on 21<sup>st</sup> October 2021. During the meeting, Members had pre-scrutinised the Church Green Conservation Area report and had concluded their discussions by endorsing the recommendations in the report. The Executive Committee was asked to note this point when debating the item.

## 29. CHURCH GREEN CONSERVATION AREA ADOPTION

The Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager presented a report in respect of the adoption of the Church Green Conservation Area.

A report on this subject had previously been considered by the Executive Committee in the 2020/21 municipal year, where draft proposals had been agreed. Officers had subsequently launched a

Chair

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consultation exercise in February and March 2021. All local business owners in the conservation area had been directly contacted about this consultation process, which had also received coverage in the local press and had been promoted on the Council's website and social media accounts. The feedback provided in the 13 responses that had been received in this consultation process had been listed in the report alongside Officer responses to the points that had been raised.

The Council was working with partner organisations, including Worcestershire County Council and the North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit (NWEDR) in respect of the Church Green Conservation Area. A number of key issues had been identified that would require partnership working, including actions in respect of the public realm and parking on Unicorn Hill and the Church Green area.

Following the presentation of the report, Members discussed the consultation process that had been undertaken in relation to the Church Green Conservation Area. Members expressed some disappointment in the relatively low response rate to the consultation process. It was noted that those people and businesses that were not directly impacted by the proposals detailed in the report could still respond during the consultation process and this had been highlighted in the press coverage.

Reference was also made to the proposed amendments to the Church Green Conservation Area. Members agreed that it was important to protect the Borough's heritage and the Church Green Conservation Area would help in this process. In addition, Members welcomed the extension of the Church Green Conservation Area to include additional properties located on Alcester Street, as Members commented that many of these buildings had been constructed in the same period in which the buildings on Church Green East had been built.

### **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) Council approves the Church Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, and endorses its contents as a material consideration for planning purposes; and**
- 2) Council approves the designation of the proposed extension to the Conservation Area to include 5 – 11 Alcester Street.**



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## 30. LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME

The Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services presented a report on the subject of the Redditch Local Development Scheme.

The Executive Committee was informed that the Council's Local Plan review process, for the preparation of Local Plan no. 5, had commenced. As part of the process, the Council was required to prepare the Local Development Scheme no. 7, which detailed the process and timetable for the preparation of the new Local Plan. The Local Development Scheme did not address the policies that would be included in the Local Plan No. 5, as this would be considered at a later date.

As part of the Council's work on the Local Development Scheme, consideration was being given to the requirement for other local authorities to seek the Council's views of their Local Plans, under a process known as the Duty to Co-operate. Officers prepared responses on behalf of the Council, though these could be amended by Members through the democratic process. In relation to the correspondence with Solihull Metropolitan Borough Council, the Council was agreeing a Statement of Common Ground, whereby a statement was agreed with Solihull regarding each Council's Local Plan.

Following the presentation of the report, Members discussed the consultation process that would be followed for the Local Plan no. 5. Officers explained that there was a statutory period of at least six weeks of consultation, though Officers usually advised that the consultation period should be extended to eight weeks. In previous years, a range of methods had been used for consultation purposes in respect of the Local Plan, including press releases, social media and consultation with Feckenham Parish Council. Consultation events had also been held in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre and other prominent locations in the Borough and, subject to the Covid-19 pandemic, it was possible that similar events could be held for the Local Plan no. 5, including potentially hybrid events.

Reference was made to the potential for local residents to submit their views during the consultation process. Members urged the public to participate in this consultation process, as this provided an opportunity for the public to influence the content of the Local Plan and this would ultimately have implications for future decisions on planning applications.

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## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the update on progress on the Redditch Local Plan Review be noted;**
- 2) the Local Development Scheme No.7 for the production of the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.5 be approved;**
- 3) the consultation responses provided to neighbouring and nearby authorities be retrospectively approved; and**
- 4) the Statement of Common Ground with Solihull Borough Council be approved.**

## **31. BUDGET FRAMEWORK REPORT**

The Head of Finance and Customer Services presented the Budget Framework report for Members' consideration.

The report detailed the approach that the Council would be adopting to the development of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25. This work was being undertaken in a context in which the Section 24 Notice had been lifted from the Council but financial challenges remained in place for the authority. The Council's reserves and balances were only slightly above the minimum levels set for the authority. There was also a lot of uncertainty regarding local government finances as the Fair Funding Review had still not been completed by the Government. It appeared likely that the Council would only receive a one-year revenue grant settlement from the Government for 2022/23, which made it difficult to plan the Council's budget over a three-year period, though this would probably not be confirmed until late December 2021.

Officers intended to involve elected Members more in the budget setting process and this would take place at an earlier stage than in previous years. However, this would be challenging, particularly in relation to aspects of the budget setting process that would only be confirmed in late December to early February. A proposed timeline had been recorded in the report and as part of the process for Member engagement, Officers would be consulting with the Budget Scrutiny Working Group.

A new template would be introduced for financial reports, which would be presented in a manner that would reconcile the budget position to the previous budget. Officers were aiming to include information about the impact of the Covid-19 pandemic on the Council's finances in the report.

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Members discussed the report and in so doing welcomed the proposed new template for reports about the Medium Term Financial Plan to Committee. The Committee also welcomed proposals to involve Members in the budget setting process at an earlier stage. The Financial Services team was praised for their hard work at a challenging time for the Council.

During consideration of this item, Members expressed concerns about the continued uncertainty in respect of Council budgets. Members called for the Government to provide greater certainty over a longer period of time than one year in respect of budget settlements to help Councils plan for the future.

Reference was made to the financial challenges that had been faced by Rubicon Leisure Limited during the Covid-19 pandemic and the implications of this for the Council's finances. Members commented that many leisure service providers had been similarly impacted by the requirement to close services during the pandemic. It was also noted that Rubicon Leisure Limited had made some difficult decisions designed to address the financial challenges.

**RESOLVED that**

**the updated member engagement plan for the 2022/23 Budget and MTFP Report is noted and supported.**

**32. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chair advised that all of the recommendations detailed in the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 had been considered at the previous meeting of the Executive Committee.

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 be noted.**

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

There were no referrals through the Overview and Scrutiny process or from the Executive Advisory Panels on this occasion.

**34. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT**

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

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- a) Climate Change Cross Party Working Group – Chair, Councillor Anthony Lovell

Councillor Lovell explained that a meeting of the Climate Change Cross Party Working Group was scheduled to take place in early November 2021.

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

Councillor Dormer advised that a meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party was due to take place on 3<sup>rd</sup> March 2022.

- c) Corporate Parenting Board – Council Representative, Councillor Nyear Nazir

Councillor Nazir commented that a meeting of the Corporate Parenting Board was scheduled to take place on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2021.

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

Members were informed that a meeting of the Member Support Steering Group had taken place on 5<sup>th</sup> October 2021. During this meeting, Members considered information provided in completed surveys by new Members about the Member Induction Programme. Councillor Dormer expressed some disappointment concerning the number of new Members who had completed the survey. The group had also held an initial discussion about arrangements for the Member Induction process in May 2022.

During consideration of this update, Members briefly discussed the potential for Committee meetings to be live streamed, particularly meetings of the Executive Committee and Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Chair explained that the Council did live stream some meetings, where significant public interest was anticipated in items on the agenda. However, the matter could be explored further.

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

The Executive Committee was informed that a meeting of the Planning Advisory Panel had recently taken place. During this meeting, Members had considered proposals in respect of the Redditch Local Development Scheme.

# **Executive Committee**

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**35. MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.**

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm  
and closed at 7.05 pm

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**Mobile Homes Act 2013 – Introduction of Licensing Fees**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Craig Warhurst
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis
Report Author	Job Title: Private Sector Housing Officer Contact email: k.sharp-fisher@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 01527 881437
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
<b>Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)</b>	Run and Grow a Successful Business Finding Somewhere to Live
<b>Non-Key Decision</b>	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS****The Executive Committee RECOMMEND that:-**

- 1) The Mobile Home Fee Structure is approved and implemented to all relevant sites throughout Redditch Borough and reviewed on an annual basis.**
- 2) The recovery of expenses through enforcement action is approved and implemented to all relevant sites throughout the Borough.**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 The Mobile Homes Act 2013 came into force on 1st April 2014 and was introduced as an addendum to the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 and applies to caravan sites typically known as residential parks, mobile home sites or caravan sites.
- 2.2 Caravan sites must have received planning permission prior to a caravan site licence being granted as determined under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act 1960 (as amended).
- 2.3 There are currently no licensable sites within Redditch Borough. Officers are however aware of a number of locations that are currently with the Planning Officer for determination of either new site development applications or investigation for retrospective planning consent. Sites that are granted development permission will subsequently require licencing unless they are exempted from licencing requirements. A Local

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Authority may charge for Site Licencing applications, annual site inspections and enforcement subject to formal adoption of a relevant Policy.

- 2.4 There is currently no provision to charge for such elements of work. It is proposed that Redditch Borough Council charge fees from January 2022 in accordance with the following proposals

### Proposed Fee Structure

- 2.5 The fees and charges set will aim to achieve the full cost recovery of providing the service. Potential enforcement costs will be recovered separately. The fees generated by the Mobile Homes Act 2013 are not designed to include investigation of harassment or matters not related to the site licence, these should be dealt with through Residents Associations or other appropriate channels.
- 2.6 Fees must be transparent and reasonable and should fairly cover costs incurred deliver the function. The proposed fee structure has been developed in line with DCLG 'A Guide for local Authorities on Setting Fees'. If approved the fees and charges will be reviewed annually in line with the corporate fees and charges policy. Fees are non-refundable if the application is refused or withdrawn.
- 2.7 It is proposed that a standard fee would be introduced for each element of work as detailed within the following table (Table 1). For costing detail see Appendix A – Assessment of Costs)

**Table 1**

<b>Fee Type</b>	<b>Proposed Fee amount</b>
Register of Site Rules	£72.25
New Site License Application Fee	£238.00
Licence Amendment Application Fee	£187.00
Transfer of Licence Fee	£136.00

- 2.8 There is no time limit to the Site License; therefore the above situations will arise on an ad-hoc basis.

### Annual Inspections Fee

- 2.9 Officers have taken account of the guidance and propose adoption of a 'banded' fee structure. It is considered to offer transparency and fairness to both residents and site owners and reflects actual inspection costs based on existing experiences. Where a Site Owner refuses to pay the fee this may result in the Local Authority referring the case to the First Tier Tribunal



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(Property Chamber) for the recovery of the charge and potential revocation of the Site License.

2.10 The Mobile Homes Act 2013 does allow the Local Authority to exempt certain sites from charging for licensing functions. It is proposed that small sites with single units are exempt as they are low risk and tend to be owner occupied sites where no business interest or third party duty exists. The cost of an inspection is outweighed by the cost of administering any charges. Where single unit sites are privately rented however it is proposed that these will be included into the annual site license inspection regime and charged at the Band A rate.

2.11 Table 2 indicates the bandings and charges for the annual inspections.

**Table 2**

<b>Annual Site Fee (per number of sites)</b>	<b>Annual Site Fee</b>
Band A (2-10 Units)	£256.67
Band B (11-30 units)	£274.17
Band C (31-70 units)	£385.00
Band D (71-100+ units)	£420.00

**Enforcement**

2.12 When issued, a site licence includes Site Licence Conditions based upon the national Models Standards. Non-compliance issues are currently difficult to pursue as the only available enforcement tool is prosecution for non-compliance. This does not however ensure that any necessary works are completed. The Mobile Homes Act 2013 provides the Local Authority with additional enforcement tools to tackle site owners over non-compliance issues. The Act has introduced the ability to serve compliance notices detailing breaches and for recovery of enforcement costs. Non-Compliance with the notice may result in a potential fine of up to £5,000.

2.13 Charges for enforcement costs cannot be passed onto the residents pitch fees.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

3.1 Currently the Local Authority cannot levy charges for these functions. The proposals will enable recovery of a substantial portion of service costs where these arise.

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

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- 4.1 The Local Authority has taken into consideration and ensured compliance with the following legislation and guidance: -
- Mobile Homes Act 2013,
  - Caravan Site and Control of Development Act 1960
  - DCLG Mobile Homes Act 2013
  - 'A guide for Local Authorities on Setting Fees'
  - The Mobile Homes (Site Rules) (England) Regulations 2014
  - Mobile Homes (Site Licensing) (England) Regulations 2014

### 5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS

#### Relevant Strategic Purpose

- 5.1 The introduction of charging for annual inspections to mobile home sites enables the local authority to meet its community priority of 'Supporting the delivery of appropriate housing for the Borough'. Sites regularly are able to be regularly inspected and compliance with model standards monitored and maintained in order to ensure the safety of residents and visitors to mobile home sites throughout the Borough. Regularly inspecting sites also ensure that site owners are supported in their business by maintaining compliance with Legislation.

#### Climate Change Implications

- 5.2 It has been determined that there are no climate change implications.

### 6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS

#### Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 6.1 It has been determined that there are no direct diversity or equality implications associated with the introduction of license fees.

#### Operational Implications

- 6.2 The option to not charge fees has been considered, however the functions are still required to be performed. There is no additional demand upon internal IT systems above what is provided currently.

### 7. RISK MANAGEMENT

Risk	Consequence	Controls
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Increased number of challenges relating to the introduction of site license fees	Increased officer time dealing with challenges relating to the introduction of annual inspection fees	The charges structure is based upon and in line with the guidance.
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**APPENDICES****8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- Appendix A – Assessment of costs
- Caravan Sites Control of Development Act 1960
- Mobile Homes Act 2013
- DCLG Mobile Homes Act 2013 'A guide for Local Authorities on Setting Fees'
- The Mobile Homes (Site Rules) (England) Regulations 2014
- Mobile Homes (Site Licensing) (England) Regulations 2014

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**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder		
Lead Director / Head of Service		
Financial Services		
Legal Services		
Policy Team (if equalities implications apply)		
Climate Change Officer (if climate change implications apply)		

# Appendix A – Assessment of Costs

	<b>New Site License Application Fee</b>	<b>Licence Amendment Application Fee</b>	<b>Transfer of Licence Fee</b>	<b>Annual Site Fee</b>				<b>park home rules</b>
				Band A(2-10 Units)	Band B (11-30 units)	Band C (31-70 units)	Band D (71- 100+ units)	
	Time (mins)							
Initial enquiries	20	20	20	0	0		0	10
Letter writing/ telephone calls etc to make appointments and requesting any documents or other information from the site owner or from any third party in connection with the licensing process;	60	30	30	30	30	30	30	30
Sending out forms;	10	10	10	0	0	0	0	
Updating hard files/ computer systems;	30	10	10	10	10	10	10	10
Processing the licensing fee;	20	20	20	20	20	20	20	20
Land registry searches;	10	10	10	0	0	0	0	
Time for reviewing necessary documents and certificates;	60	40	30	30	30	30	30	30
Downloading photographs;	30	30	30	30	30	30	30	
Preparing reports on contraventions;	0	0	60	80	80	80	80	
Preparing draft and final licences;	60	30	30	0	0	0	0	
Review by manager or lawyers; review any consultation responses from third parties;	60	30	30	30	30	30	30	
Updating public register;	10	0	10	0	0	0	0	10
Carrying out any risk assessment process considered necessary;	0	0	0	30	30	30	30	0
Reviews of decisions or in defending appeals.	60	60	30	0	0	0	0	0

# Appendix A – Assessment of Costs

	<b>New Site License Application Fee</b>	<b>Licence Amendment Application Fee</b>	<b>Transfer of Licence Fee</b>	<b>Annual Site Fee</b>				<b>Park home rules</b>
				Band A(2-10 Units)	Band B (11-30 units)	Band C (31-70 units)	Band D (71- 100+ units)	
A second visit, following the issue of a new licence, to check conditions and occupation of site.	60	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
A site visit to assess the specifics of the application, any implications for the licence or its conditions and to assess whether undertakings need to be given	0	60	0	0	0	0	0	0
A pre- programmed full site inspection;	0	0	0	60	90	120	240	0
A follow – up inspection to check compliance following programmed inspection	0	60	0	60	60	60	60	
Handling enquiries and complaints;	0	0	0	30	30	30	30	30
Travel time – including fuel costs	30	30	0	30	30	30	30	0
TOTAL MINUTES	560	440	320	440	470	500	620	170
TOTAL HOURS	9.3	7.3	5.3	7.3	7.8	11.0	12.0	2.8
<b>Time x Officer Rate</b>	<b>£ 326.67</b>	<b>£ 256.67</b>	<b>£ 186.67</b>	<b>£ 256.67</b>	<b>£ 274.17</b>	<b>£ 385.00</b>	<b>£ 420.00</b>	<b>£ 99.17</b>

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**Housing Revenue Account Outturn 2020/21**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillors Mike Rouse and Craig Warhurst
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Chris Forrester
Report Author	Job Title: Head of Finance & Customer Services email:chris.forrester@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk Contact Tel: 0152764252
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	'Help me find somewhere to live in my locality'
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Executive Committee RESOLVE that:-**

- 1) To note the outturn financial position (subject to audit) in relation to the HRA revenue and capital budgets for the year April 2020 – March 2021 as detailed in the report.**

**The Executive committee RECOMMEND that:-**

- 2) The housing system capital budget be increased by £436k**

**2. BACKGROUND**

The purpose of this report is to set out the revenue and capital outturn position for the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) for the financial year April 2020 – March 2021.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1** This report provides details of the revenue and capital outturn position of the HRA for 2020/21 and performance against budget.
- 3.2** Table 1 below sets out the revenue outturn position compared to budget (and prior year).

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3.3 **Table 1: HRA Outturn 2020/21**

HRA OUTTURN 2020/21	2019/20	2020/21	2020/21	2020/21
	Actuals	Budget	Actuals	Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's	£000's
<b><u>Expenditure</u></b>				
Repairs & Maintenance	6,275	6,038	4,682	-1,356
Supervision & Management	8,292	7,491	6,840	-651
Rents, Rates, Taxes and other charges	172	294	61	-233
Depreciation, impairments and revaluation losses, and interest payable / debt costs	10,132	9,894	10,044	150
Allowance for bad debts	88	182	184	2
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>24,959</b>	<b>23,899</b>	<b>21,811</b>	<b>-2,088</b>
<b><u>Income</u></b>				
Dwelling rents	-22,983	-23,083	-22,931	152
Non-dwelling rents	-541	-537	-541	-4
Charges for services and facilities	-630	-667	-650	17
Contributions towards expenditure	-154	-44	-59	-15
Capitalisation of System Implementation Team	-79	0	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>-24,387</b>	<b>-24,331</b>	<b>-24,181</b>	<b>150</b>
<b>Net Expenditure or Income of HRA Services</b>				
	<b>572</b>	<b>-432</b>	<b>-2,370</b>	<b>--1,938</b>
HRA Services Share of Corporate & Democratic Core	682	758	650	-108
<b>Net Expenditure of HRA Services</b>	<b>1,254</b>	<b>326</b>	<b>-1,720</b>	<b>-2,046</b>
HRA Interest and Investment Income	-143	-118	-3	115
<b>Deficit (Surplus) for Year on HRA Services</b>	<b>1,111</b>	<b>208</b>	<b>-1,723</b>	<b>-1,931</b>

3.4 The above table shows that the HRA budget of £208k deficit was underspend by £1,931k at an Outturn position of £1,723k surplus.



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3.5 The main variations against budget were as follows:

- The Repairs & Maintenance budget was underspent significantly by £1,356k due largely to Covid-19 and the associated operational impact on the schedule of maintenance. During large parts of the year, access to properties was restricted by Covid-19 measures imposed nationally. Responsive Repairs is a budget subheading that has been significantly impacted by Covid restrictions with a budget underspend of £637K (outturn £1.37m). The year outturn is considerably lower than the previous year's outturn of £3.09m. Similarly, Covid has impacted on work schedules, and this has resulted in underspend within the budget subheadings of Equipment & Adaptations (£137k), Planned Repairs (£124K), Void Repairs (£243k) and Service charge eligible works (£225k).
- Supervision & Management budgets were underspend by £651k. Within this the largest underspends were within the budget subheadings of Policy & Management (£160k), Housing Locality (£293K) and Communal Services (£159K). The underspend within Housing locality is mainly due to vacancies that remained unfilled while the restructure of the team was taking place.
- Rents, Rates, Taxes and other charges were under budget by £233k due mainly due to a reduction in insurance provision for the year.
- Depreciation, impairments and revaluation losses, and interest payable costs were up by £150k against budget due to small increase in depreciation for dwellings (£15k) and Garages (£25K), Deprecation charge for vehicles of £104k was not budgeted (this is because vehicles leased were previously "off balance sheet")
- Dwelling rent income were below budget by £152k which represents less than 0.7% of budget.

3.6 It should be noted that the above position is subject to audit.

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- 3.7 It should also be emphasised that the notional underspend reported above does not represent a real savings in resources over the medium term, but rather a change in the profile of required spend from 2020/21 to future years, particularly in relation to repairs and maintenance where operationally there will be a need to 'catch up' on outstanding work. That is to say that the underspend represents a delay in spend rather than a saving.
- 3.8 As a consequence of 3.10, and as part of the preparations for the audit of the HRA accounts, further work will be undertaken to establish how much of the £1.773 million underspend should be set aside as an earmarked reserve.
- 3.9 Table 2 below sets out the capital outturn position compared to budget.

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## 3.10 Table 2: HRA Capital Budget Outturn

Capital Scheme	2021/22 Budget	2020/21 Outturn	Variance
	£000's	£000's	£000's
Housing 1-4-1 purchases	3,200	2,823	377
Kitchen renewals	180	0	180
Catch up repairs	0	4	-4
Asbestos general	400	170	230
Structural repairs	30	38	-8
Electrical upgrades	888	527	361
Boiler replacements	0	43	-43
Upgrade of central heating systems	416	287	129
Window replacements	100	6	94
Disabled adaptations	700	72	628
Environmental enhancements	350	245	105
Fra works	0	383	-383
Stock condition survey	0	69	-69
Housing management it system	469	281	188
HRA external painting	0	79	-79
Capital salaries	300	433	-133
Door entry/CCTV installations	72	11	61
HRA hard wire smoke detector installs	378	136	242
HRA bin stores	200	56	144
Bathroom renewals	105	0	105
General roofing	270	0	270
Balcony replacements	150	0	150
Water supply	50	0	50
HRA electric heating	42	0	42
HRA electric catch up works	624	0	624
HRA door renewals	20	0	20
HRA damp & mould	38	0	38
HRA fire safety	82	0	82
HRA property purchase works	270	23	247
HRA compartmentation works	1,800	0	1,800
Major voids works	0	21	-21
Fencing renewals	90	0	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>11,224</b>	<b>5,707</b>	<b>5,517</b>

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- 3.11 The main variations against budget were driven by the impact of covid. As operatives were unable to undertake works this year, these are not savings rather the works will need to be reprofiled moving forwards.

New Housing system update

- 3.12 Significant progress has been made with regards to the implementation of the new Civica CX housing system this year despite the impact of covid. As the project has been going forwards several new costs have been identified which will need to be incurred to ensure the successful delivery of the project. Working with Civica, T1 and internal officers the housing project board recommends an increase in the capital budget of £465k to ensure the successful delivery of the programme.
- 3.13 These costs are being driven by a desire to increase the functionality of the system being implemented and improve its integration with a wider organisation as well as a planned delay in go live requiring additional licensing costs to be paid to Civica to maintain the current system arrangements.
- 3.14 It should be noted that this capital spend is within the overall capital spend allocation for the HRA in the current year and that further information (regarding the schedule of the spend and the benefits of this project spend) will be set out in the 22/23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan (including Capital Programme) Report.

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

No legal implications have been identified.

**5. STRATEGIC PURPOSES - IMPLICATIONS****Relevant Strategic Purpose**

- 5.1 This relates most closely to the strategic purpose: 'Help me find somewhere to live in my locality'.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 5.2 No climate change implications were identified.

**6. OTHER IMPLICATIONS****Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 6.1 No equalities and diversity implications were identified.

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**Operational Implications**

- 6.2 Managers meet with finance officers on a monthly basis to consider the current financial position and to ensure actions are in place to mitigate any overspends.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 The financial monitoring is included in the corporate risk register for the authority.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Portfolio Holder	Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling	November 2021
Lead Director / Head of Service	Director of Resources	November 2021
Financial Services	Head of Financial and Customer Services	November 2021

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# **2022/23 Budget and Medium Term Financial Plan 2022/23 to 2024/25**

Executive 7<sup>th</sup> December 2021

# Agenda

1. Intro and Purpose
2. Financial Context – Balances & Risks
3. Reallocation of Earmarked to General Fund Reserves
4. Emerging Budget Pressures
5. RPP and Emerging Budget Options
6. Council Tax and budget assumptions
7. Conclusions and summary



# 1. Intro and Purpose

- Build upon previous discussions regarding improving the fragile financial position of RBC
- Present emerging budget considerations, options, recommendations and forecasts
- Cut through the complexity of the Budget
- Get an initial steer from the Executive prior to:
  - further work
  - member engagement on emerging budget
  - finalising formal budget reports.

## 2. Financial Context – Balances

RESERVE BALANCES	FEB 21 MTFP FORECAST		
Feb 21 Forecasts	31/3/22 (£m)	31/3/23 (£m)	31/3/24 (£m)
General Fund (NB minimum = £1.5m)	1.9	1.6	0.8

- The Council's financial reserves are at **minimum levels** and forecast to go below minimum levels in 2023/24 at Redditch.
- Finalising the prior year Outturn and updating 21/22 forecasts will update this position over coming weeks.
- Lack of headroom is a real risk to financial security / resilience / sustainability

**This position is fragile. The Financial Strategy must therefore focus on increasing General Fund balances.**

## 2. Financial context - Risks

- Future of Local Government Finance (inc NHB) and the Fair Funding Review
- Future of business rates and the business rates reset
- Covid – impact on service demand, Leisure services collection rates

**= Planning Uncertainty**

**NB: The Towns Fund and other projects increase our risk (as well as opportunity)**

### 3. Reallocation of Earmarked Reserves to the General Fund

Re the strategic focus of increasing the General Fund balance – an important practical step is to **reallocate Earmarked Reserves back to General Fund where possible.**

This ensures that we have an accurate assessment of the Council's 'rainy day funds' – used to mitigate risk and ensure finances remain sustainable.

## 4. Emerging Budget Pressures

- Starting budget gap
- Covid and impact on delivery of savings
- Inflationary pressures – BoE forecast of 5% by April 2022
- Utility costs are currently at an historic high as seen with gas prices
- Salaries budgeted at 1% but likely to be higher as inflation is climbing
- Demand for Leisure services post Covid?
- ICT and additional agile working demands on IT kit and cyber controls

**Emerging Budget Recommendation: Exec notes significant budgetary pressures. Exec supports principle of minimum full cost recovery on fees & charges (including 5% inflationary pressures).**

# 5. Resource Planning and Prioritisation (RPP) and Emerging Budget Options

CMT working to identify options to re-prioritise limited resources. As part of the development of a **RBC Financial Turnaround Plan** and 22/23 Budget:

- Options for doing things differently / more efficiently / reduce costs
- Options to increase income
- Options to stop doing (do less)
- Pipeline of potential projects (for inclusion in future budgets subject to business case)

## 5. Emerging RPP Options: Further approved work

Following previous Exec steer, further work is to be undertaken re:

- cost reduction initiatives including consideration of alternative cash payment processes (subject to business case).
- exploring additional income opportunities including in the areas of bulky waste, charging for replacement wheeled bins, property rentals (including Town Hall) and Council Tax empty premiums.
- Maximising the impact and affordability of non statutory services.
- Identifying further projects, initiatives and 'Invest to Save' opportunities that could be built into future budgets.
- Consideration of an 'Invest to save' Earmarked Reserve.

## 6. Council Tax

NB: Due to the CT cap – a decision in any one year not to increase CT – has a recurring year on year impact on the General Fund.

Impact on General Fund	Year 1	Year 2	Year 3	Year 4	TOTAL
	£m	£m	£m	£m	£m
Impact of not increasing by £5 in Year 1	0.13	0.13	0.13	0.14	<b>0.53</b>
Impact of not increasing by 2% in Year 2		0.13	0.13	0.14	<b>0.4</b>
Impact of not increasing by 2% in Year 3			0.13	0.14	<b>0.27</b>
Impact of not increasing by 2% in Year 4				0.14	<b>0.14</b>
Total over the Medium Term (4 years)					<b>1.34</b>

**Emerging Budget Recommendation: No change in MTFP assumptions re Council Tax. Increase CT by £5 in 22/23.**



## 7. Conclusions and summary

- Balances are too low. The financial position is fragile.
- The Financial Strategy must focus on increasing General Fund balances.
- Funds should be reallocated from Earmarked to General Fund Reserves where possible.
- An 'Invest to Save' Earmarked Reserve should be set up.
- There are a number of budget pressures including pay / non pay inflation.
- The current MTFP models a £5 increase in Council Tax in 22/23.
- Budget options which must be considered include options to stop doing / do less, reduce costs and increase income.
- The Executive has supported a number of budget areas for further work.
- Next Steps: Draft budget to Exec in December.

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 21st October, 2021

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Debbie Chance (Chair), Councillor Jennifer Wheeler (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Karen Ashley, Joanne Beecham, Alex Fogg, Julian Grubb and Lucy Harrison

### Officers:

Sue Hanley, Mike Dunphy and Mary Worsfold

### Democratic Services Officers:

Jo Gresham

## 28. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Councillor Chance informed the Committee that she may arrive late to the meeting. The Vice-Chair, Councillor J. Wheeler, chaired the meeting until 18:31 when Councillor Chance joined the meeting.

Apologies were received from Councillors Akbar and Chalk.

## 29. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no Declarations of Interest nor of any Party Whip.

## 30. MINUTES

### RESOLVED that

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 2nd September 2021 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.

Chair

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 21st October, 2021

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## 31. PUBLIC SPEAKING

There were no public speakers registered on this occasion.

## 32. CHURCH GREEN CONSERVATION AREA

The Principal Conservation Officer presented Members with the Church Green Conservation area report including the Conservation Area Appraisal and Conservation Management Plan. During the presentation the following was highlighted for Members' attention:

- It was a statutory duty under s69(1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and conservation Areas) Act 1990 for the Council to designate any areas which they considered to be of special architectural or historic interest as a Conservation Area.
- The Conservation Area Appraisal had been prepared in order to provide a strategy to protect and enhance its character and support the wider regeneration of the town centre. The Conservation Management Plan identified strategies to protect and enhance the Conservation Area by addressing any issues that had been identified in the Conservation Area Appraisal. These issues had been identified as the following:
  - Poor state of the public realm
  - Poor state of shop fronts
  - Parking around the church
  - Parking on the corner of Evesham Walk/ Unicorn Hill
  - Vacant Units
- A consultation was carried out in February and March 2021 where letters were hand-delivered to occupiers of the Conservation Area and other interested parties which included Historic England and The Victorian Society. Thirteen responses to the consultation had been received, most of them dealt with issues that had already been identified and officers had dealt with the concerns that were raised.

Members were interested in particular areas of the Appraisal Plan and queried the outcome there would be for the church if

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 21st October, 2021

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they no longer received the income from parking around the church. Officers explained that the church would be approached, and a way forward would hopefully be identified that was suitable to both parties.

Also identified as an area of interest were the fountain and the Abbey stone located in Church Green. It was commented that both of these artefacts were in a state of disrepair and residents were keen to understand what the future plans were. Officers informed Members that the plans included the repair of the fountain, however they would undertake to provide further information to Members and circulate accordingly.

The Committee were pleased that the vacant shops would be included in the plans as they impacted on the look of the area. Members questioned whether it was likely that all of the Landlords would be happy to undertake improvements of their shop fronts. It was explained that the process would be a slow one. However, when plans like these had been undertaken before, once some of the Landlords had undertaken to make changes then other Landlords would be encouraged to make improvements, having seen that they were worthwhile.

The Strategic Planning Manager explained that some funding mechanisms had changed, and it was hoped that bids would be made in order to secure funding in the future. Members were advised that there were multiple parties included in this project and that it was not a one-person approach.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) The Council approves the Church Green Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan, and endorses its contents as a material consideration for planning purposes; and**
- 2) Council approves the designation of the proposed extension to the Conservation Area to include 5 – 11 Alcester Street**

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 21st October, 2021

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## 33. CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY PANEL UPDATE

Councillor Wheeler introduced the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel update in her role as Chair of the panel. Members were informed that the panel meeting took place on 22<sup>nd</sup> September 2021 when they were presented with an articulate and highly informative presentation by Bev Houghton, the Community Safety Partnership Manager.

The Deputy Chief Executive was welcomed to the meeting to outline some of the background of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership (NWCSP). It was highlighted for Members' attention that the NWCSP covered three areas: Redditch, Bromsgrove and Wyre Forest and that the annual update had focussed on the workings of the Partnership as a whole, not individual organisations and agencies. It was also made up of subgroups and tasking groups which functioned as the operational arms of the Partnership.

The Chair of the Panel presented the key areas to the Committee, as follows:

- Although the work of the Partnership had been impacted by the Covid-19 pandemic there had been a significant number of projects developed including work to prevent reoffending and the harmful effects of drugs and alcohol.
- Funding had been received from the Police and Crime Commissioner in order to improve CCTV including a digital upgrade.
- A large number of Youth Programmes had been undertaken both online and face-to-face. These projects included Empowering Young People Project, Young Citizens Challenge, Virtual Decisions Knife Crime Project and The Respect Programme. There were also projects carried out that ensured that some of the most vulnerable residents in the Borough were protected. These had included the Nominated Neighbour Scheme, the White Ribbon Scheme for victims of domestic abuse and security home improvement visits.
- Woodrow had been chosen as the recipient of the Safer Streets project funding in Redditch. It was explained that

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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some Members queried why Woodrow had specifically been chosen to receive the funding. It was noted that analysis of super output area data for safer street crime types in respect of Woodrow had reinforced its selection as the area of highest need. Members were informed that future funding would be available, and that residents should be encouraged to report incidents to the appropriate agencies.

In addition to the work of the NWCSP's work in Redditch, an update on Anti-Social Behaviour (ASB) was also provided to the Panel at their meeting. The Chair informed Members of the Committee of the various types of preventative action that could be undertaken in situations where ASB was identified. These were as follows:

- Introductory Tenancies
- Community Protection Warnings
- Community Triggers
- Restorative Justice

Councillor Wheeler thanked Bev Houghton and the team for their hard work over the past year and commented that more Members should be encouraged to attend the meeting when it occurred the following year. It was also noted that such was the value of the meeting that the scheduling of meetings should be increased.

Members were informed that the statutory requirement of the scrutiny of the Partnership was only once per year. However, it might be possible to have an additional scheduled meeting during the year on a specific topic that involved the Partnership. The Deputy Chief Executive undertook to speak to officers and establish what could be an appropriate level of meeting support and wider communications given the capacity of the team. It was also highlighted for Members' information that the Portfolio Holder attended the Partnership meetings and could potentially be a Member conduit for the future.

Some Members were keen to understand the process for reporting resident complaints in both Council homes and private properties. The Deputy Chief Executive explained that this was dependent on the circumstances. However, it was explained that Members were

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thursday, 21st October, 2021

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always welcome to contact the relevant Senior Officer in order to progress the query or complaint.

## **RESOLVED that**

**The Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel Update be noted.**

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

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

The Chair reported that the Budget Scrutiny Working Group had met on 6th September 2021, when the group had discussed the purpose of the Working Group, including the way it had worked in previous years and of the importance of regular scrutiny of the Council's Budget.

It was highlighted for the Committee the importance of working as a Critical Friend to the Executive. It was clarified that any recommendations made by the Budget Scrutiny Working Group would be considered by the main Overview and Scrutiny Committee prior to them being considered by the Executive. Members were informed that all previous recommendations made to the Executive had been agreed.

Councillor Wheeler provided information on some of the items that would be considered by the Group over the next municipal year. These included:

- Towns Fund
- Fees and Charges
- Budget Framework
- Budget Outturn
- Covid-19 Grants Update
- Brexit and the impact on the Borough

The Committee were informed that the next meeting of the Group was scheduled for 9th November 2021.



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b) **Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Jennifer Wheeler**

The Chair reported that the Performance Scrutiny Working Group had met on 14th September 2021. During that meeting, Members had been presented with an update from the Head of Housing Services. It was explained that an all-Member briefing had taken place in September regarding the Housing Service. It was stated that another session would be held again for any Members who had not been able to attend the initial session.

Several items had been included on the Work Programme for the next municipal year including understanding the Green Thread and its impact on Council's services and an introduction and training on the new Council dashboard which was due to be implemented by the end of 2021.

The next meeting was scheduled for 2<sup>nd</sup> November 2021.

d) **Parking on Unicorn Hill, Short, Sharp Review – Chair, Councillor Joanne Beecham**

Councillor Beecham informed Members that a meeting of the Parking on Unicorn Hill Short, Sharp Review had taken place on 21st September 2021.

At that meeting the Head of Planning and Regeneration and a representative from the Licensing Committee had provided an update regarding the licensing work that was currently underway in respect of the location of Taxi Ranks in the Borough. It was decided that since the Licensing Committee were undertaking work in this area, that the Short, Sharp Review would be paused until such time as this work had been completed.

**RESOLVED that**

**The Task Groups, Short Sharp Reviews and Working Groups Update Reports be noted.**

# **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

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## **35. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS**

The External Scrutiny Bodies Update reports were presented to the Committee for their consideration.

There were no questions regarding the updates from Members at the meeting. However, having noted that Councillor Chalk had submitted his apologies, it was agreed that should there be any questions they could be raised at the next meeting of the Committee.

**RESOLVED that**

**The External Scrutiny Bodies Update reports be noted.**

## **36. SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE'S WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY**

The Executive Committee's Work Programme was presented for Members' consideration.

It was noted by the Committee that the Financial reports were to be considered at the Budget Scrutiny Working Group meetings, and that if there were any recommendations, these would be presented to the main Committee for their consideration.

It was requested that the Growth Options for the Garden Waste Service be placed on the Committee's Work Programme in order to be pre-scrutinised prior to its consideration by the Executive Committee.

**RESOLVED that**

**Subject to the preamble above, the Executive Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

# **Overview and Scrutiny Committee**

Thursday, 21st October, 2021

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## **37. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME**

**RESOLVED that**

**The Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

## **38. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES**

**RESOLVED that**

**The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday, 7<sup>th</sup> September 2021 be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm  
and closed at 7.35 pm

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