



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Thu 20 Jul  
2023  
6.30 pm

Civic Suite  
Redditch Town Hall

**REDDITCH** BOROUGH COUNCIL

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difference*

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**If you have any queries on this Agenda please contact  
Jo Gresham**

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

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**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**

Meeting attendees are encouraged not to attend a Committee if they have any of the following common symptoms of Covid-19 on the day of the meeting; a high temperature, a new and continuous cough or a loss of smell and / or taste.

### **PUBLIC SPEAKING**

The usual process for public speaking at Committee meetings will continue to be followed subject to some adjustments which allow written statements to be read out on behalf of residents and the virtual participation of residents at meetings of Council and Planning Committee.

### **PUBLIC ATTENDANCE AT MEETINGS**

Members of the public are encouraged not to attend a Committee if they have any of the following common symptoms of Covid-19 on the day of the meeting; a high temperature, a new and continuous cough or a loss of smell and / or taste.

### **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.**

# Overview and Scrutiny

Thursday, 20th July, 2023

6.30 pm

## Agenda

### Membership:

Cllrs:	Sid Khan (Chair)	Joanna Kane
	Sharon Harvey	Emma Marshall
	(Vice-Chair)	Jane Spilsbury
	Imran Altaf	Monica Stringfellow
	Karen Ashley	
	Chris Holz	

### 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 5 - 14)

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee from 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023 will be considered at this meeting.

### 4. Public Speaking

To invite members of the public who have registered in advance of the meeting to address the Committee. Please note that the deadline to register to speak at this meeting is 12 noon on Tuesday 18<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

### 5. Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2040 - Pre-Scrutiny (to follow)

*This report will follow in an Additional Papers pack once the report has been published for consideration of the Executive Committee (due for publication on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023).*

### 6. Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group - Scoping Document (Pages 15 - 16)

### 7. Establishment of a Programme Office - Pre-Scrutiny - (to follow)

*This report will follow in an Additional Papers pack once the report has been published for consideration of the Executive Committee (due for publication on Monday 17<sup>th</sup> July 2023).*

# Overview and Scrutiny

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## 8. Overview and Scrutiny Training Event - Consideration of Items Suitable for Scrutiny (Pages 17 - 24)

## 9. Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme (Pages 25 - 28)

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

- a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Kane
- b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Holz

## 11. External Scrutiny Bodies - Update Reports (Pages 29 - 32)

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

## 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;
- and may need to be considered as ‘exempt’.

# Overview and Scrutiny

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## **13. Executive Committee Minutes and Scrutiny of the Executive Committee's Work Programme - Selecting Items for Scrutiny (Pages 33 - 60)**

*The minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 13<sup>th</sup> June 2023 have been attached for Members' consideration. The latest edition of the Executive Committee work programme is also attached.*

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Thursday, 8th June, 2023

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Sid Khan (Chair), Councillor Sharon Harvey (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Imran Altaf, Joanna Kane, Emma Marshall, Jane Spilsbury and Monica Stringfellow

### Also Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer – Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development, Commercialism and Partnerships

### Officers:

Sue Hanley, Peter Carpenter (on Microsoft Teams), Claire Felton (on Microsoft Teams), and Deb Poole (on Microsoft Teams).

### Democratic Services Officers:

Mat Sliwinski

## 1. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Ashley and Holz.

## 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

Councillor Marshall declared that she was a member of the Executive Committee at the time Section 24 Notice was issued to Redditch Borough Council. It was noted that the nature of the interest declared did not preclude Councillor Marshall from full participation in the discussion, and voting on, any of the items on the meeting's agenda.

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

## 3. MINUTES

Chair

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The minutes of the meetings held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023 were submitted for Members' consideration.

## **RESOLVED that**

**the Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023 be approved as a true record and signed by the Chair.**

### **4. PUBLIC SPEAKING**

There were no registered public speakers on this occasion.

### **5. CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE - ACTION PLAN - PRE-DECISION SCRUTINY**

The Deputy Chief Executive Officer provided an overview of the report on Corporate Peer Challenge – Action Plan and in doing so explained what happened during the Peer Review Challenge visit that took place at the Council between 7<sup>th</sup> and 10<sup>th</sup> March 2023 and presented the feedback report from the Local Government Association (LGA) Peer Review team on the Peer Review visit. This feedback included six key recommendations for the Council, which were as follows:

1. The council needs to review its strategic priorities and realign resources accordingly.
2. The organisation should consider a governance review to improve decision-making.
3. Embed the 2022-2026 Workforce Strategy and develop an action plan which needs to be implemented at pace.
4. Agile working principles and policies need to be implemented consistently.
5. Ensure the Section 24 Notice and Interim Annual Audit Report recommendations are fully implemented.
6. Use engagement, shared values, and improved processes to create a positive democratic culture.

It was explained that Appendix B to the main report provided the Council's response and action plan against each of the six key recommendations. These responses had been submitted for the Executive Committee to consider alongside supporting action plans included at Appendices C to G.

It was reiterated that Members views were particularly sought as to what, if anything, else the Council should do to address Recommendations 2 and 6



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(Appendix D).

Following the main presentation, Members had the opportunity to make comments and question the Officers in attendance. The following comments and suggestions were made by Members, and responses provided by Officers:

- It was reiterated that residents, elected members, local partners from public and private sectors, and members of staff all had the opportunity to take part in the peer review. There were resident, elected member, and staff focus groups to facilitate participation from these groups. In total, the peer team gathered information and views from around 55 meetings and spoke to over 130 people over the course of the peer review for Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils.
- It was raised by some Members that consideration should be given to altering the dates of Overview and Scrutiny meetings so that they aligned better with dates of Executive Committee meetings, thereby enabling Members of Overview and Scrutiny to have maximum possible time period to access Executive Committee papers that had been chosen for pre-scrutiny.
- It was explained that for the purposes of the Council agile working was defined as the ability of staff to work from different locations, and that as part of the strategy indicators to monitor customer/resident experience were being developed. Progress on this would be reported to Council on a quarterly basis.
- With regards to procuring external support to implement the six key recommendations, it was explained that support from LGA was available, and the Council already paid a subscription so there would be no additional cost implication. A support could also be sought, if required, from the Centre for Governance and Scrutiny (CfGS), and based on anecdotal evidence from other authorities, the cost implication would be up to, but no more than, £10,000.

It was proposed by Councillor Spilsbury, and agreed by the Committee, that each key recommendation would be discussed and voted on in turn.

With regards to recommendation 1, Councillor Kane proposed, seconded by Councillor Spilsbury, that the additional action be inserted as an addendum to the action plan (at Appendix B) for recommendation 1 as follows:

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*“to produce a new engagement plan so that residents have the opportunity to shape new Council policies at the development stage. The plan should be co-produced with residents ensuring a broad selection of people with no political bias are involved in producing the plan.”*

During the discussion, it was highlighted that residents had the opportunity to engage with the Council through the Community Panel, with around 800 residents signed up. These residents were volunteers who agreed to be contacted by the Council at any time for taking part in surveys and similar engagement activity. It was also highlighted that most Council surveys were open to all residents but those signed up received direct notifications.

For surveys undertaken by the Council, it was reported that these were usually advertised for residents to take part online. Hard copies were nevertheless provided at Town Hall reception and, residents could request that a paper copy of a survey questionnaire be sent to them through the post. Social media channels were also utilised in order to engage younger demographic.

Whilst some Members opined that 800 residents engaged in Community Panel represented a significant part of the community that was directly engaged with Council activity, other Members noted that the LGA Corporate Peer Challenge feedback report clearly highlighted a room for improvement in the Council's engagement with the public and that the Council should be ambitious in terms of its public engagement aims. It was also highlighted that engaging with residents through surveys was often not the most effective way of understanding the real concerns of residents and that the Council should consider more focus group and discussion type activities with residents.

Following the discussion, the proposed addition to recommendation 1 was put to the vote, and it was agreed that the Executive Committee be asked to add this addendum outlined above to the action plan for recommendation 1.

With regards to recommendation 2, a proposal was put forward by Councillor Marshall that the Council might consider creating a member advisory group or cabinet/executive advisor posts on the model of Worcestershire County Council (WCC) in order to strengthen governance arrangements. This would necessitate updating Council's constitutional governance arrangements. Members were advised that any elected member could put such proposal to the Constitutional Review Working Party who were the most appropriate forum for Members to raise constitution-related

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proposals. Following this clarification, Councillor Marshall agreed to withdraw the above proposal and instead proposed that any proposals on governance be referred to the Constitutional Review Working Party for consideration. The resolution was worded as follows:

*“That it be reaffirmed, in relation to Recommendation 2 of the Corporate Peer Challenge, that elected member proposals relating to governance arrangements be referred to the Constitutional Review Working Party as the forum that facilitates engagement of all elected members in improving the Council’s decision-making processes.”*

On being put to the vote, the above resolution was agreed, and it was agreed that the action plan to recommendation 2 should be endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee without changes.

With regards to recommendation 3, Members sought clarification with regards to the Workforce Strategy Action Plan as it was observed that some of the actions contained in this Strategy should exist as business-as-usual for an organisation, not as something to be developed. Officers clarified that the Workforce Strategy Action Plan presented was alongside an operational action plan that contained significant amount of detail on business-as-usual matters. This resulted in a great number of actions being highlighted in the main Workforce Strategy. Members requested that a briefing note be prepared that highlights which actions in the Workforce Strategy were already in place and which were in the development stage.

In response to queries about the planned new council chamber and arrangements for live webcasting of council meetings, Officers reported that proposals for new chamber in terms of webcasting technology, frequency and type of council meetings that would be streamed would be brought before Members. In terms of layout of the new council chamber, it was commented that it was planned at this point that in ‘blind spots’ screens would be installed so that elected members would still be able to observe the dais and the centre of the chamber from these places. Architects’ drawings would be shared with all Members.

On being put to the vote, it was agreed that the action plan for recommendation 3 should be endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee without changes.

With regards to recommendation 4, a proposal was put forward by Councillor Harvey, seconded by Councillor Kane, that an additional

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action be inserted to the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan (at Appendix B) for recommendation 4 as follows:

*“that the Implementation Plan for Agile working (included at Appendix F) includes the assessment of the needs of residents in accordance with the Council’s Agile Working Policy. This should include undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).”*

During the discussion, it was highlighted that evaluating the impact that agile working had on residents’ ability to resolve enquiries with the Council and access to Council services should be a priority, however, no reference to the effect of agile on customers of the Council, the residents, was made in the Agile working action plan (Appendix F). It was with this in mind that the above addition to the action plan was proposed. Members also raised consideration of technological solutions such as ‘communication pods’ put in locations across the Borough that would enable residents to speak directly with Officers via a remote connection should continue to be considered.

Following the discussion, the proposed addition to recommendation 4 was put to the vote, and it was agreed that the Executive Committee be asked to add this addendum outlined above to the Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan for recommendation 4.

With regards to recommendation 5, it was agreed that the action plan in response to recommendation 5 should be endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee without changes.

With regards to recommendation 6, it was agreed that the action plan in response to recommendation 6 should be endorsed by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee without changes.

## **RECOMMENDED to the Executive Committee**

- 1) That the following additions be inserted to the Council’s Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan (response to Peer Challenge recommendations) included at Appendix B to the report:**

***Recommendation 1: “to produce a new engagement plan so that residents have the opportunity to shape new Council policies at the development stage. The plan should be co-produced with residents ensuring a broad selection of people with no political bias are involved in producing the plan.”***

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**Recommendation 4: “that the Implementation Plan for Agile working (included at Appendix F) includes the assessment of the needs of residents in accordance with the Council’s Agile Working Policy. This should include undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).”**

## RESOLVED

- 2) That it be reaffirmed, in relation to Recommendation 2 of the Corporate Peer Challenge, that elected member proposals relating to governance arrangements be referred to the Constitutional Review Working Party as the forum that facilitates engagement of all elected members in improving the Council’s decision-making processes.

## 6. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE’S WORK PROGRAMME - SELECTING ITEMS FOR SCRUTINY

The Committee requested that the following items from the Executive Committee’s Work Programme be added as pre-scrutiny items to the Committee’s Work Programme:

- Playing Pitch and Built Facilities Strategies
- Parking Enforcement Service Level Agreement
- Matchborough and Winyates Regeneration Proposals
- Decarbonisation of the Council Fleet
- Carbon Reduction Strategy – Annual Review
- Review of Governance Arrangements for Rubicon Leisure Limited
- Future Plans for Auxerre House.

In addition, it was requested that the following items from the Executive Work Programme be referred to the Budget Scrutiny Working Group for its consideration:

- Treasury Outturn Report 22/23
- Draft Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25
- HRA Rent Setting 2024/25.

## RESOLVED that

**the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be updated with items from the Executive Committee’s Work Programme as per the pre-amble above.**

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## 7. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY WORK PROGRAMME

The Democratic Services Officer explained that there had been a number of items identified by Members for inclusion in the Committee's work programme during the overview and scrutiny training event held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023. The suggestions made by Members at the training event would be considered as an agenda item at the next meeting of Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme be noted.**

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

Updates on Task Groups and Working Groups were provided as follows:

- a) Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Kane

Councillor Kane reported that a number of meetings of the Working Group had now been scheduled.

- b) Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Chair, Councillor Holz

As Councillor Holz had submitted his apologies, he could not provide an update. It was reported, however, that meeting dates for this Working Group had now been arranged.

- c) Consideration of any outstanding Task Groups – All Councillors

Members present agreed that the Bulky Waste and Fly Tipping Task Group should be launched and undertaken in the first instance.

**RESOLVED that**

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

## 9. EXTERNAL SCRUTINY BODIES - UPDATE REPORTS

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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Councillor Marshall provided an update in respect of External Scrutiny Bodies and in doing so that no meetings of the West Midlands Combined Authority (WMCA) Overview and Scrutiny or the Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny (HOSC) had yet taken place in this municipal year.

Councillor Marshall thanked the previous long-time representative on external scrutiny bodies, former Councillor Michael Chalk, for his regular written reports that were considered at meetings of this Committee. She undertook to similarly provide written updates in advance of the Committee meetings.

**RESOLVED that**

**the External Scrutiny Bodies updates be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm  
and closed at 8.22 pm

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**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	Cllr Sid Khan	Date of referral	20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
Proposed topic title	Fly Tipping and Bulky Waste Task Group		
Link to local priorities including the strategic purposes	Communities which are safe, well maintained and green. Reduce crime of Fly tipping and target the causes of anti-social behaviour across the Borough.		
Background to the issue	Fly tipping is common across Redditch. It is believed that some residents cannot afford to have items collected due to costs.		
Key Objectives Please keep to SMART objectives (Specific, Measurable, Achievable, Relevant and Timely)	To provide a free service to areas where fly tipping is prevalent reducing environmental health hazards that arise from illegal disposal. This can be linked directly to the green thread with an aim to recycle, reduce fly tipping and improve the environment. This can be measured by the amount of waste collected and the reduction of fly-tipping. This will encourage residents to recycle responsibly, not have a need to fly tip and improve the image of the town. Free collections should reduce pollution and help improve the built environment. A campaign to raise awareness and education through social media, targeted leaflet drops, ward councillors surgeries, PACT meetings. Reduce, Reuse and Recycle to keep much material out of landfill as possible.		
How long do you think is needed to complete this exercise? (Where possible please estimate the number of weeks, months and meetings required)	This review will run for a period of 6 months with meetings taking place roughly every three weeks.		

Please return this form to: **Mat Sliwinski and Jo Gresham, Democratic Services Officers, Redditch Borough Council, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH**  
 Email: [mateusz.sliwinski@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:mateusz.sliwinski@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)  
[joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:joanne.gresham@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**20<sup>th</sup> July 2023**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY – UPDATE ON WORK PROGRAMMING  
PLANNING EVENT ITEMS**

Lead Councillor	Councillor Sid Khan, Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee
Portfolio Holder Consulted	N/A
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton – Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services
Report Author Mat Sliwinski	Job Title: Democratic Services Officer Contact email: <a href="mailto:mateusz.sliwinski@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk">mateusz.sliwinski@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk</a> Contact Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3095
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor(s) consulted	N/A
Relevant Strategic Purpose(s)	An Effective and Sustainable Council
Non-Key Decision	
If you have any questions about this report, please contact the report author in advance of the meeting.	

**1. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** to:-

- 1) **Identify items raised during the Overview and Scrutiny Training Event to add to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme.**

**2. BACKGROUND**

- 2.1 This report provides Members with an opportunity to consider the outcomes of the Overview and Scrutiny Training Event, which was held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023. During the event Members explored a number of issues that might potentially be suitable for further scrutiny. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee is asked to consider whether to add any of these items to the Committee's Work Programme in 2023-24.
- 2.2 The Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Planning event was held on 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023. All non-executive Members were invited to attend. In total 14 Members participated in the session.
- 2.3 During the event introductory training was provided in respect of the role of Overview and Scrutiny in the democratic process and the different types of scrutiny activity that can be undertaken.

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- 2.4 Members were also invited to consider the different ways in which Overview and Scrutiny Members could investigate matters. This included:
- Receiving an overview of a subject at a meeting of the Committee. This could involve the presentation of a report to a single meeting of the Committee for information.
  - Undertaking Task Group or Short Sharp Reviews of a subject. This review work involves Members working in small groups to investigate a subject in detail over a period of usually a number of months.
  - Pre-decision scrutiny, whereby Overview and Scrutiny Members investigate a matter in detail before the Executive Committee makes a decision on the subject. Where sufficient notice is provided in the work programme this may involve undertaking a Short Sharp Review.
  - Members carrying out independent research on behalf of the Committee and reporting back in respect of their findings.
- 2.5 Following an overview of the various approaches that could be adopted to scrutiny and where these might, Members were invited to participate in an interactive session to consider items that Members felt needed to be considered for investigation by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.6 The activity focused on doorstep issues that had been raised by residents with Members over the previous months. Members were invited to consider whether they felt that the issues would be suitable for further scrutiny and, if so, in what way these matters should be investigated by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.
- 2.7 This report considers the outcomes of the training event in terms of issues that were identified by Members (included in Appendix 1) and at this meeting Members are asked to consider which issues are suitable for inclusion in this year's Committee Work Programme.
- 2.8 Members are asked to note that the Bulky Waste and Fly Tipping Task Group is due to be launched at the meeting on 20<sup>th</sup> July 2023, and it has also been agreed to launch the Road Safety and Speeding Task Group during this municipal year. There are also two permanent sub-groups of the Committee, the Budget Scrutiny Working Group and the Performance Scrutiny Working Group. As such, there is no spare capacity to support any additional Task Group Reviews at this stage, though further reviews could take place once these have been completed.
- 2.9 Members are asked to note that it is not intended for the training event to provide the only opportunity for Members to suggest items for

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scrutiny. Members are encouraged to continue to suggest items for scrutiny, including pre-decision scrutiny, throughout the year as and when they feel that this would be appropriate.

**3. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 3.1 All scrutiny activities can have some financial implications, for example in respect of the costs of issuing paperwork for Committee meetings. It is therefore important to ensure that Members select subjects to scrutinise that will achieve best value for money for local residents.

**4. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 4.1 There are no specific legal implications.

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

- 5.1 Overview and Scrutiny activities should focus on strategic issues that matter to local residents. The Overview and Scrutiny Training Event was designed to enable Members to identify issues that best match this aspiration.

**Climate Change Implications**

- 5.2 There are no some climate change implications, for example in terms of the amount of paperwork that is issues for Committee meetings and any Task Group Reviews and Working Groups. Members are asked to consider climate change implications of their work, for example in terms of Members being able to view agendas and minutes in electronic format wherever possible.

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

- 6.1 There are no specific equality and diversity implications.

**Operational Implications**

- 6.2 Overview and Scrutiny is a Member-led process. Members determine which items are added to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's work programme, what evidence is gathered during an investigation and which recommendations to make to the Executive Committee and / or

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Council. The Overview and Scrutiny Training Event provided Members with an opportunity to propose items that could be added to the Committee's Work Programme.

- 6.3 Overview and Scrutiny activities should focus on strategic issues that matter to local residents. The event was designed to enable Members to identify issues that best match this aspiration.

**7. RISK MANAGEMENT**

- 7.1 No specific risks have been identified at this stage. In selecting the items for scrutiny task group / short sharp reviews and proposing any subsequent recommendations, Members need to be mindful of ensuring that the issues selected reflect the needs of the communities and any recommendations adhere to the SMART principles in terms of being clear, realistic, timely, and comply with any legal requirements.

**8. APPENDICES and BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Appendix 1 – Door Step Issues – items identified as suitable for further scrutiny in 2023-24.

**9. REPORT SIGN OFF**

<b>Department</b>	<b>Name and Job Title</b>	<b>Date</b>
Chair of Overview & Scrutiny Committee	Councillor Sid Khan	6 <sup>th</sup> July 2023
Lead Director / Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic & Property Services	xxx

## Overview and Scrutiny Training Session – 5<sup>th</sup> June 2023 – Redditch Borough Council

### Doorstep Issues

Members were placed in groups for this interactive exercise. They were asked to reflect on key issues that had been raised by residents in their wards and whether they would be suitable for further scrutiny. Members attending were split into three groups to discuss their ideas. During the discussion the following topics were raised by each group:

#### Group 1

1. **Homelessness Support** – what support and service are available for those who are homeless within the Borough?
2. **Third Sector Support** – How are third sector organisations supported? What is information, funding is available for them? Does the Council work with them effectively?
3. **Parking** – parking enforcement, provision within the Borough.
4. **Domestic Violence Support** – understanding what support and services were available to victims of domestic abuse and their families.
5. **Black Mould** – Understanding the extent of the issues of black mould within social housing in Redditch. What measures are taken by Housing teams to remedy the presence of black mould and the process and timeframes they are resolved.
6. **Repairs and Maintenance** – What is the process for reporting an issue to Repairs and Maintenance Team? How long does it take to resolve issues. What services are available?
7. **Customer Experience** – what is the customer experience when making complaints within the Council. Who do issues get reported to? Timelines of resolution of issues.
8. **Speeding** – How is the issue of speeding tackled within the Borough?
9. **Anti-Social Behaviour** – What measures are taken to tackle ASB within the Borough?
10. **Drugs** - What measures are taken to tackle drug activity within the Borough? Are there steps being taken to tackle County Lines drug activity?
11. **Nuisance Begging** – What measures are in place to tackle this issue and if there is a mechanism to provide support and understand those who needed further support.
12. **Drinking in Town** – what measures were in place to tackle drinking in the Town Centre, particularly around the Church Green area.
13. **Tree Maintenance** – what is the schedule for tree maintenance? Which trees can the Council remove, and which are protected?
14. **Culture and the Arts** -how does the Council work with local Arts and Culture Groups in a joined up way to ensure that events within the Borough are publicised effectively. What resources does the Council have in this area? Could the Council do more in order to promote the Arts and Culture Service on its website (including up to date information of groups on the Council website).

Group 2

1. **Roads** – Condition of roads, how issues with road safety and speeding can be tackled effectively by the Council working with partners (County Council, Police etc).
2. **Parking** - What can the Council do to alleviate parking issues for residents around Redditch Town Centre?
3. **Social housing repairs** – How can the Council improve its social housing stock repair turnaround times? How can resources be aligned more effectively so that urgent repairs are undertaken in a timely manner?
4. **Gardens in social housing** – How can the standard and upkeep of garden areas in council properties be improved?

Group 3

1. **Play Areas** – Is there a sufficient provision of suitable play areas in the Borough? How to address the lack of variety in terms of play equipment in the Borough catering to different age groups, e.g. 4-12 year-olds and older teenagers? Can the durability of play areas equipment be improved?
2. **Medication Provision in Worcestershire** – To resolve an inconsistency identified whereby some medicines are not available for free within Worcestershire that are free to residents in neighbouring/other counties.
3. **Mental Health - Third Sector Support** – How are third sector organisations providing mental health services supported? What information, funding is available for them? Does the Council work with them effectively?
4. **Empty Shops in Town Centre** – Looking at how empty units can be accommodated and whether initiatives can be implemented to encourage businesses and/or community organisations to move into empty units. How can the Council help to increase the shops offer in the Town Centre?
5. **Footpaths and pavements** – Addressing the poor condition of paving in certain areas of the Borough, which is a potential dangerous and an inconvenience for pedestrians.
6. **Keeping local areas clean and safe** – How to ensure neighbourhoods are kept clean and secure from Anti-Social Behaviour? How can community cohesion be strengthened and/or supported by the Council?
7. **Housing register waiting list** – How can the housing waiting list be reduced? How to better prioritise people with local connection? Exploring scope to increase the number of social housing properties in the Borough to accommodate the demand.
8. **Repairs and Maintenance (of Council properties)** – What is the process for reporting an issue to Repairs and Maintenance Team? How long does it take to resolve issues. What services are available? What is the policy regarding damage caused to Council properties, whether caused by tenants, the Repairs and Maintenance Team and the contractors?
9. **Mould and damp** – What is done to enforce standards in properties to prevent structural damp and mould issues (both social housing and private rented sector)? How effective is the Council at enforcement where poor standards are reported? Is there any advice support available to those residents who have black mould / condensation in properties as a result of lifestyle factors?



10. **Parking** – What can the Council do to alleviate parking issues for residents around Redditch Town Centre? Also parking enforcement provision within the Borough.
11. **Benefit and debt issues** – How to better support residents in dealing with these issues? What support can be provided/facilitated by the Council?
12. **Buses** – Liaison with Worcestershire County Council over maintenance of key bus lines that residents rely on for work commute. Looking at making the timetables more convenient particularly at peak times.
13. **Tree Maintenance** -\_what is the schedule for tree maintenance? Which trees can the Council remove, and which are protected?
14. **Fences** – Standard of fencing etc.

### **Methods of Scrutiny**

Within the groups there followed a discussion regarding what would be the most appropriate method of scrutiny to look at the topics identified in further detail. The following options were provided to Members to choose from:

1. Overview
2. Task Group/ Short Sharp Review
3. Pre-scrutiny
4. Working Group

#### **Group 1**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Method of Scrutiny</b>
<b>Homelessness Support</b>	Overview
<b>Third Sector Support</b>	Task Group
<b>Parking</b>	Overview
<b>Domestic Violence Support</b>	Task Group
<b>Black Mould</b>	Performance Scrutiny Working Group
<b>Repairs and Maintenance</b>	Short/Sharp Review or Performance Scrutiny Working Group
<b>Customer Experience</b>	Overview
<b>Speeding</b>	Overview (Task Group already agreed)
<b>Anti-Social Behaviour</b>	Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel
<b>Drugs</b>	Task Group
<b>Nuisance Begging</b>	Task Group
<b>Drinking in Town</b>	Task Group
<b>Tree Maintenance</b>	Performance Scrutiny Working Group
<b>Culture and the Arts</b>	Task Group

#### **Group 2**

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Method of Scrutiny</b>
<b>Roads (road safety and speeding)</b>	(Task Group already agreed)
<b>Parking</b>	Overview
<b>Social housing repairs</b>	Overview (to begin)
<b>Gardens in social housing</b>	Overview

Group 3

<b>Topic</b>	<b>Method of Scrutiny</b>
<b>Play Areas</b>	Overview (then potentially a Short Sharp Review)
<b>Empty Shops in Town Centre</b>	Task Group
<b>Parking</b>	Short Sharp Review
<b>Buses</b>	Overview (invite County Council Officers)
<b>County Lines and ASB/Drugs</b>	Overview (Police to be invited to deliver a presentation) / Crime and Disorder Panel
<b>Mental Health – Third Sector Support</b>	Overview. Any questions on County matters to refer to the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)
<b>Footpaths and pavements</b>	Performance Scrutiny Working Group
<b>Bulky Waste and Fly Tipping</b>	(Task Group already agreed)
<b>Speeding</b>	(Task Group already agreed)
<b>Housing Register Waiting List</b>	Short Sharp Review / Performance Scrutiny Working Group
<b>Medication provision in Worcestershire</b>	Refer to the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)
<b>Tree Maintenance</b>	Performance Scrutiny Working Group
<b>Mould and damp</b>	Overview or Task Group Review
<b>Benefit and debt issues</b>	Overview
<b>Repairs and Maintenance</b>	Short/Sharp Review or Performance Scrutiny Working Group
<b>Fences</b>	Performance Scrutiny Working Group

Members then provided feedback to the other groups on the issues identified and what their top three issues would be. These were as follows:

Group 1

1. Domestic Violence Support
2. Third Sector Support
3. Culture and the Arts

Group 2

1. Social Housing Repairs
2. Road Safety and Speeding
3. Gardens in Social Housing

Group 3

1. Empty Shops in the Town Centre
2. Play Areas
3. County Lines and Drug Use

**Overview & Scrutiny**

Committee

20<sup>th</sup> July 2023**WORK PROGRAMME 2023-24**

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Subject Matter</b>	<b>Officer(s) / Member(s) Responsible for report</b>
<b>ALL MEETINGS</b>	<b>REGULAR ITEMS</b>	<b>(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)</b>
	Minutes of previous meeting	Chief Executive
	Consideration of the Executive Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive
	Call-ins (if any)	Chief Executive
	Pre-scrutiny (if any)	Chief Executive
	Task Groups / Short, Sharp Review Groups – feedback	Chair of Task Group / Short, Sharp Review
	Working Groups - feedback	Chair of Working Group
	Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive

**Overview & Scrutiny**

Committee

20<sup>th</sup> July 2023

MEETING DATE	ITEM TO BE CONSIDERED	RELEVANT LEAD
20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Pre-Decision Scrutiny - Worcestershire Housing Strategy 2040	Judith Willis, Head of Community and Housing Services
20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Bulky Waste and Fly Tipping Task Group – Terms of Reference and Membership	Councillor Sid Khan, Chair of Overview and Scrutiny  Guy Revans, Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services
20 <sup>th</sup> July 2023	Overview and Scrutiny Training and Work Programme Planning Event Report	Democratic Services
Not before 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Playing Pitch and Built Facilities Strategies	Jonathan Cochrane, Development Services Manager
Not before 31 <sup>st</sup> October 2023	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Parking Enforcement Service Level Agreement	Kevin Hiron, Environmental Services Manager
Not before 12 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Pre-Decision Scrutiny - Matchborough and Winyates Regeneration Proposals	Ostap Paparega, Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development
Not before 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Pre-Decision Scrutiny - Environment Act - Changes to Waste Services – Implications	Guy Revans, Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services
Not before 25 <sup>th</sup> September 2023	Pre-Decision Scrutiny – Decarbonisation of the Council Fleet	Kevin Hiron, Environmental Services Manager
26 <sup>th</sup> October 2023	Pre-Decision-Scrutiny - Review of Governance Arrangements for Rubicon Leisure Limited	Claire Felton – Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services

**Overview & Scrutiny**

Committee

20<sup>th</sup> July 2023

<b>30<sup>th</sup> November 2023</b>	Pre-Decision-Scrutiny - Future Plans for Auxerre House	Simon Parry, Housing Property Services Manager
<b>Date to be confirmed</b>	Health Priorities in Redditch - Overview item	Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive Officer
<b>Date to be confirmed</b>	Outcome of Tenant Consultation on Housing Policies	Judith Willis, Head of Community and Housing Services

## Working Groups:

- Budget Scrutiny Working Group – Provisional calendar of meetings for 2023/24 is currently being finalised.
- Performance Scrutiny Working Group – Provisional meeting dates have been arranged in September and November 2023, and January and March 2024 with the exact dates currently being finalised.

## Task Groups:

- Bulky Waste and Fly Tipping Task Group – A submission, and approval, of a topic proposal document to the Committee on 20<sup>th</sup> July and agreement on the membership are required before the Task Group can be launched.
- Speeding and Road Safety Task Group – To be agreed at future meetings: Membership, Full Topic Proposal and Terms of Reference of the Task Group to be agreed by the Committee before this Task Group.

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## West Midlands Combined Authority Transport Delivery Overview and Scrutiny Update 03/07/2023

Public papers available here:

<https://governance.wmca.org.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?CId=240&MId=873>

Recording of meeting can be watched here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8uniOvxEcVI>

### Update:

As this was the first meeting of this committee the first agenda item was to elect a chair, Cllr John McNicholas from Coventry City Council was duly elected.

The meeting contained 4 verbal reports. The committee requested not to have verbal reports in the future to give time for the members to digest the information.

Agenda item 5, members were informed that there will be several training programmes available for all members throughout the course of the year.

Agenda item 6, Thanks to recent successful bids, Transport for West Midlands (TfWM) has been able to have a complete review within the department. The funding has enabled the department to investigate long term projects with a 10-year programme. After holding a review on capitol delivery including consulting with residents, the department has moved away from working in silos to a more integrated delivery model. As of the 3<sup>rd</sup> of July, the department moved into the new ways of working with the new structures in place. This new 1 team will be responsible for all travel under one portfolio office. The department are now looking at succession planning, recruitment, graduate positions, and apprenticeships to ensure staffing rates are maintained. A written outlining this will follow.

Agenda item 8, the financial monitoring report demonstrates a favourable variance on revenue of £0.6m due mainly to under patronage of concessions and staff vacancies. Capital budget has a minor over spend against budget of £0.8m however the overall project costs remain within the overall budget allocation.

Agenda item 9 was a verbal update on bus travel. Bus tickets have increased in areas where the cap is not in place. It was felt by members of the committee that not enough had been done to advertise the increase to passengers in advance of the raise.

TfWM successfully bid for the Bus Service Improvement Plan (BSIP) and was awarded £88m one of the highest awards in the country. This has enabled the WMCA to maintain 90% of bus services so far. TfWM are looking now at how to best utilise the funding with the aim of maintaining 88% of bus services going forward accepting that they will not be able to maintain all the services.

It was discussed that bus services needs to be more reliable to attract passengers and that one of the issues bus companies are facing is lack of drivers.

Demand Responsive Transport (DFT) was discussed as Solihull recently held a DFT trial in Balsall Common and Berkeswell. TfWM are working with Warwickshire County Council who also held a trial to share learnings. I will be putting officers in touch with Worcestershire County Council to be included in these conversations as we also held our own DFT trial in Bromsgrove with further trials being launched in Malvern.

It was discussed how the increase in bus tickets are not profit driven but due to the increase in labour and fuel. One member felt the enhanced bus partnership is not working and felt the authority didn't have control over cost, route, or frequency. The chair felt this could be raised at the West Midlands Bus Alliance.

Agenda item 10, the road safety strategy has been refreshed and will be launched in September 23. This strategy is 2 years in the making and looks to reduce incidents of serious injury or death on the road by 50% by 2030 based on 2015 levels. The new strategy also looks to adopt Vision Zero as the long-term mission to eliminate all fatal and serious injuries on the roads. The strategy looks to include safety performance indicators, opportunities for innovation and collaboration.

Not only is reducing accidents the right moral way forward, but there is also a reduction in societal cost incurred. On average a fatal road collision costs the taxpayer around £2m and serious injury costs around £246k for each incident.

There has been a recent spike in road incidents including children, bikes, elderly and hit and run accidents. TfWM are working closely with the police, fire, resident's groups and health authority, and local charities on this issue. So far, they have seen a reduction of 16%,

The public engagement on the strategy evidenced 88% agreement. After the launch of the Strategy in September officers will develop a delivery plan to be delivered in 2024.

Next meeting – Monday 14<sup>th</sup> September 1pm



## Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Update 15<sup>th</sup> June 2023

Public papers are available here:

<https://worcestershire.moderngov.co.uk/ieListDocuments.aspx?Mid=5771&x=1&>

### Update on improving Patient Flow:

The Trust are disappointed that they haven't been able to completely eradicate delays in patient handover or timely discharge from ambulances. They mentioned that they have been hampered by both industrial action and hot weather.

The trust is working to quickly identify the most appropriate care for patients presenting to the ED and transfer the patient there as quickly as possible. This helps reduce overcrowding and facilitates faster ambulance handovers.

The main reason for delayed ambulatory handover is overcrowding in the ED either having no space or no staff to treat the patient. This is mainly an issue for Worcester. Patients in ambulances are continually cared for by the ambulance crew with a check every 15 minutes performed by an experienced ED nurse. Patients are then admitted based off clinical priority instead of arrival time. This can lead to walk in patients being seen before a patient in an ambulance where their clinical need is greater.

The ED department still see patients who should have seen their GP or called 111. Better messaging is needed to help the public know where to go for medical attention so that the ED is only used when necessary. This would have a significant impact on waiting times.

We have an advanced primary care offer in Worcester and Redditch and the Trust is working with primary care networks to help share best practice. A big issue for primary care is work force. We have more GP's being trained up than before, but more are leaving the practice, and more are going to other countries to practice.

To improve patient flow in Worcester the Trust are building a new ED which will have a larger capacity and be better situated to move patients on to the relevant specialities required. We had the opportunity to tour the new ED department which was very impressive. It will be opening for patients in October 23.

The Trust has undergone multiple reviews including external, internal, and national. They have received 14 recommendations and are formulating a plan to deliver on the 9 priorities which refer directly to the Trust. This will include better planning for an increase in an elderly population long term.

There will be an aim on prevention and keeping people well at home with the backlog of Occupational Therapy recommendations being prioritised to help with home adaptations and therefore discharge of patients back to their homes. The Trust noted that the County Council were extremely good at getting people with social care plans discharged into appropriate settings in a timely manner.

The work to help councils spend their Disabilities Support Grants is a big programme of work. The back log caused by Covid has reduced from 1400 patients to 700. The OT team are prioritising urgent cases which can lead to longer waits for others. The aim is to reduce the waiting list and remove the backlog completely. It is extremely important to get elderly patients discharged quickly as they deteriorate rapidly in the hospital environment.

People with mental health crisis are increasingly appearing in the ED, this is believed to be due to West Mercia Police changing their practice to not attend mental health call outs. The new ED department will have specialist rooms specifically for mental health concerns.

The ED department is well over 100% capacity every day even during the off-peak months. One of the aims is to improve discharge rates concentrating on discharging earlier on in the day as discharges post 4pm lead to considerable blockages.

This was Matthew Hopkins last meeting with the Health Overview and Scrutiny panel. The July meeting has had to be cancelled so the next meeting now will be in September.

### Ambulance update:

The amount of time crews are spending waiting to hand over at hospital has continued to improve with April showing the lowest total since May 2021. However, work is still ongoing to get back to 2019 levels.

Despite taking over 120,000 999 calls during April, the Trust was able to answer all of them within two minutes with an average time to answer of just 2 seconds! It's the first time for over a year that there have been no over two-minute calls and the Trust was the only ambulance service in the country to be able to do so.

Once more, the level of gratitude shown by the public to the work of staff during April has been phenomenal. In total, the Trust received 183 compliments, all of which will be passed to the individual staff members involved.

Almost 170 graduates from universities across the region descended on Sandwell Hub last month for an engagement event organised by the recruitment team. The day was designed to give paramedic science students who are due to graduate soon, the opportunity to find out more about the Trust and speak to various members of staff to assist them with the recruitment process. Visiting students, who attended from Wolverhampton, Staffordshire, Coventry, Worcester, and Birmingham City Universities, had the chance to try out equipment they will be using on the fitness tests, talk to Senior Operations Managers, find out about the Trust's Health and Wellbeing process and see what the Hazardous Area Response Team has to offer, with all of the specialist equipment on show in the garage.

### Integrated Care Strategy:

You can read an update to the Integrated Cre Strategy here:

<https://sway.office.com/ofig2JrqzVebcG8U?ref=email>

The 10-year strategy aims to Improve population health outcomes.

- Reduce inequalities in outcomes, access, and experience.
- Improve value for money.
- Contribute to wider social and economic wellbeing for the population.

The Worcestershire NHS trust is now working on their 5-year joint forward plan which will be published at the end of June.

Last month celebrated the official launch of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire ICS Academy. It is unique among other healthcare systems in that it provides staff with a 'one stop shop' for a vast array of training, development, and career opportunities - all of which are available to everyone across ICS partner organisations.

NHS England recently published their [delivery plan for recovering access to primary care](#).

As part of this plan, by next winter patients will be able to get medication for earache, sore throat and urinary tract infections straight from the pharmacist without needing a GP appointment. The plan also seeks to support recovery by focusing on:

- Empowering patients to manage their own health.
- Tackle the 8am rush, provide rapid assessment and response.
- Build capacity.
- Cut bureaucracy and reduce workload.

The Stroke Board are now considering the findings of a recently held stroke engagement project.

On 1<sup>st</sup> April 23 NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire became responsible for the commissioning of pharmaceutical, ophthalmic, and dental functions which were previously commissioned and managed by NHS England in the Midlands.

NHS Herefordshire and Worcestershire has introduced a project to look at how GP surgeries can ensure they are more receptive to the sensory needs of autistic people, as well as helping to raise awareness of autism and what reasonable adjustments staff can make to support improving health outcomes of autistic people.

# EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME

**1 August 2023 to 30 November 2023**

(published as at 3<sup>rd</sup> July 2023)



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

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

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

The Executive Committee's meetings are normally held at 6.30pm on Tuesday evenings at the Town Hall. They are open to the public, except when confidential information is being discussed. If you wish to attend for a particular matter, it is advisable to check with the Democratic Services Team on (01527) 64252, ext: 3072 to make sure it is going ahead as planned. If you have any other queries, Democratic Services Officers will be happy to advise you. The full Council meets in accordance the Council's Calendar of Meetings. Meetings commence at 6.30pm.

## **EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERSHIP**

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

Councillor Gemma Monaco, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder for Climate Change

Councillor Joe Baker

Councillor Joanne Beecham Portfolio Holder for Leisure

Councillor Brandon Clayton Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services

Councillor Luke Court Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling

Councillor Lucy Harrison Portfolio Holder for Community and Regulatory Services

Councillor Bill Hartnett

Councillor Craig Warhurst, Portfolio Holder for Housing and Procurement

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Disposal of Long Leasehold Interest at Woodfield Close, Abbeydale, Redditch <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 12 Sep 2023	This report may contain exempt information which may need to be considered in private session.	Report of the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	Victoria Bendall, Property Manager Tel: 01527 881333 ext 3300
Matchborough and Winyates Regeneration Proposals <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive 12 Sep 2023		Report of the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services	Ostap Paparega, Head of North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration Tel: 01562 732192
Playing Pitch and Built Facilities Strategies <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 12 Sep 2023		Report of the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services	Jonathan Cochrane, Development Services Manager Tel: 01527 63051
Carbon Reduction Strategy - Annual Review <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 12 Sep 2023 Council 25 Sep 2023		Report of the Head of Community and Housing Services	Judith Willis, Head of Community and Housing Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3284

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Decarbonisation of the Council Fleet <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Not before 12th Sep 2023  Council 25 Sep 2023		Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Kevin Hirons, Environmental Services Manager Tel: 01527 881705
Draft Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 12 Sep 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Michelle Howell, Head of Finance and Customer Services Tel: 01527 64252
Environment Act - Changes to Waste Services - Implications <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 12 Sep 2023  Council 25 Sep 2023		Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Guy Revans, Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3292
Finance and Performance Monitoring Report - Quarter 1 2023/24 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 12 Sep 2023  Council 25 Sep 2023		Report of the Head of Finance and Customer Services	Michelle Howell, Head of Finance and Customer Services Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
The Town Hall Refurbishment - Final Decision <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive 12 Sep 2023	This report will contain exempt information which may need to be discussed in private session.	Report of the Interim Section 151 Officer	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252
Approvals to Spend Report <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 31 Oct 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252
Council response to Local Plan Consultations; Birmingham Development Plan, South Staffordshire Local Plan and South Worcestershire Development Plan <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Not before 31st Oct 2023  Council Not before 13th Nov 2023		Report of the Head of Planning, Regeneration and Leisure Services	Mike Dunphy, Strategic Planning and Conservation Manager Tel: (01527) 881325
Draft Council Plan <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 31 Oct 2023  Council 13 Nov 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Finance Recovery Plan - Update <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 31 Oct 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Michelle Howell, Head of Finance and Customer Services Tel: 01527 64252
Parking Enforcement Service Level Agreement <b>Key:</b> Yes	Executive Not before 31st Oct 2023	This report may contain exempt information which would need to be discussed in private session.	Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Kevin Hirons, Environmental Services Manager Tel: 01527 881705
Medium Term Financial Plan - Tranche 1 Budget including Fees and Charges (prior to consultation) <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 31 Oct 2023		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Michelle Howell, Head of Finance and Customer Services Tel: 01527 64252
Review of Governance Arrangements for Rubicon Leisure Limited <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 31 Oct 2023  Council 13 Nov 2023		Report of the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services Tel: 01527 881429

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Finance and Performance Quarter 2 Report 2023/24 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 5 Dec 2023 Council 29 Jan 2024		Report of the Head of Finance and Customer Services	Michelle Howell, Head of Finance and Customer Services Tel: 01527 64252
Future Plans for Auxerre House <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 5 Dec 2023 Council 29 Jan 2024	This report may contain exempt information which would need to be discussed by the Executive Committee in private session.	Report of the Head of Environmental and Housing Property Services	Simon Parry, Housing Property Services Manager Tel: 01527 64252
Medium Term Financial Plan - Tranche 1 Budget Update including Fees and Charges <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 5 Dec 2023 Council 29 Jan 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252
Approvals to Spend Report <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 9 Jan 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252



Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Council Tax Base and Business Rates Yield 2024/25 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 9 Jan 2024 Council 29 Jan 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Michelle Howell, Head of Finance and Customer Services Tel: 01527 64252
Final Council Tax Support Scheme 2024/25 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 9 Jan 2024 Council 29 Jan 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252
Finance Recovery Plan - Update <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 9 Jan 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252
HRA Rent Setting 2024/25 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 9 Jan 2024 Council 29 Jan 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Independent Remuneration Panel Recommendations <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 9 Jan 2024 Council 29 Jan 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Darren Whitney, Electoral Services Manager Tel: 01527 882547
Pay Policy 2024/25 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 9 Jan 2024 Council 29 Jan 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Becky Talbot, Human Resources and Development Manager Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3385
Medium Term Financial Plan (including Treasury Management Strategy, Capital Strategy, Minimum Revenue Provision and Investment Strategy) (Tranche 2) <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 6 Feb 2024 Council 26 Feb 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252
Council Tax Resolutions 2024/25 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 26 Feb 2024 Council 26 Feb 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Resources	Michelle Howell, Head of Finance and Customer Services Tel: 01527 64252

Decision including Whether it is a key Decision	Decision Taker Date of Decision	Details of Exempt information (if any) and any additional information for noting	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Finance and Performance Quarter 3 Report 2023/24 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 26 Feb 2024 Council 26 Feb 2024		Report of the Head of Finance and Customer Services	Michelle Howell, Head of Finance and Customer Services Tel: 01527 64252
Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report <b>Key:</b> No	Council 26 Feb 2024		Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee	Mateusz Sliwinski, Democratic Services Officer
Approvals to Spend Report <b>Key:</b> No	Executive 19 Mar 2024		Report of the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252
Finance and Performance Monitoring Outturn Report 2023/24 <b>Key:</b> No	Executive Not before 1st Jun 2024 Council Not before 1st Jun 2024		Report of the Head of Finance and Customer Services	Peter Carpenter, Interim Section 151 Officer Tel: 01527 64252

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# Executive Committee

Tuesday, 13th June, 2023

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## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Matthew Dormer (Chair), Councillor Gemma Monaco (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Joe Baker, Joanne Beecham, Brandon Clayton, Luke Court, Lucy Harrison and Bill Hartnett

### Also Present:

Councillors Joanna Kane, Kerrie Miles and Jane Spilsbury

### Officers:

Matthew Bough, Peter Carpenter, Kevin Dicks, Claire Felton, Sue Hanley and Michelle Howell

### Principal Democratic Services Officer:

Jess Bayley-Hill

#### 1. APOLOGIES

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

#### 2. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 3. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader advised that at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023 Members had pre-scrutinised the Corporate Peer Challenge report, due to be considered at Minute Item No. 5 at the Executive Committee meeting. At the end of their debate, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had proposed a recommendation on the subject which had been published in a supplementary pack for the consideration of the Executive Committee. Members were urged to consider the Committee's proposals alongside the report.

Chair

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## 4. MINUTES

### RESOLVED that

**the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on Tuesday 21<sup>st</sup> March 2023 be approved as a true and correct record and signed by the Chair.**

## 5. CORPORATE PEER CHALLENGE - ACTION PLAN

The Chief Executive presented the Corporate Peer Challenge report and action plans for the Executive Committee's consideration.

The Committee was informed that the Corporate Peer Challenge had been requested at a Bromsgrove Council meeting held in December 2022, following the authority's receipt of a Section 24 Notice from the external auditors, Grant Thornton. The decision had subsequently been taken to invite the Local Government Association (LGA) to undertake a joint Corporate Peer Challenge for Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council.

There were a number of key themes that were addressed in all Corporate Peer Challenges undertaken through the LGA but in addition, Councils could ask for the peers to focus on particular areas; for this Corporate Peer Challenge, a request had been made for peers to focus on governance and culture as well as Council finances, due to the points raised in the Section 24 Notices issued to both authorities. The Corporate Peer Challenge team had comprised representatives from a number of different Councils, including elected Member representatives, and their report had been published prior to the local elections in May 2023.

The Corporate Peer Challenge report had contained a number of recommendations and these had already been reviewed by the Corporate Management Team (CMT). In some cases, Officers had identified that action was already being taken to address the points that had been raised. The appendices to the report provided further detail on the action being taken and Members were asked to note the following key points:

- The Corporate Peer Challenge had emphasised that, given the financial challenges for local government, the Council needed to identify clear priorities and to ensure that these informed the content of the authority's Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP).
- In respect of the governance issues that had been identified, Members were asked to note that there was already a lot of work being undertaken with respect to Member training, as

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part of the new Member induction process, as well as the ongoing review of the Council's constitution by the Constitutional Review Working Party (CRWP). In addition, CMT had identified that all Member briefings on particular topics might need to be organised on a case-by-case basis moving forward.

- A lot of work had already been undertaken in respect of the Workforce Strategy, which had previously been approved by Members, and a high-level action plan had been developed. Many of the projects within this plan were complex and required action from Heads of Service and managers and progress with this would be monitored. Some of the priorities underpinning this would be considered by CMT shortly and would thereafter be managed by a Strategy Working Group.
- In respect of the Council's approach to agile working, an Agile Working Policy had been developed following a pilot of agile working arrangements. The policy took into account best practice and staff briefings had been delivered to help communicate the terms of the policy. There was an Agile Working Project Board, which assessed implementation from a strategic perspective, although service managers would be responsible for ensuring that the policy was applied in the most appropriate way to meet the needs of their customers. Residents, tenants and the business would all be prioritised when determining how agile working should apply in practice in different contexts across the organisation and performance management would apply to ensure that services continued to be delivered effectively.
- The Finance Delivery Plan detailed the action that was being taken to address the issues with financial management that had been highlighted in the Section 24 Notice. This included the provision of an Accounting Policies report for consideration at every meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee, the frequency of which had increased from four to six meetings per year in the 2023/24 municipal year. The report would update the Committee on the progress that was being achieved and any issues with non-compliance.

The Corporate Peer Challenge process usually concluded with a follow up visit by some of the peers to review the progress that had been achieved. Generally, these follow up meetings occurred within six months of the original visit, however, due to the forthcoming departure of the current Chief Executive, it was suggested that Members might wish to review those timescales to involve the new Chief Executive in due course.

Following the presentation of the report, Members commented on a number of points in detail:

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- The information included in the report regarding community engagement and involving Members in this process. It was noted that the Council needed to try to consult with more than 800 people when undertaking community engagement and that the authority also needed to try to engage with a wider and more representative demographic.
- The possibility of holding residents' forums for engagement on particular issues.
- The potential to improve engagement with more Members in Council business.
- The lack of financial monitoring reports for the period leading up to the Council receiving a Section 24 Notice and the weaknesses with risk management that had been identified in the notice. Officers highlighted that reports received throughout the 2022/23 municipal year had already addressed this issue and would continue to be considered at Committee meetings and that Risk Management had been discussed quarterly at both Executive and Audit, Governance and Standards Committee throughout 2022/23.
- The need for effective systems to enable Members to report casework and to receive responses from Officers more swiftly than the existing ten-day response rate for the Housing Department.
- The potential for Redditch Executive Committee members to hold joint meetings with Bromsgrove Cabinet Members as suggested by the Corporate Peer Challenge team. The Leader explained that he would be supportive of this where the two authorities were considering reports on the same subjects and where it could be demonstrated that this would have a beneficial impact in terms of reducing demands on officer time. However, Members were asked to note that, following the local elections in May 2023, Bromsgrove District Council was exploring various different options which might impact on the potential to work together in this way moving forward.
- Concerns were raised regarding the timeframes in which reports were provided to Members, particularly scrutiny Members, and the need for this to be improved. It was noted that the Council was compliant with the requirement to publish agenda packs at least five clear working days before a meeting and the focus of Overview and Scrutiny in previous years on only pre-scrutinising the Executive reports had impacted on timeframes for scrutiny Members to receive reports, which would be available once published for the Executive Committee meetings. Adopting a different approach to pre-scrutinising issues more holistically, taking into account wider issues than just the Executive Committee's report, could help to address this problem alongside potentially reviewing



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- the timing of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings in relation to Executive Committee meetings moving forward.
- The progress that had been made with the works on the Town Hall hub and the extent to which the financial figures identified for this work were “final” in a context in which rates of inflation had increased. Officers explained that the figures had been based on quotes provided in the summer of 2022/23. The exact figures remained to be determined, subject to the outcomes of the library consultation and the subsequent procurement process being undertaken in July – August 2023.
  - The action that had been taken to date with respect to increasing use and upgrading the Council’s Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) system. Officers explained that staff had attended recent conferences and were in contact with external experts regarding this matter.
  - The members of the Corporate Peer Challenge team were thanked for their hard work and support. Members and Officers who had contributed evidence during the challenge were also thanked for their contributions.

During consideration of this item, Members referred specifically to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee’s pre-scrutiny of the Corporate Peer Challenge report at a meeting held on Thursday 8<sup>th</sup> June 2023. Members commented that there had been a detailed discussion of the report at that meeting and the recommendation that had been made had been based on the evidence that had been considered. There was general consensus that the recommendation proposed sensible action and it was agreed that the recommendation should therefore be endorsed.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the Local Government Association (LGA) Corporate Peer Challenge (CPC) Feedback report which took place in March 2023 be noted;**
- 2) **the Council’s response and supporting action plans be endorsed; and**
- 3) **That the following additions be inserted to the Council’s Corporate Peer Challenge Action Plan (response to Peer Challenge recommendations) included at Appendix B to the report:**

***Recommendation 1: “to produce a new engagement plan so that residents have the opportunity to shape new Council policies at the development stage. The plan should be co-produced with residents ensuring a broad***

*selection of people with no political bias are involved in producing the plan.”*

**Recommendation 4: “that the Implementation Plan for Agile working (included at Appendix F) includes the assessment of the needs of residents in accordance with the Council’s Agile Working Policy. This should include undertaking an Equality Impact Assessment (EIA).”**

**6. RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE AUDIT, GOVERNANCE AND STANDARDS COMMITTEE - BROMSGROVE AUDIT TASK GROUP**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented recommendations that had been agreed at a meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 9<sup>th</sup> March 2023. During this meeting, the Committee had considered a report that had been produced by the Bromsgrove Audit Task Group, which had been launched by the Bromsgrove Audit, Standards and Governance Committee, at the request of their Council, in response to their Section 24 Notice. Members were asked to note that the Redditch Audit, Governance and Standards Committee had responded in a different fashion to the Council’s Section 24 Notice, by agreeing to hold more frequent meetings of the Committee than had previously been the case and to receive a regular update at each meeting of the Committee on the Council’s progress in addressing the issues raised in the Section 24 Notice.

The Bromsgrove Audit Task Group had considered hundreds of pages of written evidence and had held eight meetings over a period of 20 hours in February and early March 2023. Based on the evidence gathered, the group had proposed two groups of recommendations; the first group had focused on general lessons learned in respect of areas such as project management, the need for proper minutes of project board meetings and escalation of issues for mitigation whilst the second group of recommendations had focused specifically on the issues arising in relation to the ERP finance system and the implications for closing the Council’s accounts. The Redditch Audit, Governance and Standards Committee had concluded that the recommendations were sensible and that they should therefore be endorsed by the Council. The Committee had also proposed that the Executive Committee should write to the Bromsgrove Audit Task Group to thank them for their hard work.

Since the report had been published, further progress had been achieved with the implementation of the ERP system, although it was anticipated that the backlog in the cash receipting module would not be cleared until the end of the calendar year.

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Bromsgrove District Council's Cabinet was also due to consider a report in respect of the project management arrangements at the authority, in line with one of the recommendations in the report.

In concluding the presentation of the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling commented that he had consulted with senior officers concerning the viability of implementing the Bromsgrove Audit Task Group's recommendations. They had indicated that, whilst further work was required to implement some of the recommendations, this would be deliverable and would add value to the Council.

Members subsequently discussed the report in detail and in doing so commented on the following matters:

- The significant progress that had been achieved by the Council, in terms of addressing the issues identified in the Section 24 Notice.
- The need for lessons to be learned from the challenges that had been encountered during the introduction and implementation of the ERP system.
- The benefits in terms of the Council monitoring the work delivered by third parties on behalf of the authority.
- The need for appropriate Council resources to be allocated to larger projects and for staff positions to be back filled where required.
- The process by which organisations could procure Software as a Service (SAAS) and the implications of this for the organisation. Officers explained that the Council adopted this approach to procuring the ERP system from TechOne and, as a consequence, the onus was on the Council to manage that process, including training and the development of user manuals.
- The difficulties for any organisation arising from being the first to adopt a new module in a system, as had been the case with the cash receipting part of the system.
- The need for the Council to take into account a range of considerations when procuring new software, not just the financial costs involved.

During consideration of this item, Councillor Joe Baker proposed an additional recommendation:

*"That more regular updates and reports on progress with financial compliance should be provided at the Council."*

The recommendation was proposed by Councillor Baker and seconded by Councillor Bill Hartnett.

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In proposing the recommendation, Councillor Baker commented that this would help to provide Members with assurance that progress was being achieved and that the issues identified in the Section 24 Notice and subsequent Bromsgrove Audit Task Group report were being addressed.

In seconding the recommendation, Councillor Hartnett commented that it would be helpful for the Executive Committee to receive an update on the progress that was being achieved as well as the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee.

Members discussed the recommendation, and in doing so noted that the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee had already agreed to hold extra meetings during the year and were already scheduled to receive updates at every meeting on the progress that was being made as well as any compliance issues. Where areas of concern were identified, or where the Committee agreed that issues needed to be highlighted for the consideration of the Executive Committee, the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee could make recommendations which would be reported for the consideration of the Executive Committee. In this context, it was suggested that the recommendation was unnecessary and Councillor Baker agreed to its withdrawal.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) any improvements arising from the recommendations in the Bromsgrove District Council Audit Task Group Report into the issuing of the Section 24 Statement be adopted by the Executive Committee; and**
  - 2) a formal note of thanks be sent to the Bromsgrove District Council Audit Task Group by the Executive Committee.**
- 7. RENEWAL OF THE ENTERPRISE RESOURCE PLANNING (ERP) CONTRACT**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented a report in respect of the renewal of the Council's Enterprise Resource Planning (ERP) System contract. The Executive Committee was informed that the existing contract was due to expire at the end of June 2023 and therefore a new contract was required. The Council was aiming to procure the system using a local government framework and the new contract would need to take into account that the Council would not be using the HR and Payroll modules, as had been originally intended. There remained a backlog in respect of cash receipting, but the Council was on track to clear this by the end of the calendar year. The only other option would be to procure another system from an alternative supplier. However, the cash

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receipting backlog would still need to be cleared on the existing system prior to transfer and there would be extra implementation time and financial investment required. The contract for the Wincave system, required in relation to cash receipting, was due to expire later in the year but would also need to be renewed. In concluding the presentation of the report, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling recognised that there had been challenges for the Council in terms of the introduction and implementation of the ERP system but Members were asked to note that the organisation was generally satisfied with how the majority of the system functioned.

After the report had been presented, Members commented on the following matters:

- The length of the report and whether this was sufficient to make a decision, given the difficulties with the implementation of the ERP system and the issues identified in the Section 24 Notice.
- The level of savings that would arise from renewing the ERP system without including the HR and Payroll module. Members were advised that the figures would be subject to the outcomes of the tender process, although it was likely to result in financial savings.
- The potential to recoup funding from the software provider. Officers explained that pricing would be set out in the framework contract, and reductions would be made as not all modules originally purchased (HR and Payroll) would be repurchased. This would be the same framework as that which had originally been used and it was anticipated that this would result in a reduction in the fee by approximately 25 per cent.
- The acronyms and other terminology used in the report and the benefits of providing clarification in these types of reports in respect of such technical terms, particularly where they were referenced in the resolutions or recommendations in a report.
- The implications of postponing taking a decision on this matter after the contract had expired. Officers explained that the current contract would remain in place, as there would be a requirement to continue to work with the existing contractor for at least a further two years to resolve the backlog and have a year of “normal running”. This framework contract duration was two years plus two further one-year extensions.
- The potential for the Leader to provide Members with further clarification on the financial costs to the Council involved in renewing the contract once the tender process had been completed.

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- The potential for Members to raise concerns with the relevant Portfolio Holder in respect of the length of reports and detail within specific reports in advance of Executive Committee meetings.

During consideration of this item, the suggestion was made that, due to the subject matter and the issues that had been identified in the Section 24 Notice, the proposals detailed in the report should be referred to Council for determination. However, Officers explained that, as the finances required to pay for the renewal of the system had already been incorporated into the budget framework, a decision was required from the Executive Committee, rather than Council. It was noted that other Members could be involved in the process, through consideration at a meeting of the Budget Scrutiny Working Group and whilst this could not take place now before the Executive Committee determined the matter, there was still time for the group to scrutinise the background to the decision prior to the end of the month and the expiration of the existing contract.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) the Council reprocures TechOne but at a reduced licence fee to reflect that HR and Payroll will not be used and delegate the finer negotiations to the Executive Director of Resources;**
  - 2) the AMS contract continues until the Council have confidence that their inhouse resource is capable of delivering all or part of that function; and**
  - 3) the Wincave contract is renewed via a tender process in the autumn.**
- 8. QUARTER 4 PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT 2022/23**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented the Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring Report for the 2022/23 financial year. Members were advised that usually this report would have included financial monitoring data but, to provide time to gather more information, a decision had been taken to report the financial information in July. Progress had been made in a range of areas since the previous update to the Executive Committee, including through a reduction in staff turnover below the national average and an increase in Council Tax collection rates to a level that was better than expected.

The Executive Committee discussed the report and in doing so commented on the delays with respect to the development at Edgeworth Close. Member questioned when the development

would be progressed further and the financial implications of the delay. Officers explained that initially there had been an aim to complete required actions by March 2023, but this had been delayed to August due to a range of issues, including challenges accessing materials.

Reference was made to the graphs and other images that had been included in the report. As Committee agenda packs were always published in black and white, some Members commented that it could be difficult to view the graphs on printed copies of the agenda as they appeared in different shades of grey. However, it was noted that the full report could be viewed quite clearly in the electronic version, as published on the Council's website and which was accessible using the modern.gov app. The Leader urged Members to use the app to access their papers electronically to help address this problem moving forward. The Committee was asked to note that modern.gov app training had recently been provided to Members and further training could be provided if needed.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Quarter 4 Performance data for the period up to 31<sup>st</sup> March 2023 be noted.**

**9. QUARTERLY RISK UPDATE**

The Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling presented the Quarterly Risk Update for Members' consideration. The Committee was advised that this was the fourth risk update report to be presented for the Committee's consideration since risk monitoring reports had been reintroduced at the Council in 2022. The Council had taken a lot of action in this time to address both the corporate and departmental risks that had been identified and as a consequence, the authority's risk assurance had improved from a limited to a moderate level.

During 2022/23, the number of departmental risks had declined from 119 to 58 by March 2023. The majority of remaining risks related to compliance. The one remaining red flagged risk was in respect of the Revenue and Benefits team's work, where certain tasks had to be undertaken manually and there was a high volume of work involved.

Corporate risks continued to be monitored by the Council, including by CMT. Many of these corporate risks, such as in respect of cyber security, were likely to remain of concern moving forward.

**RESOLVED that**

**the present list of Corporate and Departmental Risks be considered and noted.**

**10. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Members considered minutes from meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023. The Leader confirmed that there were no outstanding recommendations due for consideration.

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 23<sup>rd</sup> February and 16<sup>th</sup> March 2023 be noted.**

**11. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS ETC - RECOMMENDATION FROM THE AUDIT, STANDARDS AND GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

The Leader highlighted that at a meeting of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023, Members had recommended that the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling should write to the appropriate Government minister to request a three-year local government financial settlement in order to provide certainty to the local government sector. This recommendation had been forwarded for the consideration of the Executive Committee.

In considering the recommendation, the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling explained that he did not feel that it would be appropriate to approve this recommendation. Instead, he suggested that the best way to secure a three-year financial settlement for the Council would be through working with the LGA. Members were informed that the Portfolio Holder for Finance and Enabling planned to write to the Chair of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee to explain his position.

During consideration of this item, reference was made to the content of the extract from the minutes of the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee meeting held on 30<sup>th</sup> May 2023, which had been provided for Members' consideration. Members questioned whether any further clarity had been received regarding the potential increase to the external auditor's fee for auditing the Council's accounts. Officers explained that any increase to the audit fee had to be agreed with the Public Sector Audit Appointments (PSAA) organisation. The level of increase to the audit fee still remained unclear and therefore it could not be



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confirmed whether this increase would need to be funded from balances.

Members also questioned the progress that had been achieved in terms of the external auditor's audit of the Council's 2020/21 accounts. The Committee was advised that the external auditors had assured the Council that Redditch Borough and Bromsgrove District Councils would be their priority over the following months. However, Officers had been advised that it could take the auditors up to six months to complete the audits. Despite this, the Council had been assured that, as these delays were not the fault of the authorities, this would not result in further Section 24 Notices being presented to the Councils. Furthermore, Members were asked to note that there was a significant backlog nationally, in terms of external auditors signing off Councils' 2021/22 accounts.

## 12. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

**RESOLVED that:**

**Under S100 A (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraphs 1, 2 and 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 of the said act, as amended.**

**Minute Item No. 13 – Compulsory Purchase of a Long-Term Empty Property.**

## 13. COMPULSORY PURCHASE OF A LONG TERM EMPTY PROPERTY

The Strategic Housing Services Manager presented a report on the subject of the compulsory purchase of a long-term empty property.

(During the consideration of this item, Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to move to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to any individual, which was likely to reveal the identity of any individual and which related to the financial and business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information)).

**Executive**  
Committee

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The Meeting commenced at 6.30 pm  
and closed at 8.19 pm

By virtue of paragraph(s) 1, 2, 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A  
of the Local Government Act 1972.

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