

Executive Committee

Wed 31st March
2010
7.00 pm

Committee Room 2
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Access to Information - Your Rights

The Local Government (Access to Information) Act 1985 widened the rights of press and public to attend Local Authority meetings and to see certain documents. Recently the Freedom of Information Act 2000, has further broadened these rights, and limited exemptions under the 1985 Act.

Your main rights are set out below:-

- Automatic right to attend all Council and Committee meetings unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Automatic right to inspect agenda and public reports at least five days before the date of the meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect minutes of the Council and its Committees (or summaries of business undertaken in private) for up to six years following a meeting.
- Automatic right to inspect lists of background papers used in the preparation of public reports.
- Access, upon request, to the background papers on which reports are based for a period of up to four years from the date of the meeting.
- Access to a public register stating the names and addresses and electoral areas of all Councillors with details of the membership of all Committees etc.
- A reasonable number of copies of agenda and reports relating to items to be considered in public must be made available to the public attending meetings of the Council and its Committees etc.
- Access to a list specifying those powers which the Council has delegated to its Officers indicating also the titles of the Officers concerned.
- Access to a summary of the rights of the public to attend meetings of the Council and its Committees etc. and to inspect and copy documents.
- In addition, the public now has a right to be present when the Council determines “Key Decisions” unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Unless otherwise stated, all items of business before the Executive Committee are Key Decisions.
- (Copies of Agenda Lists are published in advance of the meetings on the Council’s Website:
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

If you have any queries on this Agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of the above rights of access to information, please contact

**Denise Sunman
Committee Support Services**

**Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH
Tel: 01527 64252 (ext 3270) Fax: (01527) 65216
e.mail: denise.sunman@redditchbc.gov.uk Minicom: 595528**

Welcome to today's meeting.

Guidance for the Public

Agenda Papers

The **Agenda List** at the front of the Agenda summarises the issues to be discussed and is followed by the Officers' full supporting **Reports**.

Chair

The Chair is responsible for the proper conduct of the meeting. Generally to one side of the Chair is the Committee Support Officer who gives advice on the proper conduct of the meeting and ensures that the debate and the decisions are properly recorded. On the Chair's other side are the relevant Council Officers. The Councillors ("Members") of the Committee occupy the remaining seats around the table.

Running Order

Items will normally be taken in the order printed but, in particular circumstances, the Chair may agree to vary the order.

Refreshments : tea, coffee and water are normally available at meetings - please serve yourself.

Decisions

Decisions at the meeting will be taken by the **Councillors** who are the democratically elected representatives. They are advised by **Officers** who are paid professionals and do not have a vote.

Members of the Public

Members of the public may, by prior arrangement, speak at meetings of the Council or its Committees. Specific procedures exist for Appeals Hearings or for meetings involving Licence or Planning Applications. For further information on this point, please speak to the Committee Support Officer.

Special Arrangements

If you have any particular needs, please contact the Committee Support Officer.

Infra-red devices for the hearing impaired are available on request at the meeting. Other facilities may require prior arrangement.

Further Information

If you require any further information, please contact the Committee Support Officer (see foot of page opposite).

Fire/ Emergency instructions

If the alarm is sounded, please leave the building by the nearest available exit – these are clearly indicated within all the Committee Rooms.

If you discover a fire, inform a member of staff or operate the nearest alarm call point (wall mounted red rectangular box). In the event of the fire alarm sounding, leave the building immediately following the fire exit signs. Officers have been appointed with responsibility to ensure that all visitors are escorted from the building.

Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do Not use lifts.

Do Not re-enter the building until told to do so.

The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.

Declaration of Interests: Guidance for Councillors

DO I HAVE A "PERSONAL INTEREST" ?

- Where the item relates or is likely to affect your **registered interests** (what you have declared on the formal Register of Interests)

OR

- Where a decision in relation to the item might reasonably be regarded as affecting **your own** well-being or financial position, or that of your **family**, or your **close associates** more than most other people affected by the issue,

you have a personal interest.

WHAT MUST I DO? **Declare the existence, and nature, of your interest and stay**

- The declaration must relate to specific business being decided - a general scattergun approach is not needed
- **Exception** - where interest arises only because of your membership of another **public body**, there is no need to declare unless you **speak** on the matter.
- You **can vote** on the matter.

IS IT A "PREJUDICIAL INTEREST" ?

In general only if:-

- It is a personal interest **and**
- The item affects your **financial position** (or conveys other benefits), or the position of your **family, close associates** or bodies through which you have a **registered interest** (or relates to the exercise of **regulatory functions** in relation to these groups)

and

- A member of public, with knowledge of the relevant facts, would reasonably believe the interest was likely to **prejudice** your judgement of the public interest.

WHAT MUST I DO? **Declare and Withdraw**

BUT you may make representations to the meeting before withdrawing, **if** the public have similar rights (such as the right to speak at Planning Committee).



Executive

Committee

31st March 2010

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs: C Gandy (Chair) W Hartnett
M Braley (Vice-Chair) N Hicks
P Anderson C MacMillan
J Brunner M Shurmer
B Clayton

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>1. Apologies</p> | <p>To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend this meeting.</p> |
| <p>2. Declarations of Interest</p> | <p>To invite Councillors to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda.</p> |
| <p>3. Leader's Announcements</p> | <p>1. To give notice of any items for future meetings or for the Forward Plan, including any scheduled for this meeting, but now carried forward or deleted; and</p> <p>2 any other relevant announcements.</p> <p>(Oral report)</p> |
| <p>4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 12) Chief Executive</p> | <p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 10th March 2010</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p> |
| <p>5. Local Development Scheme No 4 (Pages 13 - 52) Acting Head of Planning and Building Control</p> | <p>To seek approval of Local Development Scheme No 4 which sets the timetable for the production of Local Development documents.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p> |
| <p>6. Preferred Draft Core Strategy (Pages 53 - 60) Acting Head of Planning and Building Control</p> | <p>To receive and consider Officer responses into the Preferred Draft Core Strategy consultation.</p> <p>(Report attached. Appendix A available via the Council's internet and as a hard copy in the Group Rooms.)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p> |

Executive

Committee

31st March 2010

| | |
|---|---|
| <p>7. Communications Strategy 2010 - 2013</p> <p>(Pages 61 - 118)</p> <p>Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships</p> | <p>To seek approval for a Communications Strategy 2010 - 2013.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p> |
| <p>8. Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>(Pages 119 - 130)</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> | <p>To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 24th February 2010.</p> <p>There are recommendations to consider.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p> |
| <p>9. Referral from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Local Strategic Partnership Task And Finish Group - Interim Report</p> <p>(Pages 131 - 144)</p> <p>LSP Task and Finish Group</p> | <p>To consider a referral from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee detailing a number of interim recommendations that have been concluded by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Task and Finish Group.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</p> |
| <p>10. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels, Neighbourhood Groups etc.</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> | <p>To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels, Neighbourhood Groups, etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.</p> |
| <p>11. Advisory Panels - update report</p> <p>(Pages 145 - 148)</p> <p>Chief Executive</p> | <p>To consider, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels and similar bodies, which report via the Executive Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> |

Executive

Committee

31st March 2010

| | |
|---|--|
| <p>12. Action Monitoring (Pages 149 - 152) Chief Executive</p> | <p>To consider an update on the actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> |
| <p>13. Exclusion of the Public</p> | <p>It may be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, to consider excluding the public from the meeting in relation to the following items of business on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged. It may be necessary, therefore, to move the following resolution:</p> <p>“that, under S.100 I 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 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, as amended.”</p> |
| <p>14. Confidential Minutes / Referrals (if any)</p> | <p>To consider confidential matters not dealt with earlier in the evening and not separately listed below (if any).</p> |



Executive Committee

10th March 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), and Councillors P Anderson, J Brunner, B Clayton, W Hartnett, N Hicks, C MacMillan and M Shurmer

Also Present:

Councillor R King and M Collins (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee)

Officers:

S Hanley, C Flanagan, A Walsh, H Bennett, T Kristunas, K Cook, J Godwin, D Taylor, E Hopkins, D Wheeler, M Bough and J Divala

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

257. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillor Braley.

258. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillors Anderson and B Clayton declared personal and prejudicial interests and Councillor Gandy declared a personal interest in Item 13 (Voluntary Sector Grant Applications 2010/11) as detailed separately at Minute 269 below.

259. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Leader announced, with great regret, the passing that afternoon of Councillor Jack Field. Those present were invited to respect a minute's silence in memory of Councillor Field and his service to the Council and local community.

The Chair advised that the following items of business, scheduled on the Forward Plan to be dealt with at this meeting, had been removed from the Forward Plan:

- Enforcement Policy; and
- Shared Electoral Services

.....
Chair

The Chair also advised that she had accepted the following matters as urgent business:

Item 4 – Executive Committee Minutes, 22nd February 2010;

Item 14 – Overview and Scrutiny Committee Minutes, 3rd February 2010;

Item 15 – Shared Services Board Minutes, 1st March 2010; and

Item 20 – REDI Centre – Procurement of Alternative Service Provider – Update

260. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 2nd February, 17th February and 22nd February be confirmed as correct records and signed by the Chair.

261. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 3, OCTOBER - DECEMBER 2009

The Committee received the latest quarterly report on the Council's performance against a range of local and national indicators.

It was reported that, generally, the indicators were demonstrating that the Council was performing relatively well. For those areas where targets were not being met recovery plans had been put in place to address under-performance.

Members expressed a particular interest in several of the targets. There was concern once again at the validation of the claims made in respect of concessionary journeys and questions raised around the use of smart card technology by the bus companies concerned.

Levels of detritus were an area where the Council was reported to be failing to meet targets. Members noted that that this may in part be the result of a lack of action by the Highways Authority in maintaining drains and that there were significantly fewer complaints about littering from local residents than had been the case.

Officers undertook to provide:-

- i) Councillor Hartnett with additional information on the numbers of concessionary journeys per year (ET 015) following the meeting;
- ii) Councillor Anderson with an update on the projected year end figures for the number of working days lost to the local authority due to sickness absence per FTE staff member (BV 012) following the meeting; and
- iii) Councillor MacMillan with additional information on the impact of fraud on Housing Benefits overpayments (BV 079b (iii)) following the meeting.

RESOLVED that

the update on key performance indicators for the period ending December 2009 be noted.

262. QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 3, SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2009

Officers reported that the Council was set to exceed the target for savings by £127,000 in the current year to bring the total savings for the year to around £800,000.

Anticipated income from a number of areas had failed to meet expectations during the current financial year, including that from the commercial hire of the Civic Suite and income from the imposition of off-street parking charges.

A significant variation from predicted income had occurred in respect of the Council's Leisure Centres and other sporting facilities. Income was higher than in the previous year but was failing to meet the enhanced projections that had been made for 2009/10. The under-achievement primarily resulted from the poor weather experienced during the winter which had had a particularly significant impact on outdoor facilities. The introduction of free swimming for under 16s and over 60s had also resulted in a loss of income to the Council. On a more positive note, it was expected that income during the fourth quarter would surpass that achieved during the first three quarters of the year.

Officers reported on a number of measures that were being initiated to maximise the use of the sports facilities and generate additional revenue, particularly during off-peak periods. It was anticipated that matters would be brought in hand by the summer to ensure that income targets were achieved for 2010/11.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

263. QUARTERLY MONITORING OF FORMAL COMPLAINTS AND COMPLIMENTS - QUARTER 3, SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2009

A report was received that provided an update on the performance of the Council in the handling of complaints. The key issues to arise from the report were that improvements were being experienced in most areas and the direction of travel was generally positive.

Officers undertook to speak to Councillor Shurmer following the meeting in respect of problems concerning the disabled blue badge scheme about which he had been notified by a number of residents.

RESOLVED that

the update on complaints and compliments for the period October – December 2009 be noted.

264. QUARTERLY MONITORING OF THE BENEFITS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - QUARTER 3, SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2009

Members considered a report setting out the performance of the benefits service during the third quarter of the year and against the Benefits Service Improvement Plan. Officers reported that progress against the targets set out within the Plan was positive. Among the achievements were the expectation of receiving a 100% subsidy, a reduction in the numbers of appeals and work that was being carried out with the third sector in respect of the take-up strategy.

Officers within the Benefits team were commended for the work that had been undertaken to reach the present position.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

265. HOME IMPROVEMENT AGENCY

A report was received setting out proposals for the re-commissioning of the current Care and Repair agency services in partnership with Worcestershire County Council, Supporting People, the Worcestershire PCT and the six District Councils.

The risk to the Council in not proceeding with this course of action was spelled out to Members, with a decrease in the amount of central Government money being made available to fund the service within Redditch and, therefore, local residents receiving a poorer service than the remainder of the County. This was the outcome of the Supporting People contract being provided county-wide from 2010/11, replacing the existing arrangements whereby contracts were in place for both the north and south of the County.

The practical implication of the proposals was the expansion of the present service and a transfer of existing staff under TUPE arrangements to Festival Housing Group. There were ten staff currently employed by the North Worcestershire Care and Repair Service, based in Redditch, who would be affected. The team would be located in Redditch for the time being.

Members noted that the proposed contract with Festival Housing Group was for a three year period, with the option of a two year extension, at the expiry of which the contract would be subject to a tendering exercise.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the Council agree the commencement of the new Countywide Home Improvement Agency (HIA) from April 2010 provided by Festival Housing Group;**
- 2) **the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services finalise and enter into the necessary legal arrangements to implement the transfer and commencement of the new service; and**

RESOLVED that

- 3) **the new HIA be supported through the use of revenue and capital base budget contributions that are committed to the current service arrangements with the North Worcestershire Care & Repair Agency.**

266. REDDITCH HOUSING ADVICE AND HOMELESSNESS REVIEW AND ENHANCED HOUSING OPTIONS STRATEGY AND ACTION PLAN

The Committee received the outcome of the review of the Redditch Homelessness and Housing Advice Review which considered current services, identified progress made since the Redditch Homelessness Strategy was published in 2003 and highlighted the lessons learned during the initial stages of the two-year 'Trailblazer Initiative'.

Members were delighted at the impact resulting from the change of emphasis within the service. The fall in the number of Statutory Homeless Acceptances had fallen very significantly during the previous 18 months and was continuing.

It was reported that the numbers of successful preventions had increased tremendously. Officers worked to process those cases where there was the greatest risk of homelessness, employing a triage system to prioritise those who were the most vulnerable.

Officers were commended for their work in improving the effectiveness of the service.

RECOMMENDED that

subject to community consultation and Members' comments, the Enhanced Housing Options Strategy be approved and implemented.

267. PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS 2010/11 TO 2012/13 AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY

Members considered proposed limits to be set under the Prudential Code for borrowing which the Council was required to agree before the start of the 2010/11 financial year. Members' approval was also being sought for the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) Policy for 2010/11.

The meeting was informed that the Council was currently a net payer of interest which was a reflection on the present spending on the Council's Capital Programme. It was noted that the prevailing financial conditions could result in restrictions on borrowing and restrictions on future capital spending. In response to concern raised at the possible impact of constraints on future borrowing, Officers clarified that local authorities had the discretion to borrow in anticipation of capital schemes, but the implications for the Council's existing base budgets were highlighted. It was acknowledged that this was an issue that might be considered as an issue going forward.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the Prudential Indicators as set out in the report be approved; and**
- 2) the Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2010/11 be based on the estimated life of the assets financed from borrowing.**

268. TREASURY MANAGEMENT POLICY STATEMENT

The Committee considered a report setting out a Treasury Management Strategy for 2010/11. It was reported that the Strategy was largely unchanged from that in use at the present time.

Officers highlighted an amendment that was to be made to the Strategy, as printed, this being the reduction of the maximum amount placed with any single institution from £1 million to £500,000 [Appendix A, Paragraph 7.1 - Specified Investments – Monies placed on call or for less than 3 month]

RECOMMENDED that

the Treasury Management Strategy for 2010/11 be approved.

269. VOLUNTARY SECTOR GRANT APPLICATIONS 2010/11

The Committee considered the recommendations of the Grants Assessment Panel in awarding grants to voluntary sector organisations for 2010/11.

Members who had been on the Grants Assessment Panel commented that the new Policy had proved difficult to operate and a recommendation had, therefore, been made to the Committee requesting that this be referred for further review. Officers highlighted that the most significant issue was with the Shopping element of the Policy, resulting in it not being implemented in time for the current funding round. The Giving element had also proved difficult for Members to implement. It was anticipated that an improved process would be in place for the 2011/12 funding round.

Officers commented that the Shopping element of the Policy would cover those larger organisations from whom the Council could expect, in future, to procure services, whereas the Giving element would represent a much smaller portion of the overall budget and, consequently, very much smaller individual grant donations.

Members wished to clarify that the figure of £10,000 in paragraph 5.7 had been incorporated as a purely indicative figure and did not represent a financial limit imposed by the Council.

RESOLVED that

- 1) grants be awarded to voluntary sector organisations as detailed in paragraph 5.4 of this report, subject to Council approval of the budget;**

- 2) **£3,000 be donated to Redditch Arts Council, for 2010/11; and**
- 3) **the policy on funding the voluntary and community sector organisations be reviewed.**

(Prior to consideration of this item, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillors Anderson and B Clayton declared personal and prejudicial interests in view of their involvement in local voluntary sector organisations, and withdrew from the meeting. Councillor Gandy declared a personal interest in view of her spouse's nominal financial interest in a local voluntary sector organisation.)

270. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd February 2010 be noted.

271. MINUTES / REFERRALS - SHARED SERVICES BOARD, 1ST MARCH 2010

The Committee considered the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Shared Services Board.

RESOLVED that

the following targets be approved:

- a) **Cohesive Single Management Team.**
- b) **Achieve the savings targets associated with Shared Services / Joint working included within the Medium Term Financial Plan of both Councils.**
- c) **Ensure effective financial management arrangements are in place for shared service arrangements (Activity Based Costings).**
- d) **Ensure changes to the management structure / implementation of shared services are seamless from a customer perspective (to be monitored by self assessment and complaints and commendations).**
- e) **Harmonisation of Terms and Conditions.**
- f) **Implement medium term business cases – CCTV / Lifeline and ICT.**
- g) **Produce business case for North Worcestershire Shared Economic Development Unit and implement if agreed.**
- h) **Complete recruitment to the Single Management Team.**

- i) **Develop programme for consideration of further shared services between Redditch and Bromsgrove.**
- j) **Further implementation of shared services programme between Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils.**
- k) **Implementation of Regulatory Services.**
- l) **Ensure delivery of performance and financial aspects of agreed shared services.**
- m) **Ensure effective performance monitoring of shared service arrangements.**

272. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members received an update on the activity of the Council's Advisory Panels and other bodies. It was reported that the next meeting of the Church Hill District Centre Members' Panel would take place in April.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

273. ACTION MONITORING

Members considered the latest Action Monitoring report. It was reported that the visit by Members to the swimming pool in Coventry was scheduled to take place on 10th April 2010.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

274. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I 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 paragraph 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.

REDI Centre – Procurement of Alternative Service Provider - Update (as detailed at Minute 275 below);

275. REDI CENTRE - PROCUREMENT OF ALTERNATIVE SERVICE PROVIDER - UPDATE

(During the consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with a labour relations matter between the authority and employees of the authority.)

(This report had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business – not on the Forward Plan and not having met the publication deadline – and was considered at the meeting as such, with the approval of the Chair, in accordance with the Council’s constitutional rules and the powers vested in the Chair by virtue of Section 100 (B) (4) (b) of the Local Government Act 1972 to agree to matters of urgency being discussed by reason of special circumstances.

In this case the special circumstances were that the information, which was not available at the time of the agenda going to print, was required to be considered at the present meeting in order to provide the maximum opportunity for Officers to explore possible options and secure funding for adult education services at the facility.)

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and closed at 9.03pm

.....
Chair

By virtue of paragraph(s) 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A
of the Local Government Act 1972.

Document is Restricted



Executive Committee

No Specific Ward Relevance

31st March 2010

LOCAL DEVELOPMENT SCHEME NO. 4

(Report of the Head of Environment and Planning)

1. Summary of Proposals

A Local Development Scheme (LDS) is a statutorily required project plan for producing Development Plan Documents (DPDs). The current Local Development Scheme for Redditch - LDS No.3, sets out what Development Plan Documents (DPDs) the Council intends to produce and the timescales for producing these DPDs for the period of September 2009 to August 2012. Local Development Scheme No.4 (Appendix A) has been produced to update these timescales.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- 1) the timescales detailed within the Local Development Scheme No. 4 for a range of Development Plan Documents be agreed; and

RECOMMEND that

- 2) Local Development Scheme No.4 be submitted to the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) for approval.

3. Financial, Legal, Policy, Risk and Climate Change / Carbon Management Implications

Financial

- 3.1 Production of Local Development Scheme No.4 will be funded from existing Development Plans Budgets.
- 3.2 Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and other Local Development Documents (LDDs) that are listed within the LDS may require additional funding in the future to enable delivery, however these documents would be the subject of further committee reports once these costs are known.

Legal

- 3.3 Redditch Borough Council is required to produce a LDS under the Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 as amended under Section 6 and 8.

Policy

- 3.4 Planning Policy Statement 12 'Local Spatial Planning' (2008) requires Local Development Schemes to provide a brief description of all the Development Plan Documents (DPDs) to be prepared and the content and geographic area to which they will relate. The implementation of the DPDs listed in the LDS are important to deliver the Council's Service Plan priorities for example PBC5 - '*To prepare a Local Development Framework*'.

Risk

- 3.5 If the Local Development Scheme is not submitted to the Government Office for the West Midlands for approval this may affect the progression of some of the Development Plan Documents detailed within the LDS. If these DPDs are not delivered to the agreed timescale then this may affect the Council's receipt of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant (HPDG).

Climate Change / Carbon Management

- 3.6 The DPDs detailed within Local Development Scheme No. 4 (Appendix A) will address a range of environmental issues including sustainability and climate change.

Report**4. Background**

- 4.1 The existing Local Development Scheme for Redditch (LDS No.3) sets out what Development Plan Documents (DPDs) the Council intends to produce and the timescales of these DPDs for the period of September 2009 to August 2012. This LDS was approved in September 2009 by GOWM. This LDS is now out of date, for the reasons set out below therefore a revised LDS is required.
- 4.2 The West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revision Preferred Option Document (December 2007) stipulated that 3,300 dwellings needed to be delivered, up to 2026, within Redditch Borough, and 3,300 adjacent to Redditch Town in Bromsgrove and/or Stratford-Upon-Avon Districts. Following the Examination in

Public, the Inspectors Panel Report was issued which recommended that this figure is increased to 4,000 dwellings within Redditch boundaries and 3,000 in Bromsgrove District adjacent to the Redditch boundary. As a result of this increased figure it was necessary for Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council to complete a period of joint consultation on the cross-boundary locations for development within Bromsgrove District to accommodate 3,000 dwellings. This additional consultation period has resulted in the anticipated timescales for the Core Strategy in LDS No.3 slipping, requiring the LDS to be updated.

- 4.3 Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council held a meeting with the Planning Inspectorate (PINS) to discuss the cross-boundary issues. Following this meeting it is the advice of PINS that the Bromsgrove Core Strategy and the Redditch Core Strategy timescales are aligned to allow for a concurrent Examination in Public. For this reason it is also necessary to update the LDS.

5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The following paragraphs detail the key changes made to the revised Local Development Scheme No.4 (Appendix A).

Core Strategy

- 5.2 LDS No.3 schedules the Submission of the Core Strategy for May 2010 and adoption of the Core Strategy for February 2011. Local Development Scheme No.4 proposes to alter the Submission of the Core Strategy to February/March 2012 and adoption of the Core Strategy for December 2012. This is to allow further consultation on the Core Strategies for Redditch and Bromsgrove to take place in November 2010.
- 5.3 The Planning Inspectorate have produced procedural guidance (*'Local Development Frameworks Examining Development Plan Documents: Procedural Guidance, November 2008'*) which recommends the timescales that are required to produce a Core Strategy DPD, these recommendations have been incorporated in to the timescales proposed in Appendix A.
- 5.4 Subject to LDS No.4 being approved by the GOWM within their allotted 28 days, the new LDS No.4 will be approved before LDS No.3 planned that the next stage of the Core Strategy should be reached, which was planned for May 2010. This would mean that the Borough Council would not be penalised in the receipt of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant for not achieving the milestones.

Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document

- 5.5 As a result of the alteration to the timescales for production of the Core Strategy DPD, there have been consequential amendments to the timescales for the production of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD. The main implication is that these timescales can be brought forward, as the Core Strategy has been delayed there is more scope to prepare the Site Allocations and Policies DPD, and also allowing for concurrent consultation on both DPDs in November 2010. This concurrent consultation is of significant resource benefit (both financial and officer time).
- 5.6 Previous LDS No.3 scheduled the 'Publication' of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD for November 2013. LDS No.4 has brought this forward to March 2013. LDS No.3 also scheduled adoption for October 2014; this is now timetabled for February 2014.

6. Other Implications

- | | |
|--------------------------------|--|
| Asset Management | - No Implications. |
| Community Safety | - Development Plan Documents detailed in the LDS consider and promote the enhancement of community safety. |
| Health | - Development Plan Documents detailed in the LDS consider and promote the enhancement of health and well-being in Redditch Borough. |
| Human Resources | - No Implications. |
| Social Exclusion | - Development Plan Documents detailed in the LDS consider and aim to minimise social exclusion. |
| Environmental / Sustainability | - Development Plan Documents detailed in the LDS consider and promote the protection and enhancement of the Redditch environment. They also promote sustainability. Each Development Plan Document outlined in the LDS is supported by a Sustainability Appraisal. |

7. Lessons Learnt

It is considered that there have been significant lessons learnt regarding the extent of the external impacts and risks to the LDS related to the actions of neighbouring authorities, the Regional Development Agency and the Government Office for the West Midlands.

8. Background Papers

Local Development Scheme No.3 September 2009 to August 2012
Planning Inspectorate Procedural Guidance - Local Development Frameworks Examining Development Plan Documents: Procedural Guidance (November 2008).

9. Consultation

This report has been prepared in consultation with the Government Office for the West Midlands and Bromsgrove District Council.

10. Author of Report

The author of this report is Louise Brockett, who can be contacted on extension 3221 (e-mail: Louise.Brockett@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

11. Appendices

Appendix A - Local Development Scheme No.4 (to follow)

12. Key to Terminology / Abbreviations

Core Strategy DPD – sets out how we want Redditch Borough to be by 2026 and how this will be achieved. It does not allocate land, but it is one of the most important planning documents at the local level, as it provides a framework approach for the spatial growth of the Borough.

Local Development Scheme (LDS) – A project plan detailing the timescales for producing Development Plan Documents (DPDs).

Site Allocations and Policies DPD – allocates land for a range of uses to support the strategic spatial vision and objectives of the Council's Core Strategy.

Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 as amended – sets the framework for preparing Local Development Documents (LDDs).

Executive Summary

This Local Development Scheme (LDS) is critical to the successful programme management of the Local Development Framework (LDF). Introduced as a result of the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (2004), it is a public statement identifying which Local Development Documents (LDD) will be produced, in what order, when and the resource implications they have. Monitoring an up to date LDS is a key priority for Redditch Borough Council.

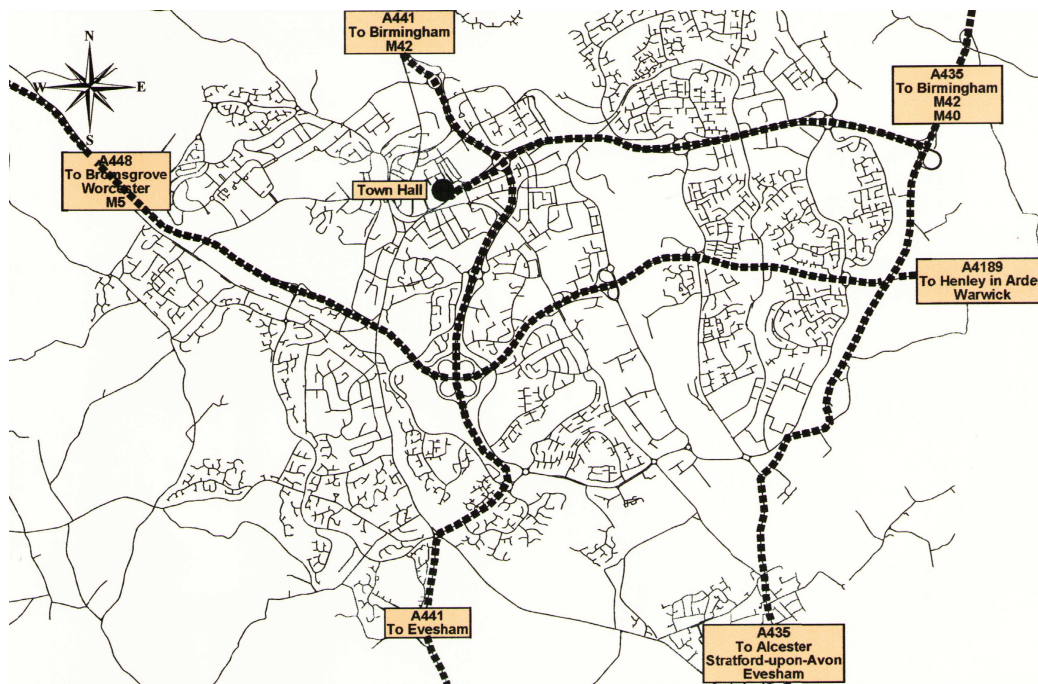
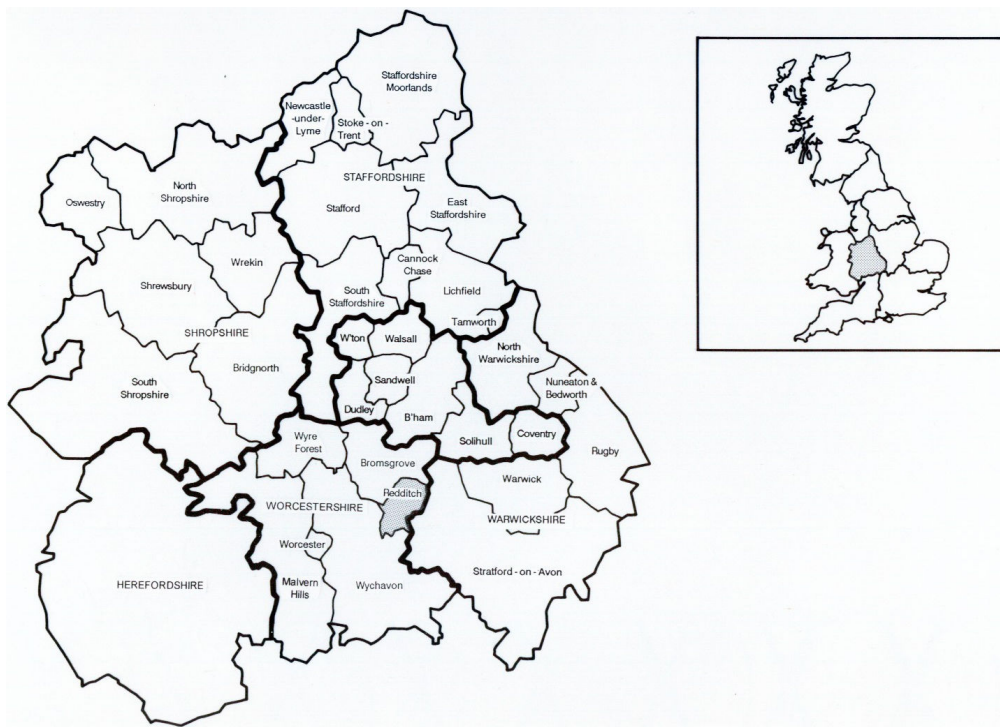
This LDS is the starting point for the community and stakeholders to find out about Redditch Borough Council's planning policies in respect of a particular place or issue, and the status of those policies. As part of the preparation of the LDS, decisions have been made as to which documents will be produced and which policies will be saved.

It is intended that this LDS is a concise, accessible and user friendly document. The introduction presents the contents of the document together with a summary of the role of the LDS and an explanation of the terminology used. This leads to a brief description of current planning policy, and the relationship with emerging policy. A description of proposed planning policies and planning guidance appears in table form. The LDS explains how the LDF will be structured; in particular focusing on how different LDD's interrelate, including the relationship between the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) and the LDD's. In the transitional period, some policies have been saved, such as those in the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3. Reference is made to how the evidence base will be managed and how implementation and review will occur. The LDS provides profiles of each LDD and illustrates the overall programme for its production.

Contents

| Section | Page(s) |
|---|----------------|
| 1. West Midlands Region Map and Redditch Context | 2 |
| 2. Introduction | 4 |
| 3. Relationship between Existing and Emerging Planning Policy | 6 |
| 4. Proposed Local Development Documents | 9 |
| 5. Delivering the Local Development Framework | 10 |
| 6. Concluding Comments | 15 |
| Appendices | |
| Appendix 1 - Local Development Framework Terminology | 16 |
| Appendix 2- Saved Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996-2011 | 18 |
| Appendix 3 – Saved Local Plan No. 3 Policies | 21 |
| Appendix 4 – Existing Plans, Policies and Programmes | 23 |
| Appendix 5 – Schedule of Proposed Local Development Documents | 24 |
| Appendix 6 – Development Plan Document Profiles | |
| • Core Strategy Development Plan Document Profile | 26 |
| • Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document Profile | |
| • Proposals Map Development Plan Document | |
| Appendix 7 - Other Local Development Documents to be Produced | 31 |
| Appendix 8 – Process for Preparing a Development Plan Document | 33 |

West Midlands Region and Redditch Context



Redditch Context

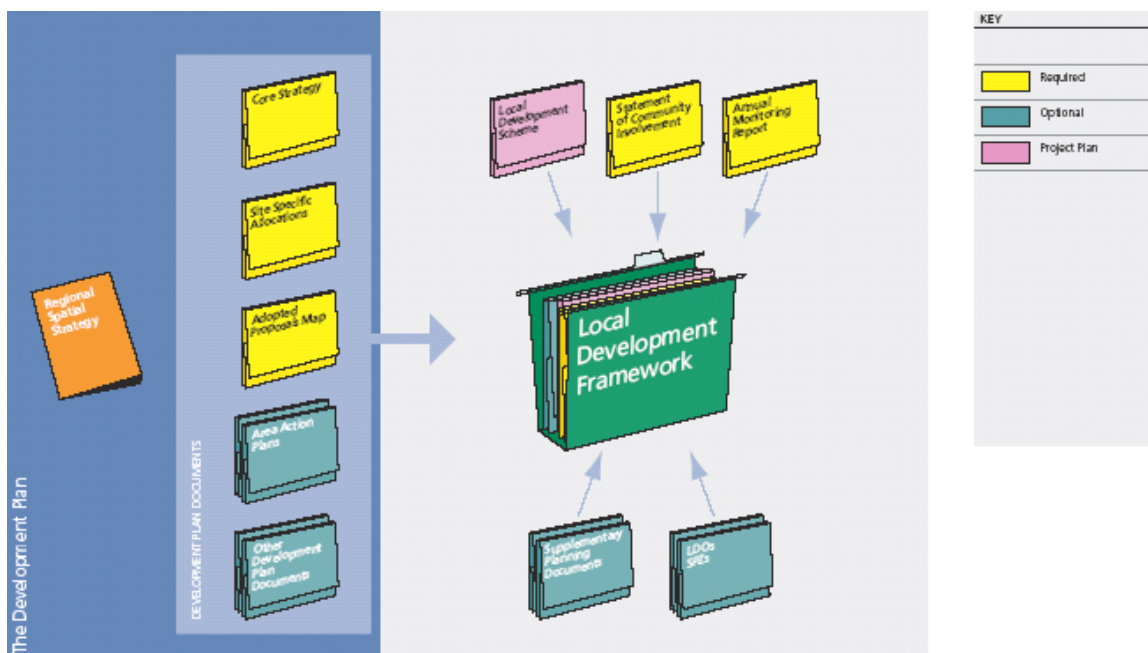
- 1.1 Redditch is a progressive and popular town, making it the ideal place to live, work or visit. Located in the very heart of England, it is set amongst the beautiful rolling countryside of Worcestershire, near to Stratford-upon-Avon, Warwick, Evesham, Worcester City and Birmingham. The town has excellent transport links. The M42 junctions' just five miles from the town give businesses and residents fast and economic connections with the rest of the country. Birmingham International Airport, the National Exhibition Centre and Birmingham International Train Station are all less than thirty minutes drive away, and a regular train service links the town with Birmingham on the cross city line.
- 1.2 Redditch is one of six districts which form the County of Worcestershire. Although it is one of the smallest of the districts, covering an area of 5351 hectares, it has one of the largest population densities in the County. Redditch Borough has a population of 79,940 (Mid-2008, population estimates, ONS). Redditch Borough is divided into two clearly defined areas of urban and rural.
- 1.3 Redditch is best known for its needle-making and metal based industries. The expansion of these trades in the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries encouraged the population of Redditch to grow quite steadily. New developments in Abbeydale, Batchley and Mayfields were constructed to meet demand for housing. With a population of 32,000 in 1964 Redditch was selected as a New Town to reduce Birmingham's overcrowded housing estates. The designated area covered what is now largely the urban area of Redditch. Church Hill, Matchborough, Oakenshaw and Winyates were transformed to become housing developments. Whilst major industrial estates were developed at Moons Moat, Park Farm and Washford the Town Centre was upgraded and substantially altered, new shopping facilities, schools, road systems and extensive landscaping followed. By 1985 when Redditch Development Corporation dissolved the population had reached almost 80,000 and Redditch had been granted Borough status.
- 1.4 Today, Redditch is a busy town with a thriving economy. It is a landscaped community, with excellent parks and recreational areas; it has a shopping centre that is well used. It has well organised residential and industrial areas with an efficient road system.
- 1.5 Improvements continue to be made to all aspects of Redditch. Redditch Borough Council and its Partners are working together to keep Redditch Borough a place where people are proud to live and work.
- 1.6 The implementation of planning documents will ensure the effective implementation of the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy and Corporate Plan.

Introduction

Requirement for a Local Development Framework (LDF)

- 2.1 The Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act (the Act) 2004 requires local planning authorities to prepare and maintain a 3-year project plan to be referred to as a Local Development Scheme (LDS). This document constitutes the LDS for Redditch Borough Council.
- 2.2 In 2009 the Town and Country (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations were amended, as such the following updates have been applied to this LDS:
- Only Local Development Documents (LDDs) which are Development Plan Documents (DPDs) should be listed in an LDS, therefore Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) are not required to be detailed within the LDS; and
 - Statements of Community Involvement are not required to be detailed within the LDS.
- 2.3 The LDF is best described as a folder containing planning policies and planning guidance referred to as Local Development Documents (LDDs). LDDs are of two types; Development Planning Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs). Other important documents to be included in the LDF folder include; The Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) and this Local Development Scheme (LDS). Annual Monitoring Reports (AMRs) will be produced which will measure progress in terms of the production of LDDs and the implementation of policies. The key documents which form part of the LDF are illustrated in Figure 1.

Figure 1



- 2.4 This LDS is the public statement that allows the community and stakeholders to find out about the emerging planning policies with respect to particular places and issues which affect Redditch Borough. It outlines the status of policies; provides a brief description of each DPD and sets out a timetable for their delivery. Redditch Borough Council recognises that in order to secure consensus in the plan-making process it is necessary to commit itself to continuous community involvement. A Sustainable Community Strategy for the Borough of Redditch was originally produced by the Redditch Partnership in 2003. This document has now been replaced with an updated version published in 2008. Redditch Borough Council has published a Statement of Community Involvement which sets out how and when the Redditch community will be involved in the production of planning documents.
- 2.5 Although this LDS will be reviewed periodically, Redditch Borough Council may, from time to time, need to update it more frequently. This may happen if, for example, circumstances change in relation to the need for a DPD or there is a sudden change in circumstances requiring an early review of an LDD. When this happens, Redditch Borough Council will consult with the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) (as is required) the Planning Inspectorate (as necessary) and with all Consultees. If you would like to be a consultee please contact the Development Plans Team (contact details are cited at the end of this document).

Consultation

- 2.6 In producing this LDS, Redditch Borough Council has undertaken detailed discussions with the Government Office for the West Midlands and Redditch Borough Councils Planning Advisory Panel. The Planning Advisory Panel has been established to ensure continuous Member involvement in the production of planning policy.
- 2.7 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) will be prepared in close consultation with neighbouring authorities. A Joint Planning Advisory Panel has been established between Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council to consider the cross- boundary growth issues that affect the two authorities.
- 2.8 In preparing this LDS Redditch Borough Council has had regard in general terms to the capacity of the community and stakeholders to be involved and to respond at the formal stages.

Appendix 1 provides an explanation of the terminology related to the production of an LDF and also the planning terminology used in this document.

Relationship between Existing and Emerging Planning Policy

- 3.1 This section provides an overview of how this LDS fits with existing or emerging planning policy documents. In essence, when determining planning applications, Local Plan No.3 saved policies will be used until formally replaced by a number of Development Plan Documents (DPDs) and Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPGs) will continue to be used as “material consideration” in the determination of planning applications until replaced by the Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs).

The Regional Spatial Strategy

- 3.2 The regional context for planning within the Borough of Redditch is provided by the Regional Planning Guidance for the West Midlands (RPG11) which was issued in June 2004 (updated January 2008). RPG 11 became the Regional Spatial Strategy for the West Midlands following the commencement of Local Planning provisions of the Planning and Compensation Act in 2004. The RSS forms part of the statutory development plan for the area and the Core Strategy and any other LDDs will have to be in general conformity with it. The West Midlands Regional Assembly is carrying out a phased review of the RSS to address issues which have been identified by the Secretary of State. The review is split into the following three phases:

- Phase One – Submitted to the Secretary of State in May 2006. Examination in Public was held between the 9 January and the 19 January 2007. Phase one amendments have been incorporated into the January 2008 edition of the RSS.
- Phase Two – Sets out further development choices for the Region up to 2026 and covers housing growth, employment land, waste management and some aspects of transport. The Examination in Public was held between April to June 2009. With the Inspectors Panel Report being released in September 2009.
- Phase 3 – The topics covered by the phase three revision are now being progressed via Policy Statements and Policy Recommendations. Each statement will focus on a particular topic that was addressed during the Issues and Options Stage of the revision.

- 3.3 Further details relating to the review of the RSS can be viewed at the following web address

http://www.wmra.gov.uk/Planning_and_Regional_Spatial_Strategy/RSS_Revision/RSS_Revision.aspx.

Saved Plans

- 3.4 Under the transitional arrangements attached to new legislation it has been possible to save existing policies for a period of three years after the commencement of the new Planning Act. The following documents have been amended since their adoption to include only those saved policies.
- 3.5 The **Worcestershire Structure Plan 1996-2011** was adopted by the County in June 2001. It identifies the key strategic policies for the County in terms of planning and development control and provides a framework for development plans (Appendix 2 lists the saved Worcestershire County Structure Plan Policies).
- 3.6 The **Hereford and Worcestershire Minerals and Waste Plans** were adopted in 1997. Both documents are currently under review.
- 3.7 The **Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 (2001-2011)** was adopted 31st May 2006. The Local Plan is saved for a period of three years from adoption; therefore its policies remained in force until May 2009. As it is not possible to replace Local Plan No. 3 by May 2009 Redditch Borough Council has had permission from the Secretary of State to save and continue to use policies and proposals contained in Local Plan No.3 beyond May 2009 (Appendix 3 lists the Saved Local Plan No 3 Policies).

Supplementary Planning Guidance / Documents

- 3.8 There are a number of existing documents which the Council has adopted as Supplementary Planning Guidance/ Documents (SPG/SPD). These SPGs / SPDs provide greater detail on the policies in DPDs and are used as a material consideration in the determination of planning applications.

Statement of Community Involvement (SCI)

- 3.9 The Borough of Redditch SCI was adopted in June 2006; it was subject to independent examination but does not form part of the statutory development plan. The SCI sets out the standards which the authority will achieve with regards to involving the community in the preparation, alteration and review of all its local development documents and in consideration of planning applications.

Adopted Local Development Documents

- 3.10 The Council has adopted a number of Local Development Documents (LDDs), which can be used as material considerations in the determination of planning applications, including:
- Affordable Housing Provision Supplementary Planning Document
 - Church Hill District Centre Development Brief
 - Edward Street Supplementary Planning Document
 - Land to the rear of the properties 1 – 11 Auxerre Avenue, Greenlands, Redditch Development Brief
 - Prospect Hill, Town Centre Supplementary Planning Document

- Land to the rear of Alexandra Hospital Development Brief
- Church Road, Town Centre (formally known as the North West Quadrant)
- Open Space Provision Supplementary Planning Document
- Designing for Community Safety Supplementary Planning Document

Proposed Local Development Documents

- 4.1 The Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 was adopted on 31 July 2006. Under the transitional arrangements, Local Plan No.3 was saved for a period of three years from adoption. The Council sought approval from the Secretary of State to save a number of the Local Plan No.3 policies.
- 4.2 In addition, the Council intends to prepare a Core Strategy DPD to replace the strategic policies of Local Plan No.3. This DPD will set out the Strategic Vision, objectives and policies for Redditch up to 2026.
- 4.3 A Site Allocations and Policies DPD is intended to be prepared, which will review existing allocations of land. The timetable for the production of the Site Allocations and Policies DPD has been carefully determined following consideration of the importance of adopting a sound Core Strategy for Redditch. In addition, the staff resources at Redditch Borough Council mean that limited resource can be allocated to the Site Allocations and Policies DPD when examination of the Core Strategy is in progress
- 4.4 The Council will also prepare a proposals map alongside each DPD adopted.

Delivering the Local Development Framework

- 5.1 This section details how the Council will produce its Local Development Documents.

Supporting Documents

- 5.2 The LDDs will establish Redditch Borough Council's planning policies. However, in preparing these documents Redditch Borough Council has and will continue to undertake a range of background research and review existing background material.

Evidence Base

- 5.3 A range of technical studies and research will underpin the preparation of the LDDs. Outlined below are a number of technical studies and research areas that will feed into the preparation of the LDDs, however others may be added to in due course:

- **Sustainability Appraisal** – A Sustainability Appraisal (SA) has been undertaken as part of the preparation of the Core Strategy DPD and will continue to inform its production. The Scoping Report consultation has been undertaken for the Core Strategy DPD and will be revised, when appropriate as part of the Core Strategy process. A Sustainability Appraisal will also be prepared as part of the preparation for the Site Allocations and Policies DPD.
- **Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA)** – To inform the LDF, the Council has completed a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment. It will form the basis for assessing the scope to provide new housing in the Borough. The SHLAA is updated on an annual basis.
- **A Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the South Housing Market area of the West Midlands Region** – This document provides technical and policy advice that will inform the LDDs.
- **Local Housing Needs Assessment** – This provides a clear indication of the local housing needs which the LDF should aim to address. This Assessment is currently being refreshed.
- **Employment Land Review** – A study has been undertaken to inform employment land requirements which the LDF will seek to meet. The Employment Land review is updated on an annual basis.

- **Open Space Needs Assessment** – An audit of open space was completed in 2009. This will need to be reviewed in order to feed into the LDF.
- **Strategic Flood Risk Assessment and Water Cycle Study**– The Level 1 Strategic Flood Risk Assessment (SFRA) for Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough has been undertaken to provide a robust assessment of the extent and nature of the risk of flooding and its implications for land use planning. The Water Cycle Strategy (WCS) for the Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough assesses the constraints and requirements that will arise from the scale of proposed growth on the water infrastructure of the Borough and District. A Strategic Flood Risk Assessment Level 2 will be completed which will consider more specifically the flood risk on potential development sites and mitigation measures. The Water Cycle Study will also be updated to inform the content of LDF.
- **Retail Needs Assessment** – The Council commissioned consultants White Young Green to undertake a Town Centre and Retail Study. The objectives of the study were to assess retail expenditure capacity up to 2026, establish shopping patterns, provide an assessment of commercial leisure facilities available, present an appraisal of alternative sites for retail development and to provide a Town Centre and retail strategy for the Borough. This study will be updated to inform the content of the LDF.
- **Study into the Future Growth Implications First Stage and Second Stage Reports** – The Council jointly commissioned these two studies to assess the implications of Redditch to achieve each of three growth scenarios then being considered by the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Phase Two Revision.
- **Public Open Space Standards in the Borough** – This study examines the background and reason for the establishment of high levels of open space provision within the Borough of Redditch.
- **A Study Green Belt Land & Areas of Development Restraint within Redditch Borough** – The purpose of this study is to demonstrate the acute sensitivities of the Redditch Green Belt and the various constraints and drawbacks it poses against development.
- **Accessibility Study and Settlement Hierarchy** - The accessibility study considers whether new development can help to enhance facilities and services in some settlements in Redditch

Borough and is primarily a tool for justifying a suitable Settlement Hierarchy.

- **Playing Pitch Strategy** – This study will provide an up-to-date assessment of the playing pitch provision in the Borough.
- **Green Infrastructure Study** - The Green Infrastructure Study will include a comprehensive analysis of green infrastructure provision in Redditch Borough and a strategy for enhancing the provision and creating a strategic network of green infrastructure.
- **Transport Assessment** – This study will assess the transport infrastructure required to support the development of 7,000 dwellings and associated employment land required in the Borough up to 2026.
- **Winyates Green Triangle Transport Assessment** – This study considered the transport implications of locating employment land at the Winyates Green Triangle and the potential infrastructure required.
- **Infrastructure Delivery Plan** – This plan will outline the infrastructure required to deliver the Core Strategy up to 2026. It will outline who will provide it, how much it will cost and the timeframes to its delivery.
- **Office Needs Assessment** – This study examines the need for offices within the Town Centre and reviews potential development sites to accommodate the identified office requirements within the boundary of the Town Centre and peripheral zone.

5.4 In carrying out its scrutiny of the LDD, an Inspector will assess whether the evidence base that Redditch Borough Council assembles to support the DPD's is sufficiently comprehensive.

Adoption of Local Development Documents

5.5 All LDDs are taken to Executive Committee and Full Council to obtain Member approval. In the case of DPDs, these are subsequently submitted to the Secretary of State for consideration.

5.6 Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council have been advised that it would be good practice to align the production of their Core Strategy's due to the cross- boundary issues affecting both authorities. The alignment will allow for concurrent consultation periods and Examinations in Public which will ensure efficient and effective use of resources for both Councils.

Monitoring

- 5.7 Progress against the LDS, for example, pre-submission and adoption dates, will be monitored. An Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) is produced annually. It assesses the implementation of the LDS and the extent to which policies in LDDs are being achieved. AMRs cover the period 1 April to 31 March and are submitted to the Government Office for the West Midlands (GOWM) in December.
- 5.8 The content of the AMR includes:
- Review actual progress, in terms of Local Development Document (LDD) preparation, against the timetable and milestones in the Local Development Scheme;
 - Assess the extent to which policies in LDDs are being implemented;
 - Where policies are not being implemented, explain why and set out what steps need to be taken to ensure that the policy is implemented; or where a policy is to be amended or replaced;
 - Identify the significant effects of implementing policies in LDD's and whether they are as intended; and
 - Detail whether policies are to be amended or replaced.

Resources and Risk Assessment

- 5.9 There will always be a level of uncertainty associated with a document such as this LDS. It is therefore considered worthwhile to ask how reasonable and achievable the targets are and what issues may affect the overall delivery of this LDS:
- **Level of public engagement.** An assumption has been made about the amount of time that will need to be allocated to public and stakeholder involvement. Whilst this has been based on past experience, it is not possible to accurately predict how many people will wish to engage with Redditch Borough Council on a particular project.
 - **Capacity of the Planning Inspectorate (PINS).** We have made assumptions about the ability of PINS to service the requirements from this LDS. If PINS cannot meet the requirements of this LDS, then there will be some slippage in the programme. The Development Plans Team will adhere strongly to the advice and schedules provided by PINS with regard to DPD production.
 - **Staff turnover.** There is a degree of flexibility within the LDS to allow for staff to be re-deployed to meet key targets.

- **Additional unforeseen pressures on staff time.** These can never be predicted in advance.
- **Additional resource requirements.** The LDF will be central to Redditch Borough Council's Vision and Strategy for Redditch Borough and will influence a wide range of policy and investment decisions. Comprehensive evidence also needs to be in place to justify particular approaches in DPDs in order to demonstrate that the DPD is sound at examination. Therefore it is critical that there are adequate resources for the LDF process. Most of the resources required for the production of the selected LDD's outlined within this LDS can be met through Redditch Borough Council based budgets.
- **Over-ambitious timetable.** Redditch Borough Council believes that it is able to meet the timetable for LDD production that this LDS outlines.
- **Regional Spatial Strategy** – Development Plan Documents are required to 'build in' flexibility to ensure they can cope with changing situations. The Regional Spatial Strategy has and will be subject to three revisions. It is necessary for Redditch Boroughs Development Plan Documents to cope with this, however there is the risk that the DPDs flexibility cannot cope with the changes posed by the RSS.

Concluding Comments

- 6.1 The committed and enthusiastic Development Plans Team at Redditch Borough Council embraces the challenge and opportunity presented by The Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009. Redditch Borough Council firmly believes that everyone who has an interest in planning matters should be able to get involved in the process of preparing planning policies. This LDS will act as an effective point of reference for local communities and stakeholders to find out about Redditch Borough's LDF. Redditch Borough Council is keen that local people and stakeholders take an early lead in contributing to the formulation of planning policies and supplementary planning material.
- 6.2 A robust approach has been taken in the preparation of this LDS and Redditch Borough Council believes that the result is an overall programme which sets out a deliverable and realistic timetable supported by sufficient resources in terms of funding and manpower. It is considered that this LDS outlines a comprehensive approach to LDD production based upon programme management principles; and offers a comprehensible guide to the nature and deadline of LDDs to be produced.
- 6.3 In setting out the subject matter, chain of conformity and outlining the timescales for implementing each LDD, within this LDS, significant steps have been taken towards the achievement of the Vision for Redditch Borough as detailed in the Sustainable Community Strategy:
- “Our vision is for Redditch to be successful and vibrant with sustainable communities built on partnership and shared responsibility. We want people to be proud that they live and work in Redditch.”**
- 6.4 All LDDs will be in conformity with West Midlands RSS. Redditch Borough Council will play its part in achieving the RSS for the West Midlands.
- “The overall vision for the West Midlands is one of an economically successful, outward looking and adaptable Region; which is rich in culture and environment, where all people, working together, are able to meet their aspirations and needs without prejudicing the quality of life of future generations”.**
- 6.5 For details about how you can get involved in the planning process and for queries regarding this LDS please contact:-

Email: devplans@redditchbc.gov.uk

Development Plans Team
Walter Stranz Square
Alcester Street
Redditch, Worcs. B98 8AH
Tel: (01527)64252 (Extension Number: 3221)

Appendix 1 Local Development Framework terminology

| | |
|------------------------------------|---|
| Annual Monitoring Report (AMR) | This is part of the LDF; the AMR will assess the progress towards the implementation of the LDS and the extent to which policies in the LDF are being successfully implemented. |
| Area Action Plan | A DPD which concentrates on a specific location or an area subject of conservation or significant change. |
| Sustainable Community Strategy | A Sustainable Community Strategy is a wide ranging strategy focusing on needs, aspirations and priorities of local communities. The intention is that LDFs will provide the spatial expression to elements of the Sustainable Community Strategy which relate to development. |
| Core Strategy | A DPD which sets out the strategic vision and strategy for the Borough. |
| Development Plan | A Development Plan comprises the Regional Spatial Strategy and DPDs contained in the LDF. Decisions on planning applications should be made in accordance with the Development Plan unless material considerations indicate otherwise. |
| Development Plan Document (DPD) | A Local Development Document which forms part of the Development Plan, it is therefore a primary consideration in determining planning applications. Appendices 6 and 7 illustrate the DPD preparation process. |
| Examination | All DPD's are subject to examination by a Planning Inspector to consider their soundness. |
| Inspector's Report | This is a report issued by a planning inspector regarding the planning issues debated at the independent examination of a development plan or a planning inquiry. |
| Local Development Documents (LDDs) | This is any document contained within the LDF including DPDs and SPDs. |
| Local Development Framework (LDF) | This is a non-statutory term used to describe a folder of documents, this includes all LDDs. |

| | |
|--|--|
| Local Development Scheme (LDS) | This sets the timetable for the production of LDDs, in particular DPDs. |
| Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004 | Legislation that introduced the new plan system. |
| Planning Policy Guidance (PPG) | Issued by Central Government setting out national land use policies, these are gradually being replaced by PPSs. |
| Planning Policy Statement (PPS) | Statement of national planning policy which provides guidance on the preparation of LDDs. |
| Proposal Map | Illustrates local policies and proposals in Local Plan No.3. |
| Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) | Replaces Regional Planning Guidance. It sets out the regional spatial strategy and policies. It forms part of the Development Plan under the new system. Any new LDDs have to be in accordance with the RSS. |
| Site Allocations and Policies DPD | Allocated housing, employment and retail/office allocations with appropriate policies on those allocations. |
| Statement of Community Involvement (SCI) | Outlines the Council's policies for the public involvement in the preparation of LDDs and planning applications. |
| Strategic Environmental Assessment (SEA) | An Environmental Assessment of certain plans and programmes which complies with the European SEA Directive 2001/42/EC which are likely to have significant effects on the environment. |
| Structure Plan | This a land use document giving broad guidance on development plans. |
| Supplementary Planning Documents (SPD) | An LDD that can cover a range of issues, thematic or site specific. SPDs do not form part of the Statutory Development Plan; they are a material planning consideration. They replace SPGs. |
| Sustainability Appraisal (SA) | Appraisal of economic, environmental and social effects of a plan from the outset of preparation process in order to allow for decisions to be made in line with sustainable development. |
| Town and Country Planning (Local Development) (England) (Amendment) Regulations 2009 | Regulations setting out the requirements for the operation of the LDF system. |

Appendix 2 Saved Worcestershire County Structure Plan 1996-2011

| Policy Number | Policy Name | Policy Number | Policy Name |
|---------------|---|---------------|--|
| SD.1 | Prudent Use of Natural Resources | CTC16 | Archaeological Sites of National Importance |
| SD.2 | Care for the Environment | CTC17 | Archaeological Sites of Regional or Local Importance |
| SD.3 | Use of Previously Developed Land | CTC18 | Enhancement & Management of Archaeological Sites |
| SD.4 | Minimising the Need to Travel | CTC19 | Areas and Features of Architectural Significance |
| SD.5 | Achieving Balanced Communities | CTC20 | Conservation Areas |
| SD.8 | Development in Sustainable Rural Settlements | CTC21 | Re-use and Conversion of Buildings. |
| SD.9 | Promotion of Town Centres | D.5 | The Contribution of Previously Developed Land to Meeting the Housing Provision |
| CTC1 | Landscape Character | D.6 | Affordable Housing Needs |
| CTC2 | Skylines and Hill Features | D.8 | Affordable Housing for Local Needs in Rural Areas |
| CTC3 | Area Of Outstanding Natural Beauty (AONB) | D.10 | Housing in the Open Countryside Outside the Green Belt |
| CTC 5 | Trees, Woodlands and Hedgerows | D.12 | Housing in the Green Belt |
| CTC 6 | Green Open Spaces and Corridors | D.14 | Housing Development in Rural Settlements Beyond, and Excluded from, the Green Belt |
| CTC 7 | Agricultural Land | D.16 | Re-use and Conversion of Buildings |
| CTC 8 | Flood Risk & Surface Water Drainage | D.17 | Residential Mobile Homes |
| CTC 9 | Impact on Watercourses and Aquifers | D.18 | Gypsy Sites |
| CTC 10 | Sites of International Wildlife Importance | D.19 | Employment Land Requirements |
| CTC 11 | Sites of National Wildlife Importance | D.24 | Location of Employment Uses in Class B8 |
| CTC 12 | Sites of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance | D.25 | Use of Employment Land for Specific Uses within Class B |
| CTC 14 | Features in the Landscape of Nature Conservation Importance | D.26 | Office Development (Class A2 and Class B1) |
| CTC 15 | Biodiversity Action Plan | D.27 | New Building for Business Uses Outside the Green Belt |

| Policy Number | Policy Name | Policy Number | Policy Name |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|--|
| D.28 | New Building for Business Purposes in the Green Belt | T.16 | Accident Reduction |
| D.29 | Change of use of Buildings in Rural Areas for Employment Purposes | T.17 | Retention of Rail Policy |
| D.31 | Retail Hierarchy | T.18 | River Severn |
| D.32 | Preferred Locations for Large Scale Development | T.19 | Airfields |
| D.33 | Retailing in Out-of-Centre Locations | RST.1 | Criteria for the Development of Recreation and Sports Facilities |
| D.34 | Retail Developments in District and Local Centres | RST.2 | Location of Informal Countryside Recreation Developments |
| D.35 | Retailing in Rural Settlements | RST.3 | Public Rights of Way |
| D.36 | Farm Shops | RST.4 | Recreational Walking Routes |
| D.37 | Shops in Community Buildings in Rural Settlements | RST.5 | Recreational Cycling Routes |
| D.38 | General Extent & Purposes of the Green Belt | RST.6 | Horse Riding Routes |
| D.39 | Control of Development in the Green Belt | RST.7 | Recreation in Areas of Outstanding Natural Beauty |
| D.40 | Green Belt Boundary Definition | RST.9 | Waterways and Open Water Areas |
| D.43 | Crime Prevention and Community Safety | RST.11 | Major Sports Facilities |
| D.44 | Telecommunications | RST.12 | Recreation Provision in Settlements |
| T.1 | Location of Development | RST.13 | Golf Courses |
| T.2 | Resources | RST.14 | Tourism Development |
| T.3 | Managing Car Use | RST.15 | Development of Tourism Potential |
| T.4 | Car Parking | RST.16 | Tourist Accommodation |
| T.5 | Bus Facilities | RST.17 | Holiday Chalets |
| T.6 | Rail Facilities | RST.18 | Holiday Caravan Sites |
| T.7 | Interchange Facilities | RST.19 | Touring Caravan Sites |
| T.8 | Interchange Facilities in the Green Belt | M.1 | Regional Production |
| T.9 | Rural Transport | M.2 | Safeguarding of Deposits |
| T.10 | Cycling and Walking | M.3 | Mineral Extraction |
| T.11 | Assessment of New Roads | M.4 | Restoration and Aftercare |
| T.12 | Road Schemes | M.5 | Abberley and Malvern Hills |
| T.13 | Motorway Service Areas | M.6 | Recycled Materials |
| T.15 | Freight /Goods Transfer | EN2 | Wind Turbines |

| Policy Number | Policy Name | Policy Number | Policy Name |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|-------------------------------|
| EN3 | Waste to Energy | WD.3 | Waste Management Facilities |
| WD.1 | Waste Hierarchy | WD.4 | Landfill |
| WD.2 | Location of Waste Handling and Treatment Facilities | IMP.1 | Implementation of Development |

Appendix 3 Saved Local Plan No. 3 Policies

The following is the list of Policies to be saved beyond May 2009.

| Policy Number | Policy Name | Policy Number | Policy Name |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| CS.1 | Prudent Use of Natural Resources | B(BE).18 | Advertisements |
| CS.2 | Care for the Environment | B(BE).19 | Green Architecture |
| CS.5 | Achieving Balanced Communities | B(BE).20 | Public Art |
| CS.6 | Implementation of Development | B(BE).22 | Temporary Buildings and Uses |
| CS.7 | The Sustainable Location of Development | B(BE).25 | Undergrounding of Telephone and Electricity Lines |
| CS.8 | Landscape Character | B(BE).28 | Waste Management |
| H.1 | Alexandra Hospital | B(BE).29 | Construction Waste |
| H.2 | Homes for the Elderly | B(NE).1 | Overarching Policy of Intent |
| S.1 | Designing Out Crime | B(NE).1a | Trees, Woodland and Hedgerows |
| B(HSG).5 | Affordable Housing | B(NE).3 | Wildlife Corridors |
| B(HSG).6 | Development within or adjacent to the Curtilage of an Existing Dwelling | B(NE).10a | Sites of National Wildlife Importance |
| B(HSG).10 | Gypsy Sites | B(NE).10b | Sites of Regional or Local Wildlife Importance |
| B(BE).9 | Streetscapes in Conservation Areas | B(RA).1 | Detailed Extent of and Control of Development in the Green Belt |
| B(BE).11 | Buildings of Local Interest | B(RA).2 | Housing in the Open Countryside Outside the Green Belt |
| B(BE).13 | Qualities of Good Design | B(RA).3 | Areas of Development Restraint |
| B(BE).14 | Alterations and Extensions | B(RA).4 | Change of Use of Buildings in Rural Areas for Employment Purposes |
| B(BE).16 | Shop fronts | B(RA).5 | Reuse and Conversion of Buildings |
| B(BE).17 | Shop front Security | B(RA).6 | Farm Diversification |

| Policy Number | Policy Name | Policy Number | Policy Name |
|----------------------|---|----------------------|---|
| B(RA).8 | Development at Astwood Bank | E(TCR).9 | District Centres |
| B(RA).9 | Development at Feckenham | E(TCR).10 | District Centre Redevelopment |
| B(RA).10 | Exceptions Housing at Astwood Bank and Feckenham | E(TCR).11a | Retail Sales at Petrol Filling Stations |
| L.1 | Children's Day Nurseries | E(TCR).12 | Class A3 Uses |
| L.2 | Education Provision | C(CF).1 | Community Facilities |
| E(EMP).1 | Employment Provision | C(CF).2 | Cemeteries |
| E(EMP).2 | Design of Employment Development | C(T).2 | Road Hierarchy |
| E(EMP).3 | Primarily Employment Areas | C(T).7 | Public Transport Infrastructure |
| E(EMP).3a | Development Affecting Primarily Employment Areas | C(T).8 | Transport Interchange |
| E(EMP).4 | Locational Criteria for Development within Primarily Employment Areas | C(T).11 | Road Schemes |
| E(EMP).5 | Edward Street Site | C(T).12 | Parking Standards |
| E(EMP).6 | North West Redditch Master Plan Employment | R.1 | Primarily Open Space |
| E(TCR).1 | Vitality and Viability of the Town Centre | R.2 | Protection of Incidental Open Space |
| E(TCR).2 | Town Centre Enhancement | R.3 | Provision of Informal Unrestricted Open Spaces |
| E(TCR).3 | Peripheral Zone | R.4 | Provision and Location of Children's Play Areas |
| E(TCR).4 | Need and the Sequential Approach | R.5 | Playing Pitch Provision |
| E(TCR).5 | Protection of the Retail Core | R.6 | Protection and Provision of Allotments |
| E(TCR).6 | North West Quadrant | R.7 | North West Redditch Master Plan -Abbey Stadium |
| E(TCR).8 | Coach Parking within the Town Centre | | |

Appendix 4 Existing Plans, Policies and Programmes

| Worcestershire County Structure Plan | |
|--|--|
| Period Covered | 1996 – 2011 |
| Spatial Dimension | County of Worcestershire |
| Adoption Date | 4 June 2001 |
| Status | Forms part of the current Development Plan for Redditch. Policies have been saved as detailed in Appendix 2. |
| Target Date for Replacement | Will not be replaced by Worcestershire County Council |
| Date for Beginning Process of Replacement | N/A. New planning legislation makes no provision for Structure Plans. |
| Discussion – Re: Replacement | As above. |

| Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3 | |
|--|--|
| Period Covered | 2001 – 2011 |
| Spatial Dimension | Borough-wide |
| Adoption Date | 31 May 2006 |
| Status | Will continue to be used as part of the Development Plan for Redditch Borough, no change to saved version. |
| Target Date for Replacement | N/A New planning system makes no provision for Local Plans. A number of policies contained within the Core Strategy DPD and other DPDs will replace policies within the Local Plan. |
| Date the Process of Replacement Began | N/A |
| Discussion – Re: Replacement | Local Plan No.3 was saved for three years from adoption date. A number of policies within the Local Plan have been saved following application to the Government Office for the West Midlands as detailed in Appendix 3. |

Appendix 5 Schedule of Proposed Development Plan Documents


This section provides an outline of what Development Plan Documents will be contained within the LDF for Redditch Borough by February 2014. A series of A4 sized sheet profiles providing further information on the production of each DPD is provided in Appendix 6.

Table One: Schedule of Proposed Local Development Documents

| Document Title | Status | Role and Content | Geographical Coverage | Dates for pre-submission consultation | Date for Publication of DPD or Draft SPD | Date for Submission to Secretary of State | Proposed date for adoption |
|----------------------|--------|---|-----------------------|---------------------------------------|--|---|----------------------------|
| Core Strategy | DPD | Aligned with the Councils Sustainable Community Strategy, this DPD will set out the Strategic Vision, Objectives and policies for Redditch until 2026. The process of Sustainability Appraisal will be part of the decision making process of the Core Strategy. It will provide guidance on Strategic issues in the Borough such as the Environment, Sustainable Development, Strategic locations or allocations of land and climate change. | Borough-wide | June 2007– Feb/ March 2012 | November 2011 | February/ March 2012 | December 2012 |


| Document Title | Status | Role and Content | Geographical Coverage | Dates for pre-submission consultation | Date for Publication of DPD or Draft SPD | Date for Submission to Secretary of State | Proposed date for adoption |
|--|--------|---|-----------------------|---|---|---|---|
| Proposals Map | DPD | To illustrate the core policies of the Core Strategy DPD and subsequent DPDs. | Borough-wide | The Proposals map will be maintained and updated when a DPD is adopted. | The Proposals map will be maintained and updated when a DPD is adopted. | The Proposals map will be maintained and updated when a DPD is adopted. | The Proposals map will be maintained and updated when a DPD is adopted. |
| Site Allocations and Policies DPD | DPD | The purpose of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) is to allocate land for a range of uses to support the strategic spatial vision and objectives of the Council's Core Strategy. The DPD must be in conformity with the Core Strategy as it will demonstrate how the vision, objectives and spatial strategy will be implemented and delivered. It will include sites for development, for example housing and employment. | Borough - wide | November 2010 – June 2013 | March 2013 | June 2013 | February 2014 |

Appendix 6 Development Plan Document Profiles

| 1. Core Strategy Development Plan Document | | |
|--|--|-----------------|
| Role and Content | Aligned with the Councils Sustainable Community Strategy, this DPD will set out the Strategic Vision, objectives and policies for Redditch up until 2026. The process of Sustainability Appraisal will be part of the decision making process of the Core Strategy. It will provide guidance on Strategic issues in the Borough such as the Environment, Sustainable Development, Strategic locations or allocations of land and climate change. | |
| Status | DPD | |
| Chain of Conformity | The DPD will be in conformity with the Sustainable Community Strategy and general conformity with the RSS and other relevant guidance. | |
| Geographical coverage | Borough-wide | |
| Relevant Local Area Agreement themes |  | |
| Relevant RBC Corporate Plan Priorities | Enterprising Community Safe Clean and Green | |
| Target Adoption Date | December 2012 | |
| Timetable (Stage) | Date | Complete |
| <u>Regulation 25</u> | | |
| Production stage | June 2007– April 2008 | ✓ |
| Issues and alternative options consultation | May - June 2008 | ✓ |
| Consultation on Preferred Draft Core Strategy ¹ | October 2008 - May 2009 | ✓ |
| Representations on Preferred Draft Core Strategy | June 2009 | ✓ |

¹ In June 2009 the Town and Country Planning Amendment Regulations came into force, which removed the need to undertake a Preferred Option stage in the Core Strategy production (previous Regulation 26). Under the transitional arrangements supplied by CLG, Redditch Borough have taken Route two. The current (amendment) requirement is to ensure that *'public participation in the preparation of a development plan document'* is undertaken, in accordance with Regulation 25.

| | | |
|--|---|--|
| Joint Consultation with Bromsgrove District Council on Revised Development Strategy (special consultation on Redditch Expansion) and growth options. | February – March 2010 | |
| Consultation on Revised Preferred Draft Core Strategy (aligned with Bromsgrove District Council) | November 2010 | |
| Representation on Revised Preferred Draft Core Strategy | December 2010 | |
| <u>Regulation 27</u> | | |
| Publication of proposed submission DPD (aligned with Bromsgrove District Council) | November 2011 | |
| <u>Regulation 30</u> | | |
| Submission to Secretary of State(aligned with Bromsgrove District Council) | February/ March 2012 | |
| Pre – Examination Meeting | May 2012 | |
| Examination Hearings Period | July 2012 | |
| Inspectors Report | October 2012 | |
| Adoption | December 2012 | |
| Arrangements for Production | | |
| Organisational Lead | Director of Environment and Planning | |
| Political Management | Planning Advisory Panel, Executive Committee and Full Council. Joint Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council Planning Advisory Panel. | |
| Resources Required | Can be managed by Development Plans Team within existing budgets. | |
| External Community and Stakeholder Involvement | As per SCI | |
| Post-Production | AMR to monitor and review DPD implementation. | |

| 2. Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document | |
|--|---|
| Role and Content | The purpose of the Site Allocations and Policies Development Plan Document (DPD) is to allocate land for a range of uses to support the strategic spatial vision and objectives of the Council's Core Strategy. The DPD must be in conformity with the Core Strategy as it will demonstrate how the vision, objectives and spatial strategy will be implemented and delivered. It will include sites for development, for example housing and employment. |
| Status | DPD |
| Chain of Conformity | The DPD will be in conformity with the Core Strategy and will be in general conformity with the RSS and other relevant guidance |
| Geographical coverage | Borough-wide |
| Relevant Local Area Agreement themes |  |
| Relevant RBC Corporate Plan Priorities | Enterprising Community Safe Clean and Green |
| Target Adoption Date | February 2014 |
| Timetable (Stage) | Date |
| <u>Regulation 25</u> | |
| Production stage | February 2010 – October 2010 |
| Issues and alternative options consultation | November 2010 |
| Consultation on Preferred Draft Site Allocations and Policies DPD | November 2011 |
| Representations on Preferred Draft Site Allocations and Policies DPD | December 2011 |
| <u>Regulation 27</u> | |
| Publication of proposed submission DPD | March 2013 |
| <u>Regulation 30</u> | |

| | |
|---|---|
| Submission to Secretary of State | June 2013 |
| Pre – Examination Meeting | August 2013 |
| Examination Hearings Period | October 2013 |
| Inspectors Report | January 2014 |
| Adoption | February 2014 |
| Arrangements for Production | |
| Organisational Lead | Director of Environment and Planning |
| Political Management | Planning Advisory Panel, Executive Committee and Full Council ² . |
| Resources Required | Can be managed by Development Plans Team within existing budgets ³ . |
| External Community and Stakeholder Involvement | As per SCI ⁴ |
| Post-Production | AMR to monitor and review DPD implementation. |

² The Political management could be more than just the Borough of Redditch with possibility of Joint Working.

³ May need more than Redditch Borough Council budget and Government funding with possibility of Joint Working.

⁴ May be more than Redditch Borough Council SCI with possibility of Joint Working.

| 3. Proposals Map DPD | |
|---|---|
| Role and Content | To illustrate the core policies of the Core Strategy and other DPDs and when appropriate indicate proposed land use policies. |
| Status | DPD |
| Chain of Conformity | The DPD will be in general conformity with the RSS and other relevant guidance. |
| Geographical coverage | Borough-wide |
| Relevant Local Area Agreement themes |  |
| Relevant RBC Corporate Plan Priorities | Enterprising Community Safe Clean and Green |
| Target Adoption Date | The Proposals Map will be produced and amended following the adoption of relevant DPDs. |
| Timetable (Stage) | Date |
| The Proposals Map will be produced and amended following the adoption of relevant DPDs. | The Proposals Map will be produced and amended following the adoption of relevant DPDs. |
| Arrangements for Production | |
| Organisational Lead | Director of Environment and Planning. |
| Political Management | Planning Advisory Panel, Executive Committee and Full Council. |
| Resources Required | Can be managed by Development Plans Team within existing budgets. |
| External Community and Stakeholder Involvement | As per SCI |
| Post-Production | AMR to monitor and review DPD implementation. |

Appendix 7 Other Local Development Documents to be produced

This section provides information on other Local Development Documents that will be produced by Redditch Borough Council. Although it is not necessary to detail these documents within the LDS, they have been listed for information purposes, as it is appropriate to indicate where staff resources are likely to be used.

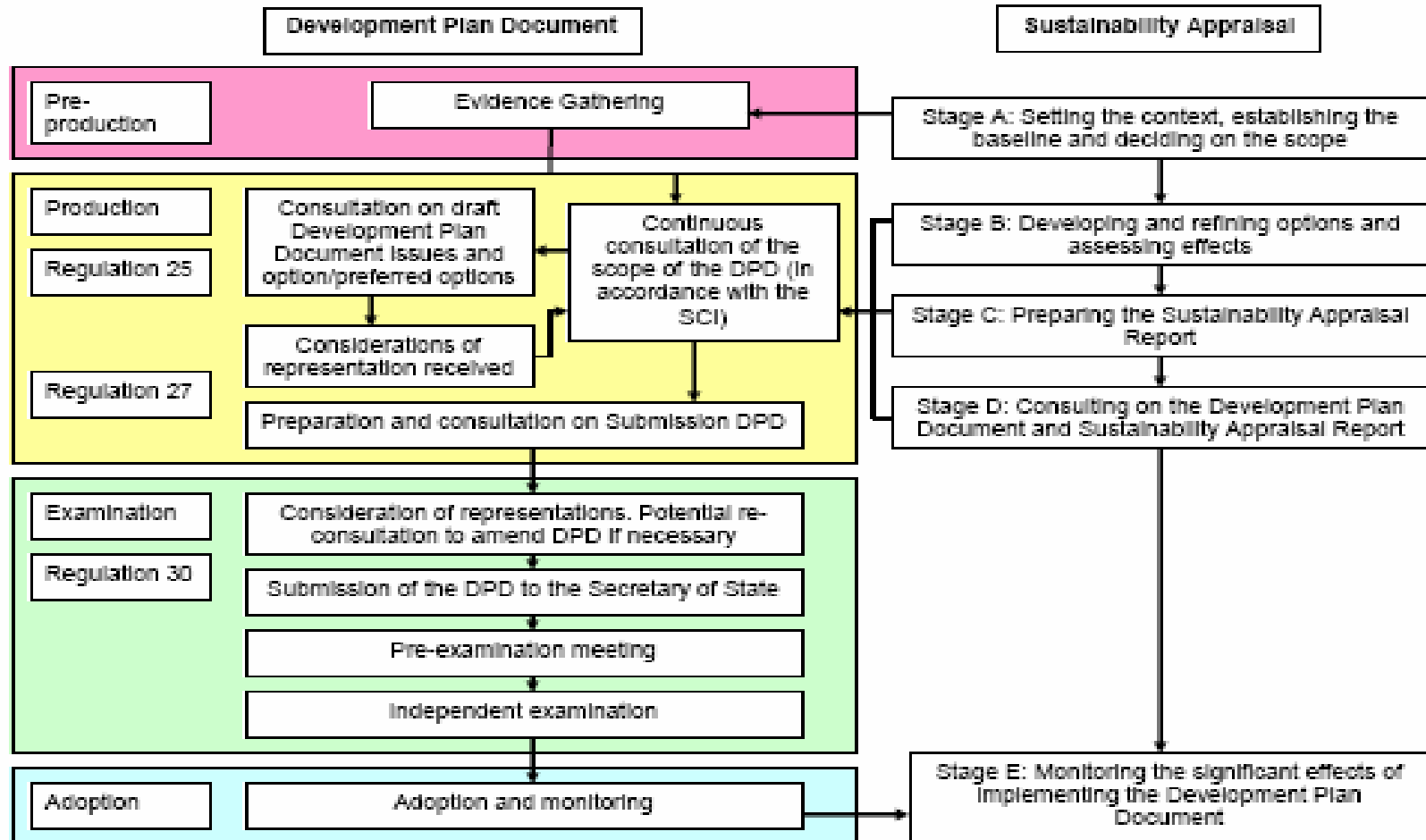
| Land to the rear of the Alexandra Hospital Supplementary Planning Document | |
|---|---|
| Role and Content | To update the existing SPD to take account of potential changes to the site designation following its inclusion as a Strategic Site in the Core Strategy DPD. |
| Timetable | |
| Consultation on Draft | June 2011 |
| Final Report | October 2011 |
| Executive. Committee | October 2011 |
| Full Council | October 2011 |

| Encouraging Good Design SPD | |
|------------------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Role and Content | To update the existing SPD. |
| Timetable | |
| Draft SPD | Not yet determined |
| Consultation of Draft SPD | Not yet determined |
| Final SPD | Not yet determined |
| Executive. Committee | Not yet determined |
| Full Council | Not yet determined |

| Public Art SPD | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|
| Role and Content | To update the existing SPD. |
| Timetable | |
| Draft SPD | Not yet determined |
| Consultation on Draft SPD | Not yet determined |
| Final SPD | Not yet determined |
| Executive. Committee | Not yet determined |
| Full Council | Not yet determined |

Appendix 8: Process for Preparing a Development Plan Document

The DPD preparation process is illustrated below, including the relationship with the key SA stages.



Executive Committee

No specific ward relevance

31st March 2010

OUTCOME OF PREFERRED DRAFT CORE STRATEGY

(Report of the Acting Head of Planning and Building Control)

1. Summary of Proposals

The report seeks the endorsement of the Officer responses to the Preferred Draft Core Strategy consultation (Appendix A)

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

the Officer responses to the Preferred Draft Core Strategy consultation be approved.

3. Financial, Legal, Policy, Risk and Sustainability Implications

Financial

- 3.1 The costs associated with this publication have been met from existing budgets.

Legal

- 3.2 Redditch Borough Council is required, under the Planning and Compulsory Purchase Act 2004, to produce a Core Strategy. On the 27th June 2008 the Town and Country Planning Amendment Regulations came into force, which removed the need to undertake a Preferred Options stage in the Core Strategy production (previous regulation 26). Under the transitional arrangements supplied by the Department for Communities and Local Government, the current (amendment) requirement is to ensure that public participation in the preparation of a DPD is undertaken in accordance with the new Regulation 25. To fulfil these requirements, a Preferred Draft Core Strategy was produced. Consultation was undertaken from 31st October 2008 to 8th May 2009. It is necessary for Officers to consider any comments received and decide on an appropriate course of action.

Policy

- 3.3 The Core Strategy Development Plan Document (DPD) will eventually replace many policies within the Borough of Redditch Local Plan No.3. It will be the first DPD to be produced as part of

Redditch Borough's Local Development Framework (LDF) and forms part of the development plan for area.

Risk

- 3.4 If the Officer responses to the Preferred Draft Core Strategy is not approved, this will have an affect on the other stages of Core Strategy production, which may result in the adoption date not being met. This has the risk of planning decisions being made on their individual merits without the benefit of a comprehensive overview of the Borough and its longer term and spatial planning needs being appreciated. Furthermore, the reward of Housing and Planning Delivery Grant may not be fully secured.

Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.5 Sustainability and environmental issues were considered by Officers when assessing any comments received to the consultation, and also any actions Officers proposed as part of the consultation.

Report

4. Background

- 4.1 The publication of the Preferred Draft Core Strategy is a significant step in the preparation of the Core Strategy DPD.

Core Strategy Preparation

- 4.2 The LDF is a folder of documents that aims to deliver the spatial portrait for the administrative area, it is made up of Local Development Documents. The Core Strategy constitutes a fundamental document within the LDF. The purpose of the Core Strategy is to outline the vision, objectives and key policies that will guide Redditch Borough's development until 2026. The Core Strategy will reflect national planning policy and Redditch's allocated role in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. Furthermore, the Core Strategy will reflect local information about the matters that are important for the Borough.

Preferred Draft Core Strategy

- 4.3 The Preferred Draft Core Strategy was the draft version of the Borough Council's forthcoming Core Strategy Development Plan Document.

5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The Preferred Draft Core Strategy was on consultation from the 31st October 2008 to 8th May 2009. In total 199 representations were received. Each representation was logged by Development Plans and allocated to an Officer who assessed the representation and considered whether an action was required. If an action was required this either encompasses a change in policy, further consultation with the individual/company who submitted the representation or passing the representation to a more appropriate department if the representation is not related to planning. The representations were divided into the following sections:
- a) Analysis of Green Belt and Areas of Development Restraint
 - b) Attractive Facilities
 - c) Balance between housing and employment
 - d) Climate change and sustainability
 - e) Cross Boundary
 - f) Delivery Strategy
 - g) Design and Safety
 - h) Development Strategy
 - i) Enterprise and Skills
 - j) Historic Environment
 - k) Infrastructure
 - l) Landscape, open space, nature, pollution, Green Belt
 - m) Miscellaneous
 - n) Open Space Needs Assessment
 - o) Policy SP.3
 - p) Procedural
 - q) Retail
 - r) Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment
 - s) Sustainability Appraisal
 - t) Sustainable Developments Strategy
 - u) Sustainable Transport
 - v) Vision and Objectives
 - w) Waste
 - x) Water and Flooding
 - y) Winyates Green Triangle
- 5.2 At examination, the Council will need to show how the most appropriate Core Strategy has been selected. Part of this process is the consideration of representation following public consultation.
- 5.3 Perhaps the most pertinent key issue raised by respondents is how the Borough Council would have preferred to deal with its development requirements cross boundary. At the time of drafting the Preferred Draft Core Strategy, the Borough Council had evidence in the form of the White Young Green Second Stage

Report on the growth implications of Redditch and pursued its conclusions as the Borough Council's preferred approach. The conclusions of this jointly commissioned study also formed the basis of the evidence the Borough Council used in support of its argument to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Panel of Inspectors that the development requirements should be in the region of 2,400 dwellings within the Borough boundary.

- 5.4 Objections were received which disagreed with the findings of the White Young Green Study and therefore the Borough Council's approach. Objectors also noted that the Borough Council would not be meeting the development requirements which were set by the then Preferred Option Regional Spatial Strategy. There were also many respondents, mostly residents of nearby Areas of Development Restraint, who supported the specific Bordesley Park allocation in Bromsgrove District in preference to development of the Area of Development Restraint.
- 5.5 Due to the ongoing discussion between Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council, the Officers response to these objections and support refers to the need for the joint consultation which is due to end on 22nd March 2010, which will give information on which option or combination of options across the boundary would be more preferable for both Councils. Similarly comments were received on the Area of Development Restraint within Redditch, where residents mostly opposed their use, and developers on the sites indicated that they should be more preferable.
- 5.6 There are a number of suggested changes to the Vision and Objectives in the Core Strategy as a consequence of comments received. All comments on the Vision and Objectives were received from Stakeholders who requested greater clarity.
- 5.7 Climate change matters received many comments, mostly questioning the approach the Borough Council have taken, which was to reiterate the related targets that were set out in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Preferred Option Document. It is not incumbent upon a Core Strategy to simply repeat provisions set out in either National or Regional policy, therefore Officers suggest that this policy is reviewed. Changes to the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy policy were detailed in the Panel Report (September 2009) therefore Officers will need to compile further technical evidence in support of a revised policy.
- 5.8 Comments were received on the Preferred Draft Core Strategy Flood Risk and Water Management Policy seeking additions and amendments. Officer's response to these comments refers to recent advice given at a Planning Inspectorate Frontloading Meeting (8/2/2010) from the Planning Inspectorate, who advised that the

flooding experienced in Redditch is not a significant issue. If the policies in the Core Strategy are not focussed on locally distinctive issues then the need for the policies is questioned. In addition, the policy as presented in the Preferred Draft Core Strategy reiterated national planning policy in PPS25. Officers suggest that this policy is deleted, and that following this advice from the Planning Inspectorate, that all policies are reviewed to determine where there may be unnecessary repetition.

- 5.9 The way in which the Borough Council projected to develop i.e. the development strategy, received some comments. There were comments questioning the use of windfall sites to contribute towards the development targets. In discussion with the SHLAA Working Partnership it is recommended that a windfall allowance should be excluded from the first 10 years of the Plan to ensure robustness and conformity with PPS3 and this will be reflected in the April 2010 Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment refresh. Officers also recommend that the approach to windfalls be drafted into the policy. Another comment on the development strategy requested allowance for the timely release of land for affordable housing development to come forward in Green Belt locations. Officers suggest that the level of development likely to be required on land currently designated as Green Belt will need to be phased sooner in the plan period to enable development to continue to come forward in a satisfactory manner without compromise to development in Redditch's urban area. This should be addressed through a revision to Policy SP.2.
- 5.10 With regards to affordable housing, objections were received to the 40% affordable housing requirement for residential development on the basis that it was too high, making developments unviable and endangering the ability of the Council to deliver regional targets, particularly relevant in the current economic climate. Officer's response to this is that the provision of 40% affordable housing requirement has been established through the findings of the 'Strategic Housing Market Assessment for the South Housing Market Area of the West Midlands Region' (April 2007). Officers recommend that further investigation of the viability of alternative affordable housing provision is undertaken including a sliding scale of financial contributions and lower levels of on-site provision should a threshold of 40% prove too constraining. A refresh to the Housing Needs Assessment can be commissioned shortly to evidence this further.
- 5.11 Comments have been received questioning how the Town Centre requirements can be accommodated – i.e. retail and office as set out in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy. The office needs assessment proposes a revised office requirement of 30,000 sq.m, of which the Town Centre can accommodate 22,000 sq.m

consequently Officers suggest that policy will need to reflect the findings of this study.

- 5.12 Land to the Rear of the Alexandra Hospital received some comments generally either in support of its use and some objecting to its use. In order to be compliant with the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy a maximum of 5000sq.m of B1 use can be provided at this location, also in light of higher housing targets in the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy Panel Report (Sep 2009) Officers suggest a change to this policy to reconsider this strategic site for mixed use development of employment and residential.
- 5.13 The Government Office for the West Midlands in its response to the Preferred Draft Core Strategy, noted concerns regarding the style and presentation of the individual policies and the overall content of the Core Strategy. In order to respond to these criticisms Officers revised the suggested layout to the Core Strategy and presented a re-drafted version in July 2009. The changes to the layout were significant, including removing the Local Area Agreement Themes as the chapters to the policies. Officers grouped what was aiming to be achieved into a number of suggested Key Strategy Areas including:
- 1) Green Strategy
 - 2) Design and Safety
 - 3) Development Strategy
 - 4) Sustainable Settlements
 - 5) Cross Boundary
 - 6) Balance between Housing and Employment
 - 7) Enterprise and Skills
 - 8) Retail and Town Centre
 - 9) Historic Environment
 - 10) Attractive Facilities
 - 11) Infrastructure
- 5.14 Government Office for the West Midlands indicated that the proposed revised layout satisfied the general requirements of the Core Strategy, and that work needed to continue to ensure that the content of the Core Strategy meets the requirements of PPS12 Local Spatial Planning. Officers will continue to liaise with Government Office for the West Midlands on this matter.
- 5.15 Other minor changes to wording of policies presented in the Preferred Draft Core Strategy were suggested for a number of other policies, all of which are detailed in Appendix A.
- 5.16 In addition to responses to the actual Preferred Draft Core Strategy, the Borough Council received a number of comments to the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment 2009. Mostly these comments were objections to the inclusion of specific sites; however

some comments from developers focussed upon the methodology used as part of the assessment. Since the consultation period, Officers have addressed these concerns and have established a Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment working partnership to further improve the content of the Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment, whose members include industry experts and developers.

- 5.17 Overall the responses received have assisted in the development of the Core Strategy, and therefore the process of consultation in respect of the Preferred Draft Core Strategy was considered a successful process.

6. Other Implications

- | | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| Asset Management | - | The Land and Property holdings are affected by the contents of this report no differently than any other land and property holdings. |
| Community Safety | - | ‘Communities that are safe and feel safe’ is an aim of the Local Area Agreement. All Local Area Agreement aims have been considered in the formation of the Preferred Draft Core Strategy. |
| Human Resources | - | The Core Strategy contains policies to help create mixed and inclusive communities. |
| Social Exclusion | - | The Core Strategy is accompanied by a Sustainability Appraisal. |

7. Lessons Learnt

Not applicable.

8. Background Papers

Preferred Draft Core Strategy

9. Consultation

Consultation on the Officer responses has been undertaken with relevant Redditch Borough Council Officers and external bodies where appropriate.

Executive

Committee

31st March 2010

10. Author of Report

The author of this report is Emma Baker (Acting Development Plans Manager), who can be contacted on extension 3034 (email: emma.baker@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information

11. Appendices

Appendix A – Officer responses to Preferred Draft Core Strategy.

Executive Committee

No Direct Ward Relevance

31st March 2010

COMMUNICATIONS STRATEGY 2010 TO 2013

(Report of the Communications and Marketing Manager)

1. Summary of Proposals

This Communications Strategy follows a previous strategy produced in 2006 and will guide the Council's corporate communications over the next three years. It includes a Communications Action Plan for 2010 / 11, which will need to be updated on a yearly basis over the lifetime of this strategy.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that the Communications Strategy 2010 – 2013 be adopted and added to the Council's policy framework from April 2010.

3. Financial, Legal, Policy, Risk and Climate Change / Carbon Management Implications

Financial

- 3.1 Proposed work to be carried out arising from the strategy is itemised through the Communications Action Plan 2010 / 11 and is within normal budgets.

Legal

- 3.2 Effective communication is fundamental to all organisations and especially where public funds are being spent and representatives of the organisation need to be accountable. In Local Government, authorities' communications work is guided by the Local Government White Paper 2006; Stronger and Prosperous Communities. On a more practical level, communications activity has to adhere to the Local Government Publicity Code. The Code is currently being revised by Government following a consultation period (Redditch Borough Council participated in this).

Policy

- 3.3 Communications is embedded in the Council's work and there are existing policies that reflect the Council's communications activities. These include a Media Relations Policy (last revised in September 2009), a Corporate Identity (adopted in July 2009), and an agreement to produce a Council magazine four times a year (supported by an Editorial Panel of Member representatives).

Risk

- 3.4 The risk of not having a new strategy in place is that the Council's corporate communications work would become unfocussed and lack direction. As part of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), Councils are judged partly on how well they communicate with their customers. Having a strategic approach is judged favourably by the Audit Commission when producing an CAA assessment.
- 3.5 By taking a strategic approach the Council is better able to manage issues that may potentially harm its reputation or seize opportunities that may help raise its profile, as well as plan overall workloads. A plan within a strategy can identify communications that could help to protect reputation, raise awareness or enhance profile.

Climate Change / Carbon Management

- 3.6 Communications has a role to play in promoting the Council's response to the issues surrounding climate change and carbon management. While greater use of digital communication can reduce the need to make unnecessary travel to Council properties and external meetings, so helping to reduce carbon emissions.

Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.7 Digital communication has developed hugely since the last strategy was produced in 2006. Where possible, we will communicate electronically to keep costs down and to reduce the need for paper and printing materials, and therefore help protect the environment.

Report

4. Background

- 4.1 The Communications Strategy takes as its structure why a strategy is needed, the need for effective internal and external communications, the need to engage and consult, what we have done so far as a Council to communicate with our various audiences, our aims, communications priorities for 2010 / 11, roles and responsibilities and where do we go from here?

Executive Committee

31st March 2010

- 4.2 While consultation and engagement is mentioned, this strategy does not set out to cover the Council's community engagement role and activities in detail. This is to be reported in a separate and combined Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council Community Engagement Strategy which will address both Councils' responsibilities under the Government's new Duty to Involve legislation, and will have separate actions for Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils.
- 4.3 A key part of the strategy is the communications priorities for 2010 / 11. These are based on the Council's corporate priorities of 'Enterprising Community', 'Safe', 'Clean and Green', and 'Well Managed Organisation'. They also include 'to increase digital communications activity' and 'help create a more positive image for Redditch'.
- 4.4 The Communications Plan for 2010 / 11, produced as an Appendix to the strategy, includes work and projects across internal and external communications. This includes media relations work and the issuing of press releases and responding to press queries, producing Redditch Matters each quarter, a monthly Communications Planner, Core Brief internal newsletter and Contact staff magazine, publications such as the Council Tax leaflet, Annual Report, Corporate Plan, marketing and communications support to the Council's services, and communications support for the Redditch Partnership.
- 4.5 A section from the Place Survey for Redditch 2008-9 is included in the Appendix that is relevant to the Council's communications. This is referred to in the strategy document. It shows that only 36 per cent of those surveyed said they were 'very well' or 'fairly well' informed about the Council and its services. Overall customer satisfaction with the Council - those who were 'very or fairly satisfied' - was 43 per cent, but with a large 37 per cent who were undecided. Communications activity since the survey was conducted, during autumn 2008, has sought to address these scores.
- 4.6 A further Appendix with the strategy is the Council's Media Relations Policy agreed in September 2009. With media relations a key part of our communications work, it is included here for ease of reference.

Executive Committee

31st March 2010

5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The Communications Strategy stresses that good and effective communication is vital if the Council's work, activities and policies are to be understood in an increasingly fragmented media landscape.
- 5.2 The Council's communications work has undergone considerable change over the past two years. Staff changes in 2008 saw the departure of the then Communications Manager, and Press Officer. A Member-led Task and Finish Group was appointed to look at Communications and reported its findings in the autumn of that year.
- 5.3 A new Communications and Marketing Manager was appointed from November 2008, joined by two Media and Communications Officers (replacing the previous single Press Officer post), a Senior Design and Print Officer (established post) and a part-time Administration Assistant (new post). The team also took responsibility for the Council's in-house Print Unit. It reported to the Head of HR and Communications (within the Environment and Planning Directorate).
- 5.4 With increased staffing, a great deal has been achieved since November 2008, particularly with the re-introduction of Redditch Matters, a Corporate Identity being formally adopted by Council, much increased internal communications activity, quality design and print work taking in other publications produced plus advertising and displays; media relations opportunities better utilised with increased staff (with the result that about 80 per cent of our coverage is deemed `positive`, and stories that could damage the Council's reputation are professionally managed), running several campaigns, developing online communication, and supporting partners involved in trying to create a more positive profile for Redditch.
- 5.5 There is no doubt that communication, for any organisation let alone the local Council, is a key management task that requires careful handling and a professional approach, if an organisation's profile and reputation is to achieve favour or be considered positive and good. With the rise of digital communication, especially through social media including Facebook, Twitter and blogging, communicating messages and managing reputation has never been more challenging. There are now multiple opportunities available to communicate, but at the same time multiple opportunities for the Council's customers and stakeholders to comment on its work and role in the community.

- 5.6 Much of this activity has the potential of adding to the Communication Team's existing workload, on top of activity undertaken through the more traditional channels of print and face-to-face communication. Interactive communication is most definitely changing that media landscape. But such change is also prompting the Council to consider amending some of its practices. A Task and Finish Group has examined the role of Neighbourhood Groups and has concluded, after more than 10 years of existence, they have reached the end of their usefulness. Various recommendations were put forward by Group Members and this strategy embraces some of them in the 2010-11 communications planning.
- 5.7 These are exciting times for any communicator as digital technology's potential for the improved targeting of messages opens up, as well as the opportunity to evaluate the Council's communications work more thoroughly. Traditionally, councils have not always been good at targeting their communication, evaluating the communications activities they perform or in communicating to the `hard to reach`.
- 5.8 The sharing of services with Bromsgrove District Council will enable us to share best practice, work together where it makes sense (i.e. a new joint intranet site for staff, ensuring we have consistent messages particularly for our staff etc), yet also respecting the differences between Redditch and Bromsgrove and seeking to ensure each area's identity is maintained and its unique communication challenges are dealt with accordingly. Scope to obtain value for money from our communications activity and from our suppliers can also be enhanced through the sharing of services.
- 5.9 Communications also has a major and ongoing role to play as the Councils undergo the change management process, not least in the need to keep staff and Members informed and involved in the process, to consult the trade unions, to inform residents about the changes being made and improvements to service delivery they can expect to see, and also to inform the Council's many partners about the changes being made.

6. Other Implications

| | | |
|------------------|---|--|
| Asset Management | - | None identified. |
| Community Safety | - | None identified. |
| Health | - | None identified. |
| Human Resources | - | Delivery of this strategy assumes existing resources are in place. |

Executive Committee

31st March 2010

Social Exclusion - Our communications should always strive to be inclusive. As appropriate, we highlight translation services for those customers whose first language may not be English, make copies of print available in Braille or large print versions, and provide accessibility options for our web and intranet sites. We consult the Redditch Community Forum to help us communicate as inclusively as possible.

Environmental / Sustainability - As previously mentioned.

7. Lessons Learnt

Taking a planned and strategic approach is vital with so much communication coming from and into the Council.

8. Background Papers

Bromsgrove District Council Communications Review 2009.
Worcestershire County Council Marketing and Communications Strategy.

9. Consultation

This report has been prepared in consultation with relevant Borough Council Officers.

10. Author of Report

The author of this report is Adrian Marklew, Communications and Marketing Manager, who can be contacted on extension 3002 (e-mail: adrian.marklew@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

11. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Communications Strategy 2010-13 (with appendices).



Redditch Borough Council
Communications Strategy
2010-13



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Contents

| | Pages |
|---|--------------|
| 1. Introduction | 3-4 |
| 2. Why do we need a strategy? | 5 |
| 3. The need for effective internal and external communications | 5-6 |
| 4. The need to engage and consult | 6-7 |
| 5. What we have done so far | 8-13 |
| 6. Our aims over the next three years | 13-14 |
| 7. Communications Priorities for 2010-11 | 14-18 |
| 8. Roles and responsibilities | 18 |
| 9. Where do we go from here? | 18-19 |
| 10. Appendices | 19 |
| A) Communications Action Plan for 2010-11 | |
| B) Extracts from the Place Survey for Redditch 2008-09 | |
| C) Redditch Borough Council Media Relations Policy | |

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Communication is a process that allows us to exchange information by several methods and happens at many different levels. It is a two way process and an integral part of what we do all the time. Good communication leads to more effective services, a better reputation and stronger relationships with internal and external stakeholders.
- 1.2 Redditch Borough Council understands that effective communication is a key driver in how the public perceives our services. Research suggests that keeping residents informed, listening to their concerns and involving them when making decisions has a significant impact of the satisfaction with the Council and its services. The Communications Strategy looks at internal and external communications and includes an annual Communications Action Plan that aims to deliver the strategic wishes.
- 1.3 An effective communications strategy takes you from where you are now to where you want to be. It ensures that all your communications are focused on your priorities and are effectively targeted to the right people at the right time.
- 1.4 To be effective, it has to be a live working document and should reflect the fact that communicating is a cross-cutting issue that affects the whole council as well as the many partners the Council works with. Individual Council teams, departments, directorates should not be operating their own communications in isolation.
- 1.5 The strategy endorses the Local Government Association's Reputation Campaign. This recommends that the following components make for good council communications:
- Effective media management
 - A – Z guide of Council services
 - Regular magazine or newsletter
 - Branding
 - Good internal communications
- 1.6 Consultation is equally an essential part of the work that the Council does. This is to be covered in a separate Community Engagement Strategy covering both Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council but with separate actions for each Council. Consultation (or engagement) has close links to our communications work but is a separate discipline with its own needs and wants. There is a statutory duty to consult on the Council's work and activities and this has recently been strengthened with the Duty to Involve legislation from Government.

- 1.7 Listening to what the community wants and involving them in decision making, whether through formal engagement processes or feedback across our communications work (letters from the public in the media on our activities, online reaction through blogs and other social media, or perhaps informal feedback on the Council's magazine) leads to services which are better quality and more appropriate. It makes people within the community feel empowered, giving them a sense of ownership, and it demonstrates to the community the commitment by the Council to listen to and value their views.
- 1.8 Overall, the Council is involved in a great deal of communications work and consultation. Its commitment to building on and developing this further is underpinned by Redditch Borough Council's Corporate Plan 2009-12. One of the Council's Values described in the Corporate Plan is 'Modernisation (Consultation)'. Next to this Value is the statement 'Consulting with residents and other stakeholders on how we can improve our services and the way we deliver them'. In October 2009 councillors agreed to review this value and the Council's other values and, if anything, have strengthened them in favour of our communications and consultation work. Hence 'Modernisation (Consultation)' has become 'Communication and Consultation'. While among the Council's priorities during 2009-12 is being a 'Well Managed Organisation'. Key objectives in this priority are communications work and include re-introducing the Council's magazine 'Redditch Matters', revising the Council's Corporate Identity, introducing a new media relations policy, reviewing existing communications work and producing a new Communications Strategy. This strategic document is therefore firmly rooted in our corporate planning and priorities.
- 1.9 The Communications Strategy needs to also contribute to wider community planning and council-wide programmes such as e-government and customer service, or refer to those strategies where they already exist. If those strategies are to be developed, they in turn should tie into the Communications Strategy. If separate departmental or directorate communication strategies are produced, they should show how they will contribute to the objectives set out in this Communications Strategy, as well as setting more local objectives of their own.
- 1.10 The Communications Strategy must be owned internally, from the top of the organisation to the front line staff, if it is to be implemented effectively and receive the resources it needs.

2. Why do we need a strategy?

- 2.1 The purpose of this document is to set out Redditch Borough Council's approach to communication over the next three years. It has been written to incorporate elements of the Local Government White Paper 2006; Stronger and Prosperous Communities, findings from the 2008-09 Place Survey for Redditch, the results of a communications audit carried out internally in 2009, and the 2009 Staff Survey. Councils are also directed by the Local Government Publicity Code which is expected to be revised in 2010 by Government. Redditch Borough Council was consulted about possible changes to the code during 2009.
- 2.2 The adoption of this strategy will ensure that we build a strong and effective communications infrastructure throughout the whole Council and Redditch Borough. It will enable us to assess our performance and to judge if we are delivering best value in terms of policymaking and service delivery through communication with our stakeholders. The Leader of the Council; Executive Committee Members and the Leadership Team will ensure this strategy is successfully implemented throughout the Council.

3. The need for effective internal and external communications

- 3.1 It is recognised that all facets of communication are equally important in raising the Council's profile and, indeed, improving communications and the perception of the authority both inside and out. We understand that if staff and Members are well informed about the 'bigger picture' and about what the Council is trying to achieve, then they can become true ambassadors for the Council.
- 3.2 Communications is seen as a priority within the Council and it is recognised that a good communications infrastructure is essential in supporting the delivery of our key priorities. It touches every service and every interaction with the public; from the way it presents itself visually to the way our customers are treated, from its public advertising, to its leaflets and forms; from its information to staff, to its consultation with user groups.
- 3.3 We want to communicate better with our stakeholders – the people we serve, our staff, partners and audiences beyond our borough boundaries. As a Council, we are committed to improving the way we communicate, engage and consult with our stakeholders, building upon work already being done within our services.

3.4 Evidence of how we have recently been performing comes with the **Place Survey for Redditch 2008-09** (see Appendix B). This was conducted by Ipsos MORI on behalf of Redditch Borough Council. The survey methodology comprised posted self-completion forms as required by the Audit Commission and the Department for Communities and Local Government. The survey period was late September to mid December 2008. It should be pointed out, however, that as with the new Audit Commission Oneplace reports, the survey is mostly about Redditch and not just the Council.

3.5 The chart for 'Being kept informed' shows that only 36 per cent of people surveyed felt they were 'very well informed' or 'fairly well informed' with, what actually should read, 64 per cent not feeling informed. The average for Worcestershire was 39 per cent for informed. Worryingly Worcestershire districts are lagging behind the 49 per cent 'informed' figure for all districts nationally. We anticipate the re-introduction of the Council's magazine 'Redditch Matters' last year and greater media activity will help increase this figure next time the survey is conducted.

3.6 In 2009 a Council Task and Finish Group was established to consider the future of Neighbourhood Groups. As a channel for external communication, the setting up of the groups over a decade ago had been innovative but in recent years their effectiveness had been questioned on the grounds of the low numbers of people attending meetings (often same people each area meeting), issues discussed (often repeated) and the costs of staging Group meetings bearing in mind officer time and venue hire. Councillors have now decided to abolish the groups in favour of more involvement in the PACT (Partners and Communities Together) meetings. They have recommended a range of further actions. Some of these have a communications aspect to them and are covered in this strategy.

4. The need to engage and consult

4.1 The Council recognise that in order to develop policies and provide services that our local communities actually benefit from, the Council needs to be able to understand their needs, views and expectations. The Local Government White Paper 2006; Stronger and Prosperous Communities first set out a range of proposals designed to strengthen local communities and to expand their opportunities for local decision making. When it became law it gave local authorities and their partners the flexibility to draw up a comprehensive community engagement strategy to combine activity, improve the coordination of engagement across Local Strategic Partners (the Redditch Partnership in the case of this Council), including the Third Sector, and to reduce the risk of 'consultation overload'.

4.2 Engagement and consultation as envisaged by the Government in its Act was to cover three main areas, which are: Sustainable Community Strategy; Local Area Agreement and the Local Development Framework. As a result, we now work with our partners to ensure that we capture all planned engagement requirements and, wherever possible, combined activity. This has been endorsed further by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Bill that has changed the Council's statutory duty from 'to consult' to one of a 'duty to inform, consult and involve'.

4.3 In doing so we want, as a Council, to ensure that:

- *A wide variety of viewpoints are considered that enable us to make effective decisions about the services we offer to our communities.*
- *We have a transparent process that can increase public trust.*
- *All parts of the Council need to share this commitment to enable us to achieve our objectives to improve the quality of life for residents, workers and visitors and to underline our priorities.*

4.4 With the sharing of services with Bromsgrove District Council, Redditch Borough Council is about to work on a new joint strategy for community engagement, especially in view of the latest Duty to Involve requirements (briefing presented to Members recently), but with separate actions for both Councils. Bromsgrove has a recently approved Community Engagement Strategy which we intend to build upon, thus taking forward a joint approach to community engagement.

4.5 Recent consultation carried out in Redditch has been supported by the Communications Team, particularly in regard to organising a series of Consultation Roadshows and the general promotion of consultation work and its results. With our Policy Team colleagues we have recorded all consultation carried out during 2009 and consultation planned for the first part of 2010. The Communications Team will be supporting the production of the new joint strategy with its bespoke actions for Redditch.

5. What we have done so far

5.1 The previous Communications Strategy for Redditch covered 2006-10. However, this was superseded part way through its delivery by the creation in 2007 of a Task and Finish Group of Members (chaired by Councillor Juliet Brunner) who were appointed to look at our Communications as a Council. Furthermore 2008 saw significant staff changes within the Communications Team which severely hindered delivery of the strategy. Both the then Communications Manager and the Council's Press Officer departed midway through the year.

5.2 But in November 2008 a new, strengthened team was in place following the appointment of a Communications and Marketing Manager and two new posts of Media and Communications Officer. They joined a Senior Design and Print Officer and a part-time Administration Assistant. Communications became part of the HR and Communications service, led by a Head of HR and Communications and located within the Environment and Planning Directorate. The Council's Print Unit of four further staff became the responsibility of the Communications Team's Senior Design and Print Officer.

5.3 The Task and Finish Group completed its work in late summer 2008 and made a number of recommendations. These effectively became the **Council's Communications Priorities for late 2008 and for 2009**. They were:

- re-introducing Redditch Matters, the Council's magazine for residents
- introducing Communications Champions across the Council's service teams
- introducing a Corporate Identity for the Council
- introducing a PR issues or a Communications Planner
- supporting partnership working especially with Worcestershire County Council and the other Worcestershire districts, and the West Mercia Local Resilience Forum (LRF) for emergency planning
- developing internal communications
- ensuring communications is on Corporate Management Team (CMT) agendas
- working closely with the Leader and Portfolio Holders to develop the Council's profile and reputation (and that of the town)
- stepping up media relations work and introducing a media relations policy

This is what the Team has been concentrating on since November 2008 and its formation.

5.4 The table below outlines our progress so far. This information has been used to determine what our aims are going to be over the next three years and how we are going to achieve those aims. The **Council's Communications Priorities for 2010-11** are shown from page 14.

| Communications priorities for late 2008 and for 2009 | What was achieved in late 2008 | What was achieved in 2009 | What has been achieved in the first part of 2010 |
|--|---|---|--|
| Redditch Matters | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding identified for 3 editions in 2009 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Council approves re-introduction of magazine • Editorial Panel formed of Members to agree on contents and provide feedback • Appointed advertising sales and printer/distributor for spring edition • New photography undertaken for the magazine • Magazine re-launched with spring edition • Appointed suppliers for following 3 editions after quotation process • Summer edition published • Autumn/winter edition published | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Funding agreed to increase to 4 editions in 2010 • Work on spring edition completed • Survey created for spring edition to obtain residents' views |

| | | | |
|---------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <p>Communications Champions</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Champions recruited from the 11 Council services and scope of role published First meeting held includes session with a reporter from the Redditch Advertiser and a look at media relations work Second meeting includes a photography workshop with a local professional photographer | |
| <p>Corporate Identity</p> | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Identity taken to Council for approval. No change to existing logo but new Style Guide and Plain English Guide introduced for all staff and Members, secondary logos rationalised and corporate e-mail footer introduced | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Corporate Identity explained to the Redditch Community Forum and large print, Braille and translation services promoted |
| <p>Communications Planner</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monthly planner created identifying issues and opportunities across the whole Council | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planner on CMT agenda once a month and updated accordingly | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Planner on CMT agenda once a month and updated accordingly |

| | | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|---|
| <p>Partnership working</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications and Marketing Manager re-establishes Redditch's involvement in the County Communications Group | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Joint Council Tax leaflet produced through County Communications • Support given to County's Economy Action Group • Re-join West Mercia LRF with particular involvement around swine flu pandemic • Help Redditch Partnership respond to media interest in the red flag status for Redditch | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work on joint Council Tax leaflet for publication in March 2010 • Support for `We are Redditch` event in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre and produce related newspaper advertising four-page wrap |
| <p>Internal communications</p> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monthly Members' Bulletin started • Develop Core Brief as regular staff e-newsletter • Contact, the staff quarterly magazine goes to full-colour. December edition introduces staff to the new Communications Team as well as the Print Unit. | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Internal communications reviewed and discussed with the Chief Executive and CMT. Various recommendations made and followed through including developing a new joint intranet with Bromsgrove District Council. • Core Brief goes fortnightly picking up on each CMT meeting decisions | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Work begins on a new joint intranet site (to go live from April/May) |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|--|--|
| | | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Staff briefings and drop in sessions with the Chief Executive held around Shared Services, as well as `walk the floor` by the Chief Executive. Staff Survey undertaken and results given to staff | |
| Communications and CMT | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communications added to all CMT agendas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative from the Communications Team attends each CMT meeting to report for Core Brief | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Representative from the Communications Team attends each CMT meeting to report for Core Brief | |
| Supporting the Leader and Portfolio Holders | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Protocols created for responding to media requests and discussions on working style and priorities held | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All press releases include quote from either the Leader or relevant Portfolio Holder as per the media relations policy Provide media support to the Redditch Partnership for the Audit Commission's Oneplace report | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> All press releases include quote from either the Leader or relevant Portfolio Holder as per the media relations policy Provide media support to the Redditch Partnership for the Audit Commission's Oneplace report | |
| Media relations | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Press coverage analysed on a weekly basis and circulated to senior staff | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media relations policy introduced 272 press releases issued between November 2008 and December 2009 and approximately 20 radio interviews given | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Media relations policy introduced 272 press releases issued between November 2008 and December 2009 and approximately 20 radio interviews given | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Wrap produced with the Redditch Standard on behalf of the Redditch Partnership |

| | | | |
|--|--|---|---|
| | | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press coverage analysed on a weekly basis and circulated to senior staff • Responses to critical letters in the local newspapers made, as appropriate • Press briefing held on proposed budget savings • Meetings with the Redditch Standard's Editor and Redditch Advertiser Publisher held plus with reporting staff • Discussions held with all the major TV broadcasters about covering the 2010 General Election | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Press coverage analysed on a weekly basis and circulated to senior staff • Working with an independent production company and NEW College on a documentary for Channel 4 about this year's Morton Stanley Festival |
|--|--|---|---|

6. Our aims over the next three years

- 6.1 Ensure we are seen as a 'customer first' organisation by:
- *Everyone who lives in, works in and visits Redditch Borough is kept well informed.*
 - *Raising our profile by actively promoting our services and celebrating successes.*
 - *Improve the level and quality of engagement with our community by engaging and consulting with the whole community, as appropriate, in order to continuously improve and shape the services we offer.*

6.2 How will we achieve our aims?

- *Through effective internal and external communications.*
- *We will improve the way we communicate with our stakeholders, and ensure that the Council develops its branding and that it is used consistently in all publications, advertising and promotional material.*
- *Manage the media effectively and innovatively in order to promote the Council to the public and to protect its image and reputation.*
- *Improve internal and external communications so that staff and members become advocates for the council.*
- *Ensure that we use plain English and clear print in all our publications, and so communicate and engage effectively.*
- *Ensure that we listen to the views, needs and aspirations of our residents.*
- *Ensure that we engage with as many sectors of the community as possible regarding our policies and plans in particular the Sustainable Community Strategy, Local Area Agreement and Local Development Framework.*
- *Actively use information we gather through consultation and engagement to inform and influence our decision making.*

7. **Communications Priorities for 2010-11**

7.1 The previous year's communications priorities were largely shaped by the findings of a Task and Finish Group and the need to establish a brand new Communications Team. The Council's **vision and priorities** were, nevertheless, communicated throughout the year at appropriate opportunities.

7.2 The Communications Priorities for 2010-11 take the Council's vision as its cue but include two further priorities that are important: developing our digital communications, and helping to improve Redditch's profile as a place to live in, work in or visit. They are:

- **Enterprising Community**

This is defined as having a vibrant and vital borough where the population is well educated, has high skill levels and is healthy and fit. Housing is excellent and varied and the community is served by a prosperous town centre that has access to first class leisure facilities. The Council's voice is influential and respected by residents, partners, other governmental agencies and suppliers. The town's economy provides sufficient high quality jobs for residents with good levels of pay and reward.

The Communications Strategy includes promoting Redditch as that enterprising community and seeking to ensure our voice is heard and respected.

- **Safe**

The Council works in partnership with other agencies through the Redditch Community Safety Partnership to reduce crime and disorder. The Council identifies key projects to build community confidence and allow residents and visitors to be safe and feel safe.

Community safety has, and will continue to, reflect strongly in our communications activity.

- **Clean and Green**

The Council is committed to the development of attractive open spaces, taking enforcement action against littering, fly tipping and other behaviour detrimental to the environment where appropriate and supporting measures to tackle climate change. The Communications Strategy seeks to promote Redditch's enviable green credentials (large amount of green space in the borough, commitment to tackling climate change, pro-active work to improve the local environment) at all possible opportunities.

- **Well Managed Organisation**

Underpinning all of the above is the desire for Redditch Borough Council to be an organisation that uses its resources effectively in order to achieve its priorities and values and to deliver high quality services that meet the needs of its residents and provide value for money.

This priority is particular to the Council's Communications work and places communication at the heart of the Council's service delivery, by informing and involving residents and stakeholders about all our services, and ensuring users know about the Council and what it is here to do and intends to achieve in the future.

- **Increasing digital communications**

As a Council we have embraced intranet and extranet technologies since their introduction to this authority in the early part of this decade. The website is one of our most important communications tools and was re-designed in 2009 as part of a Worcestershire Hub project. The staff intranet has been in need of a re-design for a while but this too will see major improvement in 2010 with the launch of a new joint intranet site with Bromsgrove District Council as part of the sharing of services.

'Increasing digital communications' needs to be a communications priority to reflect the continuing and rapid growth in web, intranet usage and especially in the area of social networking through applications including Facebook, Twitter, Flickr photographic sharing and blogging. Digital can help us communicate quickly, target the more 'hard to reach' groups (young people especially make great use of social media), can be inexpensive, and is certainly going to expand in importance and probably at the continuing expense of print communications. It therefore has to be one of our priorities in this strategy. But we have to be realistic what we can achieve with our resources i.e. some councils now employ officers solely to respond to social media sites, a luxury we are unable to afford at the present time.

- **Helping to create a more positive image for Redditch**

Redditch does have an image problem especially in the context of its location adjacent to some quite prosperous areas in the rest of Worcestershire and neighbouring Warwickshire. While the economic statistics do confirm Redditch, overall, is less prosperous than its neighbours, this is a friendly town that people are proud to live in.

For its geographic size, it has some impressive facilities – a top ten shopping centre, an excellent theatre, a country park and lake, extensive sports centres and facilities, an historic mill celebrating Redditch's proud history as the world's needles maker, award winning parks and abundant green space (including some five million trees), and a range of Council services that few other councils of Redditch Borough Council's size could match – many of them community rooted; plus major businesses whose headquarters are here including GKN and Halfords.

There are many organisations that have a role to play in helping to improve the image of Redditch. The Redditch Partnership is one such, as is the Borough Council (which also provides management support to the Partnership). As perceptions of Redditch can impact hugely on the Council's work and service delivery i.e. the ability of the Economic Development Team to attract new businesses, the Communications Strategy has a role to play in helping to create a better profile and reputation for Redditch, particularly in supporting the work of the Redditch Partnership (although our main focus and top priority, given limited resources, should always be on promoting the Council first).

With a fair amount of negativity about Redditch in 2009 following press reporting of a survey that placed Redditch poorly in a list of UK areas and the CAA Oneplace report giving Redditch a red flag for poor educational attainment and health inequalities, this therefore needs to be a communications priority in 2010-11.

7.3 The Council also has a set of **Values** (revised by Council in October 2009) that support the **Vision** of 'an enterprising community which is safe, clean and green' and the Council's **Priorities** of Enterprising Community, Safe, Clean and Green. The Communications Strategy embraces all of these values and has a specific role to play in the values of 'Partnership Working' and 'Communication and Consultation' as identified in the strategy document. The new values will appear in a revised Corporate Plan for 2010-13.

- We place a value in **Partnership working**, ensuring that these partnerships add value to service delivery and provide Redditch with a strong voice both locally and regionally.
- We are **Fair** in the decisions that we make. We value probity and fairness and strive to understand the needs of all communities, embracing a diverse range of needs and showing respect at all times.
- We are **Responsive and Accountable**. We believe in customer focus and aim to deliver a standard of service that our customers require whilst being open and honest about the decisions we make. We aim to achieve greater value for money through smarter practices and new technology.

- We value feedback through **Communication and Consultation**. We will listen and act appropriately, and will enable and provide support for people to become involved in the services we deliver.

8. Roles and responsibilities

8.1 This strategy recognises that everyone has an important part to play in communicating the Council's vision, of `an enterprising community that is safe, clean and green` and the services the Council provides. It also recognises that all employees within their own service areas are responsible for promoting a strong, consistent and professional image that is wholly representative of the Council they work for in Redditch. It is the responsibility of the Communications Team to ensure that this is effective by providing support and working with all teams/services to ensure that consistent messages are communicated to all stakeholders. This includes:

- *Internally - elected Members; the Corporate and Senior Management Teams; the trade unions; all employees communicating those messages via the media, our publications, face-to-face or phone, by email, memo, letters, reports and presentations, the website and social media - and ensuring that all publications are published on the website if appropriate.*
- *Externally - Residents includes Council Tax payers, registered voters, users of our services. Businesses includes potential, new and existing businesses. Partners - the public, private, third sector and non-Governmental agencies. Potential employees. Visitors – any person visiting Redditch Borough.*

8.2 It is important that people living in the borough feel that we, as a Council, communicate with them in such a way that it encourages them to participate in our communications activities where they are able. It is very important to us that they feel they are able to influence and shape the things that we do, especially through our engagement work, not only in Redditch Borough but also in their own communities.

9. Where do we go from here?

9.1 This three-year strategy has an annual **Communications Action Plan (Appendix A)**, which will be reviewed every 12 months. The action plan mirrors our aims set out in section 6 and contains priorities (section 7) that are directly linked to our Corporate Priorities of `Enterprising Community, Safe, Clean and Green, and Well Managed Organisation`.

9.2 All activities contained within this strategy will be monitored and reviewed on a regular basis to ensure that they are effective, fit for purpose and good value for money.

9.3 This strategy has been produced by the Communications Team at Redditch Borough Council. Contact details for further information are:

Adrian Marklew, Communications and Marketing Manager, Redditch Borough Council, tel: (01527) 64252 ext 3002, email: adrian.marklew@redditchbc.gov.uk

10. Appendices

The following appendices relate to the Communications Strategy and are listed as below:

- A) **Communications Action Plan for 2010-11**
- B) **Extracts from the Place Survey for Redditch 2008-09**
- C) **Redditch Borough Council Media Relations Policy**

APPENDIX A

Communications Action Plan 2010-11

Key to responsibilities

CMM Communications and Marketing Manager
 MCO Media and Communications Officers (two)
 SDPO Senior Design and Print Officer
 AA Administration Assistant
 BCT Bromsgrove Communications Team

| Action | How | Measure (SMART) | When | Who |
|--|---|--|--|------------------|
| 1. An Enterprising Community | | | | |
| Issue press releases, handle media enquiries, use 'Redditch Matters', inform staff and Members about 'Enterprising Community' news and activities. Produce marketing literature as required. | Work closely with key officers and the Council's Portfolio Holder to identify communications opportunities. | Media coverage achieved. Page of 'Redditch Matters' allocated to 'Enterprising Community'. Staff and Member awareness. | Ongoing | MCO/CMM/SDPO /AA |
| Communicate progress with the Abbey Stadium Pool development. | Produce communications plan following publicity that project will go ahead and public consultation on designs in late 2009. | Media coverage. Stakeholders kept informed. | Plan in April – Pool open 2011/early 2012 | CMM/MCO |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|--|--|
| <p>Support and promote Redditch's Business Expo (11th May)</p> | <p>Through `Redditch Matters`, press and Chamber of Commerce media outlets. Help find media sponsor for the event. Production of flyer and advertising.</p> | <p>Media coverage. Numbers attending. Media sponsor secured.</p> | <p>Ongoing to 11th May</p> | <p>CMM/MCO</p> |
| <p>Conclusion of Neighbourhood Groups and future arrangements.</p> | <p>Communicate end of Groups in `Redditch Matters`.</p> <p>Re-launch as part of Partners and Communities Together (PACT) with West Mercia Police and other partners in designated wards.</p> <p>For `Communications` new arrangements include continuing with Consultation Roadshows (identifying list of events to support and new outlets incl. supermarkets, and inviting the PCT and County Council to join in), introducing fourth edition of `Redditch Matters`, promoting the Worcestershire Hub and website `FixMyStreet` for residents to report problems, and use of social media.</p> | <p>Numbers attending Consultation Roadshows. Analysis of roadshow survey forms and reporting back to residents. Social media sites set up.</p> | <p>March 2010</p> <p>summer</p> <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>CMM</p> <p>CMM/MCO</p> <p>CMM/MCO</p> |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--------------------|-----------------|
| | Plus investigate Council information boards for Community Centres and local convenience shops to promote the Council and events. Town Hall – improve noticeboard and use of plasma screen in reception. Improve Council lay by boards around the town. | Plan of action produced with costings for CMT (Corporate Management Team)/councillors. | June/July | CMM/SDPO/AA |
| Promote new business directory produced by Economic Development. | Press release and `Redditch Matters`. | Media coverage. | summer | MCO |
| Support events calendar produced by Economic Development. | Advise on content, style and distribution. Promote availability. | New calendar published and reaches target markets. | During 2010 | CMM/SDPO/MCO/AA |
| Support town centre Christmas marketing campaign led by Economic Development. | Coverage in `Redditch Matters`, special magazine for visitors including offers and vouchers, events and promotions, advertising. | Effective distribution of magazine. Support of retailers through the Town Centre Partnership. | September-December | CMM/MCO/SDPO/AA |
| Redditch town guide | Investigate producing new guide which again would be funded by advertising. Street mapping and way these are presented needs particular attention. | | January | CMM/SDPO |

2. Safe

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|-----------------|-------------------------|
| <p>Issue press releases, handle media enquiries, use 'Redditch Matters', inform staff and Members about Redditch as a place where 'people are safe and feel safe'. Produce marketing literature as required.</p> | <p>Work closely with the Council's Portfolio Holder to identify communications opportunities and with key stakeholders: the Council's Community Services Team, the Redditch Community Safety Partnership and West Mercia Police.</p> | <p>Page of 'Redditch Matters' allocated to community safety. Media coverage achieved including wider recognition for innovations including bus shelter art project. Staff and Members aware.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>MCO/CMM/SDPO /AA</p> |
| <p>Support Local Democracy Day</p> | <p>Press activity and photography on the day with follow up coverage. Pre event coverage.</p> | <p>Media partner achieved again. Press coverage. Feedback from partners involved and especially the participating young people.</p> | <p>October</p> | <p>CMM/MCO</p> |
| <p>Support community fireworks event at Arrow Valley Country Park</p> | <p>Continue to promote event as safe alternative to firework displays at home. Press releases, advertising, flyers.</p> | <p>Numbers attending. Feedback from staff organisers and public.</p> | <p>November</p> | <p>MCO</p> |

3. Clean and Green

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|--|------------------------|
| <p>Issue press releases, handle media enquiries, use 'Redditch Matters', inform staff and Members priority of 'Clean and Green'. Produce marketing literature as required.</p> | <p>Work closely with key officers and the Council's Portfolio Holder to identify communications opportunities.</p> | <p>Media coverage achieved. Page of 'Redditch Matters' allocated to 'Clean and Green'. Staff and Member awareness.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>MCO/CMM/SDPO/AA</p> |
| <p>Support the Council's entry in Britain in Bloom 2010.</p> | <p>Provide media advice and past media cuttings in support of bid. Publicise judging visit and results. Photography taken of flower beds being entered. Ideal to promote on new social media sites (see further on).</p> | <p>Promote in 'Redditch Matters', to staff and Members. Media coverage achieved.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>MCO</p> |
| <p>Support the Morton Stanley Festival</p> | <p>Use special Facebook site to promote in addition to media coverage, advertising, leafletting and advising neighbourhood about event. TV company filming preparations and Festival event.</p> | <p>'Friends' accumulated on Facebook site. Numbers attending. Media coverage.</p> | <p>Ongoing (event is 20th – 22nd August)</p> | <p>MCO/SPDO</p> |

4. Well Managed Organisation

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|----------------|------------|
| <p>Continue with the Communications Planner to identify potential issues and highlight upcoming activities and campaigns.</p> | <p>Produce late in a month for the following month. Presented to CMT. CMT to feedback new/missing issues to add to the planner, on an ongoing basis.</p> | <p>Council's reputation managed professionally and negative comment minimised or Council's position understood.</p> | <p>Monthly</p> | <p>CMM</p> |
|---|--|---|----------------|------------|

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|--------------------|----------------|
| <p>Produce specific communications plans for high profile matters.</p> | <p>Existing plans developed and in use for Shared Services, and LEAN and Payroll (joint with Bromsgrove).</p> | <p>Proactive opportunities captured and acted on.</p> | <p>As required</p> | <p>CMM/BCT</p> |
| <p>Media relations</p> | <p>Write and distribute press releases and statements. Handle media enquiries and keep enquiries log up to date. Start conveying stories through new social media outlets.</p> | <p>Council's reputation and profile enhanced. Likely to be issuing around 200 releases during the year.</p> | <p>Daily</p> | <p>MCO/CMM</p> |
| <p></p> | <p>Collate press cuttings.</p> | <p>Year's coverage totalised and fed back to CMT (April 2011).</p> | <p>Weekly</p> | <p>AA</p> |
| <p></p> | <p>Analyse media coverage and rate as positive, neutral and negative. Share analysis with CMT.</p> | <p>Issues well managed. Good media relations continue. New media contacts met as appropriate.</p> | <p>Weekly</p> | <p>MCO/CMM</p> |
| <p></p> | <p>Attend all Executive Committee and Full Council meetings to be aware of communications opportunities/issues. Develop relations with the local media with periodic meetings with editorial staff.</p> | <p></p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>CMM/MCO</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|--|--|---|----------------|
| <p>Build on successful re-launch of 'Redditch Matters' magazine in spring 2009.</p> | <p>Review media relations policy.</p> | | <p>September</p> | <p>CMM/MCO</p> |
| <p>Four editions in 2010 following three in 2009. Editorial Panel of four Members to meet quarterly to guide contents and give feedback. Commission professional photography as funds allow.</p> <p>Enter magazine in LGcommunications 2010 Reputation Awards.</p> | <p>Evaluating through readers' survey in spring edition 2010. Feedback from Editorial Panel. Advertising sales achieved, with priority to increase sales from private sector.</p> <p>We are shortlisted and better still are placed!</p> | <p>summer edition (out end June), autumn edition (out end September), winter edition (out early December), spring edition (out end March)</p> <p>Results in May.</p> | <p>CMM/MCO/ SDPO /AA</p> <p>CMM</p> | |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|----------|
| Obtain new quotations to print /distribute/sell advertising for `Redditch Matters` and, this time, `Together Bromsgrove`. | Spring 2010 edition is last under present contracts (two suppliers). New contract(s) needed for summer, autumn and winter 2010 editions. | Best Value achieved. Ability to reach as many households as possible and to plug any gaps in distribution. Advertising target of up to 10 pages sold per edition achieved (2 pages allocated free to RBC services). | March | CMM/BCT |
| `Members` Bulletin` | Publish monthly and email to Members and CMT. | Analyse survey on effectiveness of Bulletin carried out in April edition. | Monthly | MCO |
| `Core Brief` staff newsletter | Publish fortnightly and email to all staff. Include key messages from CMT meetings. | Include readers` survey in a June edition. | Fortnightly | CMM/MCO |
| `Contact` staff magazine | Publish quarterly in print to distribute with pay slips (ensures all staff get to see and keep a copy). | Include readers` survey in June edition. | Quarterly – with June, September, December and March pay slips. | MCO/SDPO |

| | | | | |
|---|--|---|--|--------------|
| Noticeboards in Council offices and venues | Continue to keep noticeboards updated with posters, literature and `Core Brief` copy (aimed at those not on email) as supplied/created by the Communications Team. | | Weekly | AA |
| Review internal newsletters/magazines with Bromsgrove (includes `Connect` and `e-Connect`). | Analyse reader survey responses (as above). Present recommendations to CMT. Communicate to staff including contacts for copy/future copy deadlines. Re-design `Core Brief` if it continues long term and produce as a colour PDF. | Staff informed about any changes and fully aware. | July | CMM/BCT |
| Publish Annual Report 2009-10 | Include within autumn's `Redditch Matters` as centre section, therefore reaching all residents. Run on supply for other stakeholders. | Include reader questionnaire for feedback and monitor responses. | September | CMM/SDPO |
| Joint branding with Bromsgrove | Design and produce range of required joint branding including stationery, joint job advert template, PowerPoint presentations template, email address footer solution for staff emails etc, as required. Obtain PIG template software from Worcestershire County Council to enable electronic letterheads. | Joint branding welcomed and appreciated. Clearly sets out both Councils' existing branding, adding to individual corporate identities and not detracting from them. | Ongoing. Stationery needs for Chief Executive, Directors and Heads of Service prioritised. | CMM/SDPO/BCT |
| Review Corporate Identity | Corporate Identity adopted by Council in summer 2009. Agreed we would review it, including created Style and Plain English guides, on an annual basis. | | August | CMM/SDPO |

| Leader's column in the Redditch Standard | Continue to provide copy for column in the 'Redditch Standard' as approved with the Leader. | Column appears each month. | Monthly | MCO |
|--|---|--|---|----------------------------------|
| Handle the local, regional and national media during the General Election count. | Meetings and discussions already held with the BBC, ITN and Sky to discuss facilities. | Media happy with arrangements for Election night. | Date unknown at time of writing. Latest date would have to be 3 rd June. | MCO/CMM |
| Media training for new Corporate Management Team and key Members from both Councils. | With a new CMT team in place, formal training in handling the media is required to ensure all have the necessary skills to handle any interviews or at the very least understand how the media work and the requests and deadlines they make. Key Members to be included. | Subject to funding found and supplier sourced. Evaluation from CMT and Members of training they receive. | September | MCO/CMM/BCT |
| Review Emergency Plan and our communications | Test arrangements in place and identify any gaps/areas of concern. | Robust plan in place in the event of a future emergency. | By end 2010 | CMM/MCO |
| Staff appraisals | Communications Strategy is used to set individual objectives. | Staff understand their roles and objectives for the year ahead. Training and development needs identified and pursued. | By end of April | CMM/SPDO to conduct with reports |

| | | | | |
|----------------------------|---|--|---|--------------------------------------|
| <p>Council Tax setting</p> | <p>Communicate new Council Tax amounts by band via a press release and advertising in the local press, as statutorily required. Use Council Tax leaflet to show value for money. Cost of Council Tax expressed simply for payers to understand how much this Council uses as part of the monies collected from payers.</p> | | <p>February/ March</p> | <p>CMM/MCO</p> |
| <p>Council Tax leaflet</p> | <p>2010-11 leaflet to print. Includes A-Z guide to services and message from the Chief Executive on sharing of services.</p> <p>Review this year's leaflets with County Communications Group and identify any improvements to be made. Encourage West Mercia Police Authority to join future leaflets. Discuss with Chief Executive's Panel (county's districts).</p> <p>Work on 2011-12 leaflet with County Communications Group. To include A-Z guide to services and any improvements identified by Group.</p> | | <p>March 2010</p> <p>March 2010</p> <p>December - March</p> | <p>CMM</p> <p>CMM/BCT</p> <p>CMM</p> |

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|-----------------|---------------------|
| <p>Support Making a Difference Staff Awards</p> | <p>Promote entries and results (taking photographs of staff that succeed). Produce certificates.</p> | <p>Number of entries received. Feedback from staff and participating Members. Staff receive full results information in a timely fashion.</p> | <p>February</p> | <p>CMM/MCO/SDPO</p> |
| <p>Visible and responsive leadership</p> | <p>New CMT to engage in 'Walk the Floor', staff briefings and own directorate and service meetings to get to know staff and develop priorities. Members encouraged to also 'Walk the Floor' to meet staff. Chief Executive's 'Questions to the Chief' to continue as confidential channel for any staff concerns. Supplemented by new informal blog site that Chief Executive will use to describe what he has been doing etc (see further on).</p> | <p>Staff feedback through annual staff survey.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>CMM/BCT</p> |
| <p>Support HR's work on improving staff inductions</p> | <p>Staff inductions need to be improved. Considering new AV with Chief Executive as induction tool on new joint intranet site. Produce handy information card on essential information about the Council all staff should know – name of Mayor, budget, vision and values etc.</p> | <p>Staff better inducted into the work and life of the Council.</p> | <p>Ongoing</p> | <p>CMM/BCT</p> |

| | | | | |
|--------------------------|---|--|---|---|
| Communications Champions | Set up for each service in 2009 but in view of sharing services needs reviewing with Bromsgrove. Role should not be onerous but presents key channel between Communications Teams at both Councils and our services. | Identify way forward and seek approval from CMT. | September | CMM/BCT |
| Support Staff Forums | Managers' Forums established following Management Conferences in 2009. Wider staff forums have role to consider findings of staff surveys and to explore more staff events including corporate support for charities and Dragon's Den type staff suggestion events. | | May and ongoing | CMM/BCT |
| Staff events | Build on success of Christmas decorations competition and Dodgeball in 2009: Office Christmas decorations competition. Staff/Members Charity Christmas Quiz. Support staff sports day. Encourage staff from both Councils to support each other's events. | | December 16 th December tbc Ongoing | MCO/AA CMM/Cllr Brunner CMM/MCO/AA/ BCT CMM/MCO/BCT |

| | | | | |
|---|---|--|----------|----------------------|
| Staff Survey | Last Staff Survey conducted in autumn 2009. May combine with Bromsgrove for 2010 annual survey. Survey needs to demonstrate to staff key results and actions requiring to be made. Includes bid for 'Redditch Matters' editions in 2011-12. | Increase responses in Redditch from 222 in 2009 to minimum of 250. Benchmark against 2009 results. | autumn | CMM/BCT |
| Plan budget for 2011-12 with Director | | | autumn | CMM |
| Working in Partnership on behalf of Redditch Borough Council. | Continue to develop partnership working/network opportunities with the County Communications Group, West Mercia LRF (Local Resilience Forum), LGcommunications, and the Chartered Institute of Public Relations and Chartered Institute of Marketing. | | Ongoing | CMM/MCO |
| Research promotional event opportunities for 2011-12 | To circulate to Heads of Service, highlighting national weeks and event days they could support locally i.e. European Health and Safety Week, Think Pink breast cancer awareness campaign, Comic Relief etc. | Relevant national promotional events captured and recorded. | February | AA |
| Set Communications Priorities for 2011-12 | As part of Communications Strategy. | Priorities reflect corporate needs. | February | CMM/MCO/SDPO /AA/BCT |
| Councillor contact details and photos poster | To update the poster supplied to key staff and for Council noticeboards following changes arising from the local elections on 6 th May. | Staff informed of any changes asap so can recognise any new councillors. | May | CMM/SDPO |

5. Increasing Digital Communication

| | | | | |
|--|--|---|-----------------------------------|--------------------------------------|
| <p>New joint intranet with Bromsgrove</p> | <p>Replaces both Councils' intranet sites on a phased approach. Produce design style. Create style note for content managers. Migrate existing content and create new material. Help train selected staff to manage their services' content. Launch with new name (result of staff competition).</p> | <p>Staff make full use of the new site, helped by the use of an active desktop that makes it highly visible and facility to post rolling messages to staff.</p> | <p>Launch 10th May</p> | <p>CMM/MCO/SDPO/BCT</p> |
| <p>Embrace social media to develop our communications and especially to engage with the 'hard to reach'.</p> | <p>Launch Facebook site called 'Redditch Matters' (building on the magazine brand and to avoid being too corporate). Support agreed Council Facebook sites for Morton Stanley Festival, economic development (young entrepreneurs) and Abbey Stadium. Site developers to monitor own sites and posted messages, following guidance. Launch Twitter site also called 'Redditch Matters'. Will enable speedy messages (tweets) to be sent highlighting events, emergency alerts, Council news on projects etc.</p> | <p>Number of 'Friends' accumulated by March 2011 Number of 'Followers' accumulated by March 2011.</p> | <p>Ongoing April</p> | <p>MCO MCO MCO</p> |

| | | | | |
|---|--|--|---------|------------------------|
| | Launch blog for the Chief Executive called 'Kevin's blog'. | Hits to this part of the website. Evaluate customer feedback to blog postings. | | CMM/BCT |
| Develop the communications potential of the website | Continue to manage the news section and ensure key corporate documents appear on the site. Manage the Features section by identifying topical stories/service activities. | Information is timely and kept up to date. | Ongoing | MCO/CMM CMM/MCO |

6. Helping to create a more positive image for Redditch

| | | | | |
|--|---|---|-------------|----------|
| Support production of a Communications Strategy for the Redditch Partnership | A Communications Sub Group has started work on developing the Partnership's communications. A strategy is the next step, with an action plan. | Strategy has quantifiable actions and clear deliverance. | During 2010 | CMM |
| Help devise a strapline for the Redditch Partnership to communicate its role and purpose | Will help position and market the Partnership and build on recent awareness raising following the 'We are Redditch' event last January. | Test suggestions on stakeholders to gain 'buy in'. | spring | CMM |
| Produce banner to promote Redditch at the General Election count | Agree on design and suggested strapline 'Worcestershire's green and enterprising town'. Banner to be also used for Borough Council Elections count on 7 th May and at other promotional opportunities. | Banner achieves its purpose and is clearly visible during TV election coverage. | May | CMM/SPDO |

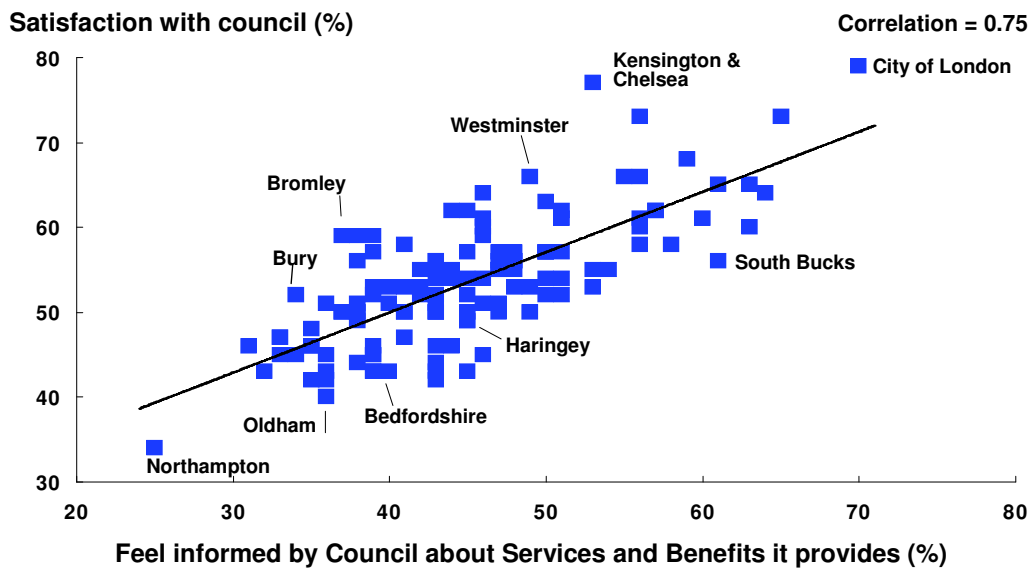
| | | | | |
|---|--|---|---|---------|
| Manage filming project for Morton Stanley Festival | An independent production company has been commissioned to film this year's Festival and will work with NEW College students. | TV coverage helps show Redditch in a positive light. | Ongoing. Transmission date tbc. Festival on 20 th -22 nd August | MCO |
| Seek to improve Redditch's image with positive TV and radio coverage. | Contact TV and radio programmes that need locations and could feature Redditch i.e. Antiques Roadshow, Gardeners Question Time, Any Questions, and appropriate digital channels. | Secure commitment from one national programme to broadcast in Redditch by March 2011. | Ongoing | CMM/MCO |
| Aim to place more Council and Redditch Partnership stories beyond the local media to promote Redditch as an achieving and innovative place. | Three pronged approach: raising Redditch (and the Council's) profile in Worcestershire through Worcestershire County Council's WOW magazine, Worcestershire Life and other county lifestyle magazines, plus Worcestershire Partnership's newsletter; in the region through publications and the websites of the West Midlands Leaders Board, Government Office West Midlands (GOWM), Advantage West Midlands , and BBC Midlands Today, ITV Central and the Birmingham Post to reach regional decision makers; | Coverage achieved beyond our core media in Redditch. | Ongoing | MCO/CMM |

| | | | | |
|---|---|---|---|-----------------|
| | <p>nationally, through the trade and technical press and national media for particularly innovative or newsworthy projects.</p> | | | |
| <p>Support the Place Survey 2010</p> | <p>Undertake communications and marketing activity prior to the Place Survey (May to September). Respond to the results of the survey.</p> | <p>Comparison with key results from the last survey in 2008 – how well residents feel they are informed, satisfaction with the Council etc.</p> | <p>Survey begins in September and concludes in December. Results in early 2011.</p> | <p>CMMM/MCO</p> |
| <p>Support publication of the CAA Oneplace survey covering Redditch</p> | <p>The first survey gave Redditch a red flag for health inequalities and poor educational attainment. This prompted a fair amount of media coverage which we responded to – via the Redditch Partnership - with positive and forward-looking statements. The next survey will critically look at how the Redditch Partnership has responded over the past year.</p> | <p>Assess media coverage and how it reports our core messages at the year end.</p> | <p>December</p> | <p>CMMM/MCO</p> |

6. Information provision

Good information and communication are important elements of service delivery. For decades, a key finding in all of Ipsos MORI's work has been that councils which do better at keeping people informed about services tend to be better regarded, as the following chart illustrates:

Satisfaction and Feeling Informed



Base: BVPI 2006 (130 Single, Upper Tier and District Ipsos MORI client authorities)

Source: Ipsos MORI

Being kept informed

Residents were asked for their overall views about how well informed they feel about local public services overall.

We can see from the following chart that the majority (64%) does not feel informed, with almost one in four (24%) saying they are not well informed at all. 36% do feel well informed.

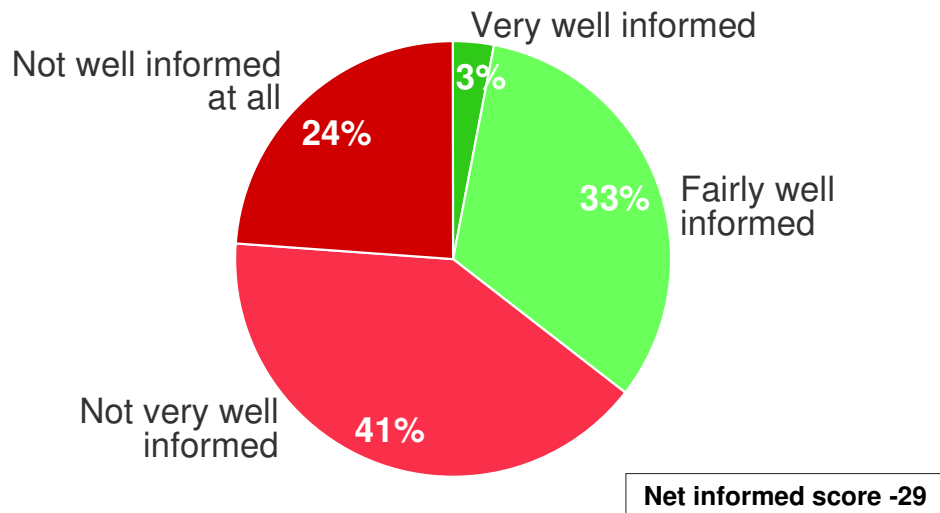
The informed group is mostly made up of older people (55% informed). Those least likely to feel informed are younger people (76% of 18-34 year olds not informed) and those in full-time work (70% not informed).

As mentioned previously, whether people in Redditch feel informed or not likely impacts on their attitudes to various aspects of the local area and local public services, such as their perceptions of crime and safety. Feeling informed is also strongly

correlated with thinking the council provides value for money (63% who think this feel informed) and satisfaction with the council overall (60% of those satisfied feel informed). This is despite the Place Survey no longer asking how informed people feel about the council (as with the BVPI survey), but about public services generally.

Being kept informed

Q Overall, how well informed do you feel about local public services?



Ipsos MORI Base: All valid responses (1424)



The chart below illustrates that people in Redditch feel slightly less informed about public services than the average Worcestershire resident (36% vs. 39% informed), and also compared to the average for all Districts surveyed by Ipsos MORI (49% informed).

APPENDIX C

**Redditch Borough Council
Media Relations Policy**

(September 2009)

Acknowledgements:

Gloucester City Council media guidelines
Worcestershire County Council media relations protocols

1. Why we need to have a policy
2. The media
3. Role of the Communications Team
4. How we communicate with the media
5. Protocols for staff
6. Protocols for members

1. Why we need to have a media relations policy

There is plenty of evidence to show why Redditch Borough Council should take media relations seriously.

According to the Local Government Association, we should aim to improve media relations because:

- **Perceptions shaped by the media affect satisfaction ratings**
- **Positive coverage protects our reputation and ‘brand’**
- **It demonstrates community leadership**
- **Good media coverage helps recruit and retain quality staff**
- **It helps with place shaping, promoting the area as a positive place to live and work in, as well as to visit**

Research by MORI has found residents often cite the local media as a key influence on their perceptions of their council.

MORI has also proved there is a direct link between residents’ satisfaction ratings of their local authorities and the amount of information they receive.

2. The media

Items about Redditch Borough Council may appear in print, on the radio, on television and online.

Our primary media group is made up of organisations with whom we do the majority of our media relations business. They cover Redditch as a stated business aim and include the borough's two free weekly papers the *Redditch Advertiser* and the *Redditch Standard*, the daily *Birmingham Mail* and radio station BBC Hereford and Worcester. All of these organisations also have websites.

Our secondary media group includes organisations that also cover Redditch, but less frequently and usually only the bigger stories. This includes the regional television programmes BBC Midlands Today and Central News. Regional radio stations such as BRMB, BBC Radio WM, Touch FM and Kerrang! are also included, as are newspapers such as the *Worcester News*, the *Birmingham Post* and the *Sunday Mercury*.

There is also the trade media. This includes local authority publications such as *Local Government Chronicle* and *Municipal Journal*, and specialised magazines like *Inside Housing*.

A fourth media group consists of all other organisations that occasionally cover the borough. This group includes national daily and Sunday papers, national and international television stations and national radio stations.

There are also some on-line, service-specific news services such as www.letsrecycle.com and the BBC has experimented with local television broadcasts that can be viewed via broadband connections or through interactive digital stations.

We also need to reach media that targets a diverse audience, including from ethnic minority communities and disabled groups.

3. The Communications Team

The Communications Team is the first point of contact for **all** media enquiries.

There are two Media and Communications Officers within the team who co-ordinate the Council's media relations activity, with the support of the Communications and Marketing Manager. They will:

- Handle and log media enquiries, identifying who is best placed to deal with the enquiry and ensuring that responses get to the media by an agreed deadline (media deadlines can often be tight)
- Produce and issue press releases and operational notes on behalf of the Council
- Organise media briefings where appropriate
- Organise photocalls as appropriate
- Set up TV/radio interviews
- Establish and maintain positive working relationships with the media
- Ensure that the media are treated equally and fairly
- Attend Full Council and Executive Committee meetings to assist any media who are attending, and also subsequently brief those who are unable to attend
- Advise officers and councillors on media handling strategies
- Organise media training for officers and councillors
- Keep press cuttings up-to-date and available
- Monitor and evaluate media coverage
- Provide support in the event of an emergency

Identifying news stories

The Media and Communications Officers look ahead to identify positive news stories to publicise the aims, works and successes of the Council. These include important events in the democratic process (eg Council decisions, setting the budget, election results) and national public service announcements, such as CAA scores.

These will be identified by the Council's own Forward Plan, and through regular discussion with officers.

It is the responsibility of individual services to tell the Media Officers as early as possible about internally-generated opportunities for publicity that are not automatically flagged up, such as:

- A milestone in service provision (eg first anniversary of Home Choice)
- The beginning of a consultation exercise (eg 'My Home, My Future, My Choice')
- Endorsement of our work by a third party (eg Green Flag Awards for our parks)
- Refurbishment or improvement work (eg Environmental Enhancement Programme)
- The release of a new Council publication (Redditch official guide)
- The launch of campaigns/events (eg Hate Incident Reporting scheme)
- Additional funding for a service from other organisations
- Training courses (eg free procurement seminars)
- Warnings to residents

4. How we communicate with the media

Contact with the media can be **proactive**, when we inform them of Council activities and decisions or **reactive**, where we respond to their enquiries.

Proactive media relations

This can involve bad, as well as good news. The Council often has to make difficult decisions that will impact on the lives of residents and businesses. They must be informed of these decisions, even if there is potential for negative stories in the media. If we do nothing, someone else will inevitably bring the issue to the media's attention, which could result in damaging, inaccurate stories with possibly no response in return from the Council.

Press releases and operational notes

The Media and Communications Officers are involved in the creation and distribution of press releases. This involves drafting a release based on a briefing or revamping/checking background for a release drafted by officers.

Releases are then shared with the relevant officer to ensure they are satisfied with their content and forwarded to the appropriate service head or director for clearance. They then go to the relevant media.

Operational notes are brief and are sent to the media to inform them of briefings, launches and photo opportunities or to alert them to agenda items of interest at upcoming Council meetings.

Press releases on court cases

Due to contemporaneous reporting issues, releases involving fraudulent benefit claims, fly-tipping etc have to be cleared and issued within two days of a case ending. Quotations in court case press releases are made by Portfolio Holders but it is imperative that these are obtained on time in order to meet the strict time limits. Failure to do so will result in quotations coming from an officer or spokesperson.

Feature coverage

Feature articles/coverage are particularly favoured by county and regional lifestyle and business magazines, BBC local radio and TV magazine programmes. The Communications Team will seek out opportunities to gain feature coverage that goes behind the scenes` eg work of the landscape team, how people can enjoy sport pre 2012, or support for businesses etc. With so much feature coverage being lifestyle, there are opportunities to show a more human face to the Council.

Trade press coverage

In the recent past, the Council has achieved coverage in housing and waste collection magazines. The Communications Team will target relevant trade publications magazines as well First, the MJ, The Councillor and PR Week to promote corporate activity. LG Communications and the Government's I&Dea website welcomes case studies from councils.

Media Briefings and press conferences

If a press release cannot do justice to the story being covered then the Media and Communications Officers will recommend a media briefing. These involve inviting the relevant media to a specially-arranged session. Here they can be briefed by an expert officer.

Media briefings have proven very successful when it comes to helping reporters understand complex issues that will run and run (such as the introduction of the Alternate Waste Collection).

Press conferences are held for major stories or announcements. They have a particular role to play in emergencies.

Online press office

The Communications Team has plans to set up an online press office on the Council's website. This will feature issued press releases, contact details, a protocol for working with the media, and useful information for journalists.

Reactive media relations

Unsolicited media enquiries are not always bad news. And it is important to remember that positive media coverage of the Council far outweighs the negative. But, as a Council, we are limited by laws and by budget. We deal with emotive issues such as housing, so it is inevitable that we will sometimes make decisions that make residents unhappy and that they will contact the media.

Unfortunately, the lines between fact and emotion can become blurred and the perception the public may take from stories in the media is not the view we would like them to take.

Any response to such an enquiry must be mindful of data protection issues and cover all the points which explain our decision, eg legal requirements, financial constraints, eligibility criteria.

Sometimes a story may run for several days, even weeks, especially where readers/viewers/listeners can comment. This can be a particular issue with blogging and social networking websites. There will come a time when further comment from the Council is fruitless and ideally the story `should be killed`. The Communications Team can advise in such situations.

Rebutting every single negative story can be a dangerous game to play and can seriously damage media relations. It is always best to be selective and seek to rebut the most damaging stories only.

The Council will **never** respond to an enquiry with “no comment.” This implies that we have something to hide.

Press statements

Statements are responses to specific media enquiries and are reactive. They can include comment through quotations. Statements need to be turned around quickly in accordance with media deadlines.

5. Protocols for staff

1. All media enquiries must be directed to the Media and Communications Officers as the first point of contact.
2. If a reporter contacts any officer directly, they must be referred back to the Media and Communications Officers. This is to ensure that call is logged and that the right officer (or councillor where appropriate) is contacted to deal with the enquiry.
3. The Media and Communications Officers will contact an appropriate officer to either talk to the reporter or to provide the information needed to respond to the query.
4. Officers should only speak to reporters or do interviews if they have been media trained. Interview and media handling guidance is available from the Communications Team.
5. Only the Chief Executive or Deputy Chief Executive may speak on behalf of the corporate Council, on issues of major importance or controversy.
6. To avoid a 'no comment' situation, the Communications Team may give a holding statement to the press in the absence of any appropriate spokesperson.
7. All press releases, statements, briefings and photo calls should be issued or arranged by the Media and Communications Officers.
8. Any press releases concerning matters which may affect staff in any significant way should only be issued after those affected have been informed by an appropriate Council source.
9. Individual services are responsible for informing Media and Communications Officers of any upcoming newsworthy events (both positive and negative) that are not flagged up on the Forward Plan. This should be done as far in advance as possible.
10. If officers become aware of any issues which may result in bad press for the Council, they should inform the press office as soon as possible. This will ensure that press office is ready to deal with any media enquiries that may follow and that appropriate officers and councillors are briefed.
11. In general, all staff have a duty not to bring the Council in to disrepute in the media.

6. Protocols for Members

1. Council media relations involving individual Councillors must conform to the Code of Recommended Practice on Local Authority Publicity. This is available from the Council's Monitoring Officer.
2. Members wishing to publicise themselves or their groups for political purposes must do so in an independent capacity without using Council resources.
3. The Communications Team will discuss controversial/crisis issues with Executive Members, as appropriate, before any news is released to the press.
4. Only the Council Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holders (or in their absence another delegated member) may speak on behalf of the elected Council.
5. The Mayor may speak on behalf of the Council as its civic representative, without reference to policy or politics.
6. Only the Chair of a committee (or in their absence another delegated member of that committee) may speak on behalf of that committee.
7. Sometimes the media will make direct contact with a member delegated to speak on behalf of the Council. This is understandable as relations can be well established. However, it is imperative that members keep the Communications Team informed of discussions they have with the media on Council business.

Communications Team
September 2009



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

24th February 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Phil Mould (Chair), and Councillors K Banks, G Chance, R King, W Norton, J Pearce, D Taylor and P Anderson

Also Present:

Councillor P Anderson (Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism)

Officers:

H Bennett, J Godwin, A Heighway, C Hemming and P Liddington, K Griffin (Wychavon District Council)

Committee Officers:

J Bayley, J Divala, S Skinner, D Sunman

175. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Smith and Thomas.

176. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest or any party whip.

177. MINUTES

Members received an apology that the minutes for the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 3rd February 2010 were not available. The Chair requested that the minutes for the meetings on 3rd and 24th February be available for the next meeting.

178. ACTIONS LIST

The Committee considered the latest version of the Actions List. Specific mention was made of the following matters:

.....
Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

a) Medium Term Financial Plans – Best Practice

It was reported that a letter had been sent to the Audit Commission requesting a best practice example of a Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP). To date no reply had been received.

b) Gender Equalities and Youth Employment

Members agreed that the members of the Executive Committee should be invited to attend the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 28th April 2010 when presentations on the Gender Equalities Scheme and Youth Employment in Redditch would be delivered by Officers.

c) Capitalisation Direction of the Single Management Team

It was reported that the information regarding the Capitalisation Direction of the Single Management Team had been circulated for Members' consideration by e-mail.

d) Convergence between Council and RSL property rents

It was reported that work was ongoing to provide the information requested by Members regarding the convergence between Council and RSL rents.

RESOLVED that

the reports be noted.

179. CALL-IN AND PRE-SCRUTINY

There were no call-ins.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

180. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

There were no scoping documents for the Committee to review.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

181. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee received reports in relation to current reviews:

a) Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer reported that arrangements had been made to interview representatives of the Redditch Partnership and that the next meeting of the Task and Finish Group had been scheduled for 10th March 2010.

b) Joint Worcestershire Hub Review

Visits to Hub Centres across the County had been arranged. The next Task Group meetings would take place on 24th March and 14th April. All Chief Executives had been contacted to seek their views. Detailed performance information for the Hub would be obtained.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

182. CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY PANEL - CHAIR' S UPDATE

Councillor Chance reported that an initial training session had taken place and that further meetings had been arranged. He reported that at the meeting on 8th February discussions had taken place regarding the appointment of a Vice Chair for the Panel.

RECOMMENDED that

Councillor J Pearce be appointed as Vice Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel.

183. CIVIL PARKING ENFORCEMENT - UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received a report on the implementation of Civil Parking Enforcement, which had commenced on 31st March 2009.

Officers reported that during the first two weeks of operation no formal Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) had been issued. However, 'warning notices' had been issued to drivers who had contravened

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

Traffic Regulation Orders (TROs) thus providing them with additional information which supplemented warnings in public and press notices.

Members were informed that the formal partnership arrangement whereby Wychavon District Council operates CPE on behalf of Redditch Borough Council had worked well. Four Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs) had been employed to patrol areas in Redditch subject to TROs. Enforcement could only be undertaken in locations where a TRO was in place and did not include other traffic offences (e.g. causing an obstruction by parking in front of a vehicular crossing) which could only be dealt with by the Police.

A small number of initial concerns had been raised including:

- a) parking in locations where previously no enforcement action had taken place;
- b) on a small number of occasions verbal abuse of Civil Enforcement Officers (CEOs); and
- c) the TRO in the Town Centre pedestrian area did not allow CEOs to take enforcement action with regard to unauthorised parking.

Officers reported that solutions to these concerns had been or were in the process of being identified and implemented.

Members outlined concerns raised by residents regarding the introduction of CPE and also the need for an increased number of Residents' Parking Schemes (RPS). Officers reported that a number of new requests for RPS had been received by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and were being considered. Any requests by residents for new RPS in the future would need to be made through their County Councillor who would pass the request to Worcestershire County Council's Traffic Management Team.

Members were informed that following discussions with Worcestershire County Council the cost of Residents Parking Permits would be increased to £10 from 1st April 2010, a reduction from the £30 initially recommended by the County Council.

Officers were asked to provide the following information to Members:

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

- i) a plan showing the CEOs patrol areas;
- ii) information regarding outstanding Penalty Charge Notices (PCNs) and the cost of recovery; and
- iii) a breakdown of the number of PCNs issued and the areas affected.

Members agreed that this information should continue to be provided for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee during annual monitoring reports on the subject of the Civil Parking Enforcement Scheme.

Officers were also asked to arrange a guided tour of the civil parking scheme in Central Ward for the Borough and County Councillors of the Ward.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee receive annual reports on the implementation of the Civil Parking Enforcement Scheme; and**
- 2) the report be noted.**

184. COMPREHENSIVE AREA ASSESSMENT

Members received a report about the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA), a new way of assessing local public services in England. The Committee was informed that CAA examined how well Councils and other public bodies, working together, met the needs of the people they served. For the first time a joint assessment of what it was like to live in an area had been produced. This was called One Place.

The Head of Community Services reported that One Place provided an organisational assessment of Redditch Borough Council together with an Area Assessment of the whole of Worcestershire.

The organisational assessment for Redditch Borough Council found that it performed adequately overall with priorities focused on issues that mattered to local people. However, there were service areas where improvements should be made.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

The Area Assessment for Worcestershire had been given a 'red flag' for the differences in quality of life in Redditch, mainly in health and education.

The Head of Community Services reported that plans were in place to address these inequalities through:

- a) Redditch Partnership raising the profile of the inequalities issue;
- b) Head Teachers and representatives of the Redditch Partnership working together to prepare an Action Plan that would address inequalities in education;
- c) Health Group meetings;
- d) Teenage Pregnancy Group meetings; and
- e) Scrutiny of the Local Strategic Partnership.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

185. COUNCIL FLAT COMMUNAL CLEANING - FIRST STAGE MONITORING REPORT

The Committee received an update on progress in implementing some of the recommendations of the Council Flat Communal Cleaning Task and Finish Group as follows:

- a) Decisions on what to do with the cleaning contract that would expire on 10th June 2010 had been put on hold because of the WETT programme. Potentially it would be separated into three contracts for Housing Communal Areas; Sheltered Accommodation; and public buildings.
- b) A revenue bid to clean and reseal the flooring of the three storey flats had been approved and work would commence in April 2010.
- c) Electric Meter readings on the communal lighting had been carried out at Abberton House and occupancy sensors would be installed in March 2010. If savings and safety levels prove acceptable funding would be pursued to roll out the

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

programme to all other blocks. Residents' feedback would be obtained during weekly clinics.

- d) An air freshener and security cage has been ordered and would be installed by the Council before the end of February. Feedback would be requested from the Anti-Social Behaviour (ASBO) staff based at Winyates.
- e) No smoking stencils had been trialled by the Housing Capital team. They had been found to be unsuitable for use on uneven surfaces. Rigid plastic signs were now to be fitted.

Officers were asked to provide an update on progress with regards to the consultation which was to be carried out regarding changes to the cleaning contract.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **Officers to provide further clarification about the progress with the consultation process; and**
- 2) **the report be noted.**

186. PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR LEISURE AND TOURISM, COUNCILLOR P ANDERSON - ANNUAL REPORT

The Chair welcomed Councillor Anderson, the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism to the meeting. Councillor Anderson presented his report in accordance with the questions set by the Committee.

- a) Can you guarantee that Redditch's Leisure Services will continue to be delivered in the 'Redditch way' and not in the 'Bromsgrove way'? (i.e. We won't be begging Wychavon District Council to run our Leisure Services).

He reported that some leisure services, particularly sports facilities, had been affected by the recession with fewer people attending and income being reduced. However, the Council had continued to work with clubs, e.g. the swimming club at Hewell Road Pool, which had been successful at County level.

The Council had attracted funding from the British Cycling Federation, which together with Section 106 monies had

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

been used to provide one of the best BMX facilities in the country.

In respect of Community Centres he reported that three continued to be operated by the Council, three had new uses and three were now managed by other operators. Meanwhile, discussions were ongoing with NEW College regarding the REDI Centre.

Plans for changes at the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre had received all party support. The Head of Leisure and Culture informed Members that work on proposals for the future of the Centre, including the types of activities which could be provided from the site, was ongoing. Further reports would be made to the Executive Committee for their approval.

Visitor numbers at the Forge Mill Museum had fallen during the year because of the inclement weather.

A new operator had become responsible for Pitcheroak Golf Club in the summer of 2009. Their first year had been challenging because of bad weather but improvements were expected in 2010.

b) When will Shopping, Investing and Giving (SIG) be fully implemented?

Councillor Anderson reported that SIG would be fully implemented during the next financial year. Funding had been obtained to employ a Grants Officer for one year who would work with the Third Sector to help them shop for, or procure, services.

c) What have you instigated to involve more people in the arts in Redditch?

The Palace Theatre attracted middle aged and elderly audiences except for community based performances. It was felt that more young people needed to be attracted to performances to ensure continued use in the future. The Head of Leisure and Culture reported that Worcestershire County Council was consulting on a draft Arts Strategy for the County. He said that this would include an Action Plan for Redditch.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

- d) What do you do in your capacity as Portfolio Holder with responsibility for education?

Sure Start had been successful in Redditch but was an education service controlled by central government and Worcestershire County Council.

- e) What are you doing to help remove the red flag on educational inequalities?

The Head of Community Services informed Members that this subject would be dealt with more fully in the item covering the Comprehensive Area Assessment.

- f) What are your views about the two-tier, as opposed to the three-tier, education system?

Councillor Anderson said that he felt that both systems showed some merit. However, statistically he felt that it was very difficult to prove which system was better.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public during the debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to the financial or business affairs of any person including the authority holding that information and contemplated consultations or negotiations in connection with a labour relations matter between the authority and employees of the authority.)

(There is nothing exempt, however, in this record of proceedings.)

187. QUESTIONS FOR THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR COMMUNITY SAFETY

Members were asked to suggest questions to be put to the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The following suggestions were made:

- 1) Why has the Community Safety Advisory Panel not met this year?

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

- 2) What do you view as being the remit of this Panel as opposed to the remit of the new Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel?
- 3) What evidence supports the assessment that fire coverage in Redditch has not been adversely affected by the reduction in manpower?
- 4) Which projects that have been delivered do you think have had the greatest impact on Community Safety in the Borough and why?
- 5) Are there any plans to extend CCTV coverage in the Borough?

188. CENTRE FOR PUBLIC SCRUTINY - ANNUAL CONFERENCE

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer informed Members that the Centre for Public Scrutiny's Annual Conference would take place on 30th June to 1st July 2010 in London. Members were invited to express their interest in attending the conference.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **Officers circulate the invitation to attend the conference to all Members; and**
- 2) **Officers note Councillor R King's request to attend the conference.**

189. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

190. WORK PROGRAMME

The Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer reported that pre-scrutiny of the Business Centre Review had been postponed to the meeting of the Committee on 7th April 2010.

No dates had been identified for the pre-scrutiny of reports on the subjects of: Church Green Improvements; and the Private Sector Home Support Service. This was because no date had been

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

24th February 2010

identified for these reports to be delivered for the consideration of the Executive Committee.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

191. EXCLUSION OF THE PRESS AND PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I 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 3 and 4 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.

Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism – Annual Report [as detailed in Minute 186 above.]

The Meeting commenced at 7pm
and closed at 9.30pm

.....
Chair

**Executive
Committee**

No Direct Ward Relevance

31st March 2010

**LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP TASK AND FINISH GROUP
- INTERIM REPORT**

(Report of the Local Strategic Partnership Task and Finish Group)

1. Summary of Proposals

This report details a number of interim recommendations that have been concluded by the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Task and Finish Group. The Group's recommendations are designed to increase local Councillors' familiarity and involvement with the Redditch Partnership, the LSP in Redditch. The Group are also aiming during their review to produce recommendations that will: extend the level of public engagement in the work of the partnership; enhance the accountability of the partnership; and help improve performance management arrangements for the Redditch Partnership.

In addition to the recommendations contained within this report a number of options for improving the performance management of the Redditch Partnership have been discussed. These options have not yet been formalised into recommendations. However, they are detailed in this report to provide advance notice about the areas that remain to be addressed by the Group.

2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

Engagement recommendations: ensuring that the Redditch Partnership involves the public in its work:

- 1) following pre-scrutiny by the LSP Task and Finish Group, the proposed format and content of the Redditch Partnership's revamped website coverage, to be hosted by Redditch Borough Council, be endorsed;**
- 2) an event, along the lines of the We are Redditch exhibition, be held every year in a form determined appropriate by Officers;**
- 3) the Redditch Partnership and appropriate partners should publicise their work and invite public reaction by providing regular updates in Redditch Matters;**

-
- 4) the Redditch Partnership should hold and advertise an Annual Meeting, as required by the terms of the Partnership's protocol, which partners, potential partners and members of the public could attend;

Accountability recommendations: ensuring the transparency and openness of the partnership:

- 5) a new item be added to the full Council agenda requiring the Leader of the Council to deliver regular updates on the work of the Redditch Partnership since the previous meeting of the Council;
- 6) the Leader of the Council formally deliver an Annual Report to the last scheduled full Council meeting of the municipal year covering the work of the Redditch Partnership by formalising the current practice of delivering an annual "State of the Borough" address;
- 7) information about the Redditch Partnership and LSPs should be provided for Members' consideration as part of the Member induction process;
- 8) a training event focusing on LSPs should be provided as a standard part of the Member training programme each year;

and RESOLVE that

- 1) the Changing Places report should be considered as part of the subsequent Local Area Agreement Task and Finish review; and
- 2) the membership of the Local Area Agreement Task and Finish Group should be drawn from the membership of the LSP Task and Finish Group.

3. **Financial, Legal, Policy, Risk and Climate Change / Carbon Management Implications**

Financial

- 3.1 There are no direct financial implications. However, appropriate funds need to be allocated to support the member training programme each year. Currently, there is an annual budget of £2,740 for Member training (though each Councillor also receives an additional personal training allowance of £300). Standard training events and additional training activities need to be funded using this budget.

Legal

- 3.2 There are no legal implications.

Policy

- 3.3 The Council's constitution outlines the standard items which are included on a full Council agenda. The constitution would need to be amended to require the Leader of the Council to deliver an update on the work of the Redditch Partnership as a regular item on the full Council agenda. Similarly, the proposed requirement for the Leader of the Council to deliver an Annual Report on the subject of the Redditch Partnership would require amendments to the Council's constitution.

Risk

- 3.4 No risks have been identified.

Climate Change / Carbon Management

- 3.5 There are no climate change or carbon management implications.

Report**4. Background**

- 4.1 The LSP Task and Finish review was launched in January 2010. The Group consists of five members: Councillor Norton who chairs the Group and Councillors Cookson, Fry, Hopkins and Thomas.
- 4.2 The Group were commissioned to undertake this review by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The review was launched after Members expressed concerns about the degree to which Members, particularly non-executive Members, were involved with and had knowledge about the work of the Redditch Partnership.
- 4.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee also agreed that the subject was appropriate for review because of the important role of the LSP in developing the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS). The Redditch SCS is a three-year strategy which is designed to provide a vision for the local area. The strategy comprises of themes and subsidiary priorities which the partner organisations represented on the Redditch Partnership, including Redditch Borough Council, all commit to deliver. The Redditch SCS is scheduled to be reviewed and refreshed in 2010.
- 4.4 The LSP Task and Finish Group have held a number of meetings and agreed some initial conclusions. This report has been presented at an early stage in the review to provide an opportunity for the

Group's recommendations to inform Council procedures from 2010/11.

5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The Redditch Partnership, as a LSP, is a non-statutory body. However, Redditch Borough Council, as the local authority in the area, has a responsibility to work with local partner organisations to develop the SCS in partnership with other local partner organisations. The coordination of this process through the LSP is considered the most appropriate way to secure collective agreement to the strategic vision and priorities contained within the SCS.
- 5.2 The work of the Redditch Partnership is coordinated by a Management Board, though more focussed, subject specific work is undertaken by various standing Theme Groups and Task and Finish Groups. The LSP's Management Board and subsidiary groups are held to account by the wider membership of the Redditch Partnership.
- 5.3 The work of the Redditch Partnership and content of the SCS is informed by the targets contained within the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA). This agreement is developed by the County's LSP, the Worcestershire Partnership, and sets the targets against which the performance of local partner organisations is measured.
- 5.4 Some local elected Councillors are actively involved in the work of the Redditch Partnership. The Leader of the Council has traditionally been a member of the LSP Management Board and is currently the Chair of the Partnership. The Deputy Leader of the Council and the leader of the largest opposition group on the Council are also members of the Management Board, alongside a County Councillor for the Borough. However, no non-executive Councillors are currently members of the Management Board or of any of the subsidiary groups.

6. Recommendations and Resolutions

- 6.1 The LSP Task and Finish Group have agreed a number of recommendations and are also suggesting some resolutions for Members' consideration.

6.2 Recommendation 1: We recommend that following pre-scrutiny by the LSP Task and Finish Group, the proposed format and content of the Redditch Partnership's revamped website coverage, to be hosted by Redditch Borough Council, be endorsed.

6.2.1 During the course of the review the Group have concluded that further work needs to be undertaken to communicate the work of the Redditch Partnership to local stakeholders. They have recognised that website coverage is a useful communications tool that could be used to promote the work of the partnership.

6.2.2 The Redditch Partnership does not have a designated website. Instead, information about the partnership is provided on Redditch Borough Council's website. The Group has reviewed the existing content of these Web Pages and concluded that they were not fit for purpose. They suggested that alterations be made to improve these web pages, in accordance with an example of best practice developed by Stevenage Borough Council for their LSP.

6.2.3 The Group subsequently pre-scrutinised Officers' suggestions for altering the relevant section on the Council's website. These alterations include: proposals to provide general information about LSPs, information about the Redditch Partnership; information about the SCS and a link to the current version of that document; and links to the partnership's terms of reference and Worcestershire Partnership's website. The Group were satisfied that this represented a positive set of proposals and recommend that they should be endorsed.

6.3 Recommendation 2: We recommend that an event, along the lines of the 'We are Redditch' exhibition, be held every year in a form determined appropriate by Officers.

6.3.1 The "We are Redditch" event was a consultation event which took place throughout a week in January 2010 in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre. This provided an opportunity for members of the Redditch Partnership to promote their work as well as the work of the LSP to the public. It also provided a useful opportunity for the partnership to consult with approximately 264 members of the public over the issues that they felt should be prioritised by the LSP and relevant partner organisations.

6.3.2 The Group are aware that this is the first time that this type of consultation event has been organised and delivered by the Redditch Partnership. The partnership has already considered the outcomes of the event and recommended improvements for the future. The Group have concurred that these recommended improvements should be endorsed as they would add value to future

consultation events and that similar events should be held every year.

6.4 Recommendation 3: We recommend that the Redditch Partnership and appropriate partners should publicise their work and invite public reaction by providing regular updates in Redditch Matters.

6.4.1 The Group recognises that there is a need to promote information about the work of the Redditch Partnership using a variety of communication tools. Many members of the public do not have access to the internet or are more comfortable referring to traditional forms of written publication. The Council's magazine, Redditch Matters, is one publication which could be utilised to promote the work of the Redditch Partnership to this audience.

6.4.2 The potential significance of Redditch Matters for promoting the work of the LSP has already been recognised by the Redditch Partnership. An article introducing residents to the Redditch Partnership appeared in the Spring 2010 edition of Redditch Matters. The Group have agreed that this practice should be extended to all following editions of the magazine and should encompass reports on both the work of the Redditch Partnership and the related work of partner organisations.

6.5 Recommendation 4: We recommend that the Redditch Partnership should hold and advertise an Annual Meeting, as required by the terms of the Partnership's protocol, which partners, potential partners and members of the public could attend.

6.5.1 The Redditch Partnership has set terms of reference which are detailed in a 'Partnership Agreement and Protocol' (September 2008). This protocol contains a commitment for there to be an annual meeting of the overarching Redditch Partnership to hold the LSP's Management Board, Theme Groups and Task and Finish Groups to account.

6.5.2 The Group are concerned that a meeting of the overarching Redditch Partnership has not taken place since the State of the Borough Conference in 2007. They agree that this urgently needs to be addressed and that the overarching Redditch Partnership meets annually. The meeting should also be organised to take place in time for the overarching partnership to review the contents of the refreshed SCS.

6.6 Recommendation 5: We recommend that a new item be added to the full Council agenda requiring the Leader of the Council to deliver regular updates on the work of the Redditch Partnership since the previous meeting of the Council.

6.6.1 During the course of their review the members of the Group have reached the conclusion that many local Councillors, particularly non-executive Councillors, are unfamiliar with the work of the Redditch Partnership. The majority of elected Members are not members of the Redditch Partnership and do not actively engage with the LSP.

6.6.2 The Group have expressed concerns about this level of Councillor engagement with the Redditch Partnership. They have concluded that this demonstrates that there is both a lack of transparency to the LSP process and a democratic deficit.

6.6.3 The Leader of the Council is, however, actively involved in the work of the Redditch Partnership. The Group have recognised that the Leader of the Council's role on the Redditch Partnership has changed over the past few years, resulting in the relatively recent appointment of the current Leader as Chair of the Management Board. However, the Group believe that it will always be appropriate for the Leader of the Council to be appointed to the Management Board in some capacity.

6.6.4 The Leader of the Council currently delivers regular reports on the subject of the Leader's activities at meetings of full Council. These are delivered as part of a standard 'Leader's Questions' item. Information about the work of the Redditch Partnership could be provided under this item. However, the members of the Group have expressed concerns that this would result in such updates being delivered alongside a variety of other reports. This could lead to a lack of clarity about which activities and initiatives had been delivered by the Redditch Partnership rather than another body.

6.6.5 The Group believe that the LSP is an important subject which should be discussed at the meetings of full Council. The explicit references to the Redditch Partnership in the Leader's reports under a designated item would help to reinforce the transparency of the process for the benefit of both elected Councillors and members of the public.

6.6.6 The Group recognise that whilst full Council meets on a monthly basis the Redditch Partnership's Management Board meets every six weeks. Therefore, at some full Council meeting the Leader may not have any new information to provide for the consideration of Members. However, the Group agrees that the report on the subject of the LSP should be retained as a standard item at each full Council

meeting to ensure that Members have a source of information about the LSP where needed and an opportunity to ask regular questions about the work of the partnership.

6.7 Recommendation 6: We recommend that the Leader of the Council formally deliver an Annual Report to the last scheduled full Council meeting of the municipal year covering the work of the Redditch Partnership by formalising the current practice of delivering an annual “State of the Borough” address

- 6.7.1 The Redditch Partnership’s protocol contains a commitment for an Annual Report on the subject of the Redditch Partnership to be delivered at a meeting of full Council. However, this Annual Report has not been delivered since the protocol was approved in September 2008.
- 6.7.2 The Group have recognised that informal reference might have been made to the work of the Redditch Partnership during the course of full Council meetings. However, the Group have expressed concerns that such informal reports have not helped to develop elected Members’ familiarity with the work of the partnership.
- 6.7.3 The Group are in agreement that the formal delivery of an Annual Report at a meeting of full Council on the subject of the Redditch Partnership would address this problem. A report from the Leader would enhance the transparency of the work of the LSP and strengthen the accountability of the partnership.
- 6.8 Recommendation 7: We recommend that information about the Redditch Partnership and LSPs should be provided for Members’ consideration as part of the Member Induction process.**
- 6.8.1 The Members’ Induction process forms an important part of the introductory training for newly elected Councillors. Currently, information is provided about a variety of issues including: local democratic processes; member support arrangements; local government finance; Council housing and the senior management structure. Many new Councillors find this induction process to be invaluable because it introduces them to local government and to some of the many issues they need to be familiar with in order to support their constituents effectively.
- 6.8.2 Presently information about LSPs and, more specifically, the Redditch Partnership, is not provided as part of this Member Induction process. However, the members of the Group are in agreement that as an important local body details about both LSPs and the Redditch Partnership should be provided as part of the Member Induction process.

6.8.3 The Group have been informed that the Member Induction process is fairly flexible and can be adapted on request. It is anticipated that some new Councillors will be elected during the local elections in May 2010. Therefore, the Group are proposing that this alteration to the Member Induction process should be approved as soon as possible to ensure that it shapes induction processes from 2010/11.

6.9 Recommendation 8: We recommend that a training event focusing on LSPs should be provided as a standard part of the Member training programme each year.

6.9.1 At Redditch Borough Council a number of standard training events take place each year. This includes training which members of quasi-judicial Committees are required to undertake each year, though other standard training arrangements have been introduced at the request of Members and Officers. Currently Councillors are invited to attend training courses each year on the following subjects: planning processes; Licensing procedures; local government finance; Council housing; the Standards Code of Conduct; ICT training and social networking.

6.9.2 The Group have concluded that, due to the significant role of the Redditch Partnership, a training event focussing on LSPs should be provided on a yearly basis as part of the Member training programme. The Group have been advised that the Member training programme at the Council is fairly flexible and could be altered in accordance with Members' recommendations. Therefore, they are proposing that this addition to the standard items on the Member training programme should be approved as soon as possible to ensure that it informs training arrangements from 2010/11.

6.10 Resolution 1: The Changing Places report should be considered as part of the subsequent Local Area Agreement Task and Finish review.

6.10.1 The review of the Redditch Partnership was originally proposed as part of a wider exercise that would also have involved a review of the Local Area Agreement (LAA). The Overview and Scrutiny Committee recognised the value that could potentially be accrued from scrutinising both subjects. However, they concluded that it would be more effective to review the two topics separately and that the review of the LSP should take place first because the conclusions reached during the course of this exercise would inform the subsequent assessment of the LAA.

6.10.2 The Changing Places report, 'Changing Places: Local Area Agreements and Two-Tier Local Government' (September 2008), focuses on best practice in the management of both LSPs and LAAs

in areas of two-tier local government. The Group have considered the details contained within this report relating to LSPs. They have concluded that the information contained within the report on the subject of LAAs is comprehensive and that it would be useful to further assess this information during the review of the LAA.

6.11 Resolution 2: the membership of the Local Area Agreement Task and Finish Group should be drawn from the membership of the LSP Task and Finish Group.

6.11.1 The Group are aware that the LSP and the LAA are complex, interconnected subjects. Through their review they are developing familiarity with both subjects. They therefore are suggesting that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee consider appointing the members of the LSP Task and Finish Group to the LAA review to ensure that their expertise can be utilised in that subsequent exercise.

7. Forthcoming issues - Performance Management: Assessing the Current effectiveness of the partnership and developing a mechanism for the scrutiny of its future conduct.

7.1 The Group agree that performance management of the Redditch Partnership is an important issue to assess during the course of their review. They do not yet believe that they are in a position to reach conclusions or to advance formal recommendations on this subject at this stage. However, they have considered a number of options in relation to this subject which will be considered in further detail at subsequent meetings. These are detailed below and should not be regarded as mutually exclusive.

7.2 Option 1: The Overview and Scrutiny Committee could pre-scrutinise the contents of the draft SCS as a standard arrangement.

7.3 Option 2: (Following on from this) the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could post scrutinise the success of the SCS as a standard arrangement.

7.4 Option 3: There could be six monthly monitoring of performance in relation to each version of the SCS and / or the LSP as a whole by an appropriate body. (Most probably this would be the Overview and Scrutiny Committee). This might involve reference to the Redditch Partnership's internal performance management framework. (The Partnership's performance management framework remains to be adopted, though is scheduled to be reviewed by the LSP in due course).

7.5 Option 4: further information will be considered and potentially recommendations produced on the subject of the Redditch Partnership's response to the red flag areas that were identified in

the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) process. These related to perceived quality of life inequalities in the Borough, specifically educational attainment levels and health inequalities.

8. **Other Implications**

- Asset Management - There are no asset management implications.
- Community Safety - There are no community safety implications.
- Health - The Redditch Partnership is coordinating work within the Borough to address the health inequalities that were identified in the recent CAA process. Regular updates, as detailed in one of the performance management options, would help to ensure that all Members were kept informed of the Partnership's progress.
- Human Resources - The requirement for the Leader of the Council to deliver an Annual Report for the consideration of full Council could have an impact on the workload of the staff employed to support the Redditch Partnership. Consideration may therefore need to be given to the level of support provided to the partnership.
- Social Exclusion - There are no social exclusion implications.
- Environmental / Sustainability / - There are no environmental/ sustainability implications.

9. **Lessons Learnt**

No lessons have been learned in the production of this report.

10. **Background Papers**

Changing Places: Local Area Agreements and Two-Tier Local Government, (Local Government Association, September 2008).

Redditch Partnership: Partnership Agreement and Protocol, (September 2008).

Stevenage Borough Council Website: 'So Stevenage',
<http://www.stevenage.gov.uk/townandcommunity/sostevenage>

11. Consultation

This report has been prepared following consultation by the Group with the Redditch Partnership Manager and Housing Strategy and LSP Manager.

12. Author of Report

The author of this report is Jess Bayley (Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer), who can be contacted on extension 3268 (e-mail: jess.bayley@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

13. Appendices

Appendix 1 – Table of the review's objectives

14. Key










| | | |
|-----|---|--------------------------------|
| CAA | - | Comprehensive Area Assessment |
| LAA | - | Local Area Agreement |
| LSP | - | Local Strategic Partnership |
| SCS | - | Sustainable Community Strategy |

Executive

Committee

31st March 2010

Appendix 1: Objectives of the Review

| OBJECTIVE | WHAT DO WE HAVE NOW? | IS IT WORKING? | WHAT DO WE WANT? |
|---|---|--|--|
| (1) Examine LSP to clarify how it works |  Presentation from officers | Unclear: 4 new T&F groups within the LSP: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • review SCS • communications • resource mapping • performance management framework |  Need more information about how the LSP works in practice |
| (2) Review the role of the LSP in development of the SCS |  Presentation from officers | | |
| (3) Determine improvements to the role of the LSP | | Overlap with Objective 1 |  Need more information |
| (4) Examine the methods used to engage and inform Cllrs |  Nothing |  No |  Agreed recommendations |
| (5) Review accountability and transparency of the LSP | |  Needs improvement | Overlap with Objective 4 Need more information |
| (6) Financial contributions |  Presentation from officers | | |

Executive

Committee

31st March 2010

| | | | |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| (7) Assess how the LSP intends to encourage wider engagement | ✓ Presentation from officers | ✓ Needs improvement | ✓ Agreed way forward with officers |
|---|---------------------------------|------------------------|---------------------------------------|

Executive Committee

No direct Ward relevance

31st March 2010

ADVISORY PANELS, WORKING GROUPS, ETC - UPDATE REPORT

(Report of Chief Executive)

1. Purpose of Report

To provide, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels, and similar bodies which report via the Executive Committee.

2. Recommendation

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

subject to Members' comments, the report be noted.

3. Updates

A. ADVISORY PANELS

| | <u>Meeting :</u> | <u>Lead Members / Officers :</u> (Executive Members shown underlined) | <u>Position :</u> (Oral updates to be provided at the meeting by Lead Members or Officers, if no written update is available.) |
|----|---|---|---|
| 1. | Climate Change Advisory Panel (formerly Environment Advisory Panel) | Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> / Guy Revans. | Last meeting - 9th March 2010. |
| 2. | Community Safety Advisory Panel | Chair <u>Cllr Brunner</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Banks Angie Heighway | Date to be arranged. |
| 3. | Economic Advisory Panel | Chair <u>Cllr MacMillan</u> John Staniland / Georgina Harris | Last meeting – 8th February 2010. |

Executive Committee

31st March 2010

| | | | |
|----|--|--|---------------------------------------|
| 4. | Housing Advisory Panel | Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Pearce Jackie Smith | Last meeting – 17th November 2009. |
| 5. | Leisure Contracts Advisory Panel | Chair <u>Cllr Anderson</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr MacMillan Ken Watkins / Kevin Cook | Last meeting – 1st February 2010. |
| 6. | Customer Services Advisory Panel | Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u> Jackie Smith / Jane Smith | Last meeting – 10th December 2009. |
| 7. | Planning Advisory Panel | Chair <u>Cllr MacMillan</u> / Vice- Chair Cllr Chalk John Staniland / Ruth Bamford | Next meeting – 3rd March 2010 |

B. OTHER MEETINGS

| | | | |
|-----|---|--|---------------------------------------|
| 8. | Constitutional Review Working Party | Chair Cllr MacMillan / Vice Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u> Steve Skinner | Last meeting - 24th February 2010. |
| 9. | Grants Panel | Chair Cllr Chance / Vice Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u> Angie Heighway | Next meeting – to be arranged. |
| 10. | Independent Remuneration Panel | Independent Members / Chair Mr Andrew Powell | Last meeting – 5th February 2010. |

Executive**Committee**

31st March 2010

| | | | |
|-----|--|--|-----------------------------------|
| 11. | Member Development Steering Group | Chair <u>Cllr MacMillan</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Brunner Steve Skinner / Trish Buckley | Last meeting – 23rd March 2010 |
| 12. | Procurement Steering Group | Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Hall Sue Hanley | Last meeting – 18th January 2010. |
| 13. | Church Hill District Centre – Members' Panel | Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> Rob Kindon / Jim Prendergrast | Next meeting – 13th April 2010. |

4. Author of Report

The author of this report is Ivor Westmore (Member and Committee Support Services Manager), who can be contacted on extension 3269 (e-mail: ivor.westmore@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

5. Appendices

None.

Executive Committee

No direct Ward relevance

31st March 2010

ACTION MONITORING

(Report of the Chief Executive)

| Portfolio Holder(s) / Responsible Officer | Action requested | Status |
|---|---|---|
| 13th January 2009 | | |
| Cllr Gandy / Executive Committee | Third Sector Task and Finish Group The Executive to consider the further work to be undertaken (detailed in recommendation 5) and come back with suggestions for further work in due course. | Awaiting further consideration by relevant Members. |
| 22nd April 2009 | | |
| Cllr MacMillan/ Ruth Bamford | Action Monitoring – Economic Advisory Panel Economic Development Strategy - Visits to Redditch businesses being arranged. | |
| 18th November 2009 | | |
| Cllr M Braley / D Riley | Benefits Improvement Plan Officers were requested to highlight the Inspector's comments regarding Overview and Scrutiny Committee's involvement in overseeing the management of performance. [Appendix 1 (R7a)] | |
| 27th January 2010 | | |
| Cllr Gandy / A Heighway | Single Equalities Scheme Members requested that a report/action plan be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee or Council detailing what the | |

Executive**Committee**

31st March 2010

| | | |
|---|---|---|
| | Council, as Community Leader, expected to receive in terms of education provision for the Borough and its children and young people. | |
| Cllr Gandy / K Dicks | Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier (WETT) Programme Officers highlighted the undertaking that had been made at a recent meeting of the WETT Programme Management Group to provide further detail to the participating Councils on the proposed service standards and related information (due April 2010) | |
| Cllr Braley / R Kindon / B Haycock | Easemore Road Site – Consultation with Tenants Officers undertook to carry out a basic check of all such Leases held by the Council by the end of the financial year. | |
| 3rd February 2010 | | |
| Cllr Braley / T Kristunas | Initial Estimates 2010/11 Officers to write, in the first instance, to Worcestershire County Council highlighting the increasing pressure on the Council's budgets for staff pensions. | |
| Cllr Braley / B Barr | Corporate Sickness Statistics Officers were asked to provide Councillor Hartnett with information regarding the SLA with Worcestershire County Council for the provision of Occupational Health services. | |
| 17th February 2010 | | |
| Cllr MacMillan / A Rutt | Planning Services - Increase In Charging For Pre-Application Discussions Officers were asked to circulate Appendix 2, as detailed in the report, prior to the meeting of Council on 29th March 2010. | This document was circulated prior to Council as requested. |

Executive**Committee**

31st March 2010

| | | |
|--------------------------------|---|--|
| Cllr Anderson / K Cook | Leisure Contracts Advisory Panel - Abbey Stadium Redevelopment Officers were asked to arrange a visit for Councillors to a leisure centre in Coventry, which had been subject to a similar refurbishment to that being suggested at the Abbey Stadium. | The visit is arranged for 10th April 2010. |
| 10th March 2010 | | |
| Cllr Braley / H Bennett | Quarterly Performance Monitoring - Quarter 3, October - December 2009 Officers undertook to provide:- i) Councillor Hartnett with additional information on the numbers of concessionary journeys per year (ET 015) following the meeting; ii) Councillor Anderson with an update on the projected year end figures for the number of working days lost to the local authority due to sickness absence per FTE staff member (BV 012) following the meeting; and iii) Councillor MacMillan with additional information on the impact of fraud on Housing Benefits overpayments (BV 079b (iii)) following the meeting. | |
| M Braley / J Pickering | Quarterly Monitoring Of Formal Complaints And Compliments - Quarter 3, September To December 2009 Officers undertook to speak to Councillor Shurmer following the meeting in respect of problems concerning the disabled blue badge scheme about which he had been notified by a number of residents. | |
| Note: | <i>No further debate should be held on the above matters or substantive decisions taken, without further report OR unless urgency requirements are met.</i> | Report period: 13/01/09 to 10/3/10 |

