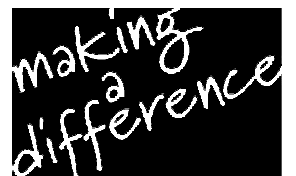


Executive Committee

Wed 20 Oct
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

20th October 2010

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs:	Carole Gandy (Chair)	Malcolm Hall
	Michael Braley (Vice-Chair)	Gay Hopkins
	Juliet Brunner	Jinny Pearce
	Greg Chance	Debbie Taylor
	Brandon 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 - 10) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 29th September 2010.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p>
<p>5. Council Plan - Part 1 Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships</p>	<p>To consider the proposed priorities for Redditch Borough Council 2011 – 2014.</p> <p>(Report to follow)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
<p>6. Revised Customer Feedback Policy (Pages 11 - 20) Head of Customer Services</p>	<p>To gain approval for a revised customer feedback policy.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>

Executive

Committee

20th October 2010

<p>7. Garden Waste (Pages 21 - 46) Head of Environmental Services</p>	<p>To provide Members with an update on the garden waste collection trial and make recommendations for the future of the service.</p> <p>(Report attached and referral report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee to follow)</p> <p>(All Wards)</p>
<p>8. Home Repairs Assistance Policy (Pages 47 - 64) Head of Housing</p>	<p>To consider and approve a Home Repairs Assistance Policy, which will replace the current policy.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
<p>9. Regional Housing Pot Grant - Proposals (Pages 65 - 70) Head of Housing</p>	<p>To approve the proposed use of Regional Housing Grant.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</p>
<p>10. Overview and Scrutiny Committee (Pages 71 - 84) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 15th and 21st September 2010.</p> <p>There are recommendations to consider.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p>
<p>11. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels, Neighbourhood Groups etc. 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>12. Advisory Panels - update report (Pages 85 - 88) 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

20th October 2010

<p>13. Action Monitoring (Pages 89 - 92) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider an update on the actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>
<p>14. 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>15. Proposed Charity Shop Drop-in - Winyates Centre (Pages 93 - 102) Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships</p>	<p>To consider a request for a reduction in the commercial rent to allow a Charity Shop and Drop in Community Space to be opened at the Winyates Centre.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(Winyates Ward)</p>
<p>16. 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

29th September 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), Councillor Michael Braley (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Greg Chance, Brandon Clayton, Malcolm Hall, Gay Hopkins, Jinny Pearce and Debbie Taylor

Also Present:

Councillors Peter Anderson and Andrew Brazier

Officers:

J Godwin, C Felton, S Hanley, R Cooke, A Walsh, E Hopkins, L Tompkin and C Wilson

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

76. APOLOGIES

There were no apologies for absence.

77. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

Councillor Peter Anderson declared an interest in Item 9 (Arrow Valley Countryside Centre – Contractual Arrangements) as detailed separately at Minute 84 below.

78. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

- Town Centre Landscape Improvements; and
- Update on Garden Waste Collection.

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

.....
Chair

Item 8 – Pitcheroak Golf Course – Referral from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

(Not meeting the publication deadline as the Overview and Scrutiny meeting post-dated the agenda despatch)

79. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 8th September 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to it being noted under Minute number 69 that Councillor Taylor had declared an interest in view of her personal connection to that organisation and not because she was a Member of the Board of Redditch Co-operative Homes.

80. WORCESTERSHIRE JOINT COUNTY AND DISTRICT COUNCIL'S SCRUTINY REPORT SUMMER FLOODS 2007 AND OTHER LAND DRAINAGE MATTERS

The Committee received a presentation updating it on progress with regard to the Joint Scrutiny Report into the 2007 floods and other land drainage strategies. The Members were reminded that Redditch had been in a significantly better position than many other Worcestershire Districts at the time of the 2007 floods as the Borough's records were far more advanced and complete than was the case in other districts. It was noted that progress in respect of more recent legislation could not be made at present as guidance and Commencement Orders were still to be received from central Government.

The Committee commended the Operations Manager on his expertise in this field and stressed the tremendous benefit he had brought to the Borough through his work on drainage over a number of years. Members noted that the Council's Operations Manager was attending the two day Flood Management 2010 conference on behalf of the Borough and County.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the Council's response to the Joint County and District Councils' Scrutiny Report into the Summer Floods 2007 be approved, including additional comments by Officers listed in the report submitted;**
- 2) the Council's policies on ditches be initially applied to Arterial Ditches only;**

- 3) **the Council notes its position in the light of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and the Flood Water Management Act 2010, subject to the Commencement Orders; and**
- 4) **a report be prepared by Officers, as previously instructed by Members, setting out proposals for a joint North Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership in accordance with the above guidance.**

81. SUB-REGIONAL CHOICE BASED LETTINGS

The Committee considered a report that sought the views of Members on how the Council should proceed in respect of its Housing Allocations Policy. The options presented to Members were either to continue with its current Policy and Redditch Home Choice scheme or continue to work alongside members of the sub-regional partnership with the option of adopting the common sub-regional Housing Allocations Policy and lettings scheme.

Officers highlighted the legal review of the sub-regional scheme that was being undertaken which would influence the Council's choice as to whether to consider adopting this scheme. The other significant issue in this regard was the inclusion within the present Redditch scheme of the priority given to those with medical, homelessness or other special needs which was not a feature of the sub-regional scheme. It was noted, however, that the sub-regional scheme did make use of digital technology which expanded the means and ease by which prospective tenants could bid for local properties.

The Committee was made aware of the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee which had received a presentation on this subject the previous week. Contrary to that recommendation, the Executive Committee considered that there was nothing to be lost and potentially something to be gained from continuing to work with sub-regional partners whilst not committing to a particular course of action at this stage.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the report be noted;**
- 2) **the decision to join the Home Choice Plus be delayed until the outcome of the legal review into the scheme is known, but Officer resources be committed to continue to work alongside the existing members of the Sub-Regional Partnership and a further report brought back**

to the Committee to report progress and make further recommendations; and

- 3) the Borough Tenants' Panel be provided with the opportunity to consider and comment upon the Sub-Regional Housing Allocations Policy report.**

82. ADMINISTRATION OF SMALL CHARITIES BY THE COUNCIL

A report was received which put before Members the option of transferring the administration of three small charities to the Worcestershire Community Foundation. Officers confirmed that, having sought further information on the benefit that had accrued to Redditch through the Community Foundation, it was apparent that a considerable number of grants had been made to organisations in the Borough during recent times.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) the administration of the Stanley, John Jordan Skinner and Caroline Swann Charities be transferred to the Worcestershire Community Foundation;**
- 2) Mr Colin Evans, Trust Transfer expert of the Community Foundation for Greater Manchester, be appointed to effect the transfer; and**
- 3) the sum of £129.62 in the Redditch Disaster Fund be transferred to the Mayor's Charity.**

83. MANAGEMENT OPTIONS APPRAISAL FOR PITCHEROAK GOLF COURSE

Officers reported that the present 18 month operating arrangement with the Worcestershire Golf Partnership was near its end and updated Members on the performance of the Partnership to date.

The Committee was informed that the Partnership had done a good job with the course, increasing membership at a time when memberships nationally were falling and, in particular, achieving a very significant increase in the numbers of junior members and younger (under 30 years of age) members. These increases had come against a backdrop of inclement weather both in the summer and winter time which served to emphasise the good performance of the Partnership.

Members were advised that the Partnership was generally not in the business of running golf courses and this was the first occasion on which they had undertaken a venture of this nature. The

Partnership was seeking a further 12 month extension to the current arrangement in order that the benefits they had brought to the course could properly be assessed. It was anticipated that the work the Partnership was undertaking would accrue further benefit to the Council in due course. Members were very appreciative of the Partnership's efforts in making a success of the golf course and were keen that the arrangement might be continued.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the arrangement with the Worcestershire Golf Partnership be extended for a further 12 month period to work up a medium/long term operating solution, with negotiations commencing immediately; and**

RESOLVED that

- 2) **a service review of the non golf related elements of the operation be undertaken; and**
- 3) **the report be noted.**

(The referral report from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had been accepted as a matter of Urgent Business –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 Overview and Scrutiny Committee meeting post-dated the agenda despatch and the referral report needed to be considered at the present meeting to have any bearing on the decision-making process in respect of this matter.)

84. ARROW VALLEY COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE - CONTRACTUAL ARRANGEMENTS

Following an earlier Council decision to go down the route of private sector management of the Countryside Centre, a report was considered which sought approval of the specification format for these new management arrangements.

Officers reported that six companies were to be invited to tender for the contract following receipt of pre-qualification questionnaires from a number of prospective contractors. Members were reminded that it had been agreed that the Council enter into a specific

contract agreement rather than enter into a service level agreement.

The Committee were generally of the view that the Countryside Centre had tremendous potential and, although well used, could be developed to increase footfall significantly.

RESOLVED that

the specification format for the tendering process for the alternative management arrangements as set out in the appendices to the report be approved.

(During consideration of this item, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillor Peter Anderson declared an interest in view of his membership of Redditch Sailing Club, a user of Arrow Valley Lake)

85. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

Members considered the minutes of recent meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, including a number of recommendations.

RESOLVED that

Climate Change Strategy

- 1) **consideration of the recommendations of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee be deferred subject to consideration of the Climate Change Strategy at the meeting of the Executive Committee on 10th November 2010.**

Drainage – Update Report

- 2) **the Council's policies on ditches be initially applied to Arterial Ditches only;**
- 3) **the Council notes its position with regard to the implications of the Flood Risk Regulations 2009 and the Flood and Water Management Act 2010, subject to the Commencement Orders; and**
- 4) **a report be prepared by Officers, as previously instructed by Members, setting out proposals for a Joint North Worcestershire Land Drainage Partnership, in accordance with the guidance provided in the documents referred to in recommendation 3 above.**

86. MINUTES / REFERRALS - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE, EXECUTIVE PANELS, NEIGHBOURHOOD GROUPS ETC.

There were no minutes or referrals under this item.

87. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

Members considered the latest update report on Advisory Panels and other Council bodies. Officers undertook to update the details of Chair and Vice Chairs subsequent to recent changes.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

88. ACTION MONITORING

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

89. URGENT BUSINESS - RECORD OF DECISIONS

Members noted two Urgent Business decisions which had been approved in accordance with Standing Order 36, namely:

Prospective Tenant – Unit 27, Rubicon Business Centre
(UB Reference 484)

Discretionary Disabled Facilities Grant
(UB Reference 485)

RESOLVED that

the matters be noted.

90. 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 matter on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended:

**Redditch United Football Club – Financial Position Statement
(as detailed at Minute 91 below).**

91. REDDITCH UNITED FOOTBALL CLUB STATUS

(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 prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to the financial affair of any particular body (including the authority holding that information.)

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and closed at 8.57pm

.....
Chair

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

Document is Restricted

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

CUSTOMER FEEDBACK POLICY

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Michael Braley, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda de Warr, Head of Customer Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report outlines recommendations for changes to the corporate customer feedback process with a view to providing a more effective means for a customer to make comments, compliments or complaints about services and staff. The recommendations aim to streamline the process to make it easy for customers to access and for staff to administer and to ensure staff have a consistent approach when dealing with customer feedback.
- 1.2 If members approve the process, officers will implement computer software to enable staff to capture data about complaints and improve reporting mechanisms.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

the Customer Feedback Policy as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 An appropriate customer feedback policy is necessary to:
- ensure that we obtain information about the public perceptions about our services,
 - inform future policy and service planning, and
 - provide customers with a mechanism to raise concerns about how we have dealt with something.
- 3.2 There are 6 overriding principles to good complaints handling that should be followed at all times:
1. Getting it right;
 2. Being customer focused;

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

3. Being open and accountable;
4. Acting fairly and proportionally;
5. Putting things right;
6. Improving as a result.

3.3 All forms of feedback help us to:

- understand what services people value and why;
- share good practice;
- make sure we learn and develop in a way which keeps providing a good service to customers;
- recognise when staff 'go the extra mile'.

3.4 Customer feedback is a valuable source of customer insight and complaints provide a valuable source of data we can use to inform what we do in the future.

3.5 The process for customers should be straightforward and easy to understand. We should deal with customer complaints correctly, comprehensively and as quickly as possible.

3.6 Complaints procedures are not in place to give everyone who asks for one a different answer to their problem, but to ensure the answers we do give are correct, timely and take account of the individual's circumstances if it is possible to do so. However, where we have made a mistake, or not done as well as customers expect we should be able to admit this and learn from the feedback. The outcome of investigations should be clearly documented using plain English and we should empathise with the customer.

3.7 The proposed policy sets out a streamlined and customer focused approach to dealing with customer feedback, specifically customer complaints. It ensures that customers have the assurance that their complaint will be dealt with at a senior level and that complaints are reported to the Chief Executive and members. It also ensures that customer complaints are taken seriously, that there is a clear outcome, even if we cannot resolve their problem and that we have implemented changes where it possible to do so.

3.8 The major change to the procedure currently in use in Redditch is the proposal to remove the Members Panel. Data collected in respect of complaints taken to the Members Panel show that the decision in respect of the complaint is almost never changed. Whilst this might give the customer the impression that they have taken their complaint to every possible level it is wasteful in terms of officer time and adds nothing to the outcome. The proposed scheme takes a streamlined, 'right first time' approach.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

3.9 However, some form of appeal process is desirable and we must be clear in what circumstances these will be considered and action taken. For example, it may be there is new evidence or information in respect of the case which would lead us to believe that the case could not have been fully investigated, or a belief that the complaint had not been properly handled. Otherwise, the customer has the option of taking the matter to the Ombudsman, their MP, or their local member. If we get the process right up front there should be few which need to go to a further stage.

4. KEY ISSUES

Any changes to such policies must be led by a desire to improve it for customers. This can lead to some organisational concerns such as, will we be able to meet customer expectations without placing additional burdens on the organisation and it's staff. The recommended policy and resulting procedure will be easy for all to understand, should result in a reduction in work as it reduces steps in the process, thus cutting out waste, whilst still ensuring customers have a robust mechanism through which to complain where it is necessary to do so.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

Failure to handle complaints well may result in complaints to the Ombudsman which can result in financial recompense being ordered.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Failure to handle complaints appropriately can lead to further legal action being taken.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As set out in Appendix 1.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

The recommended policy and procedure are in line with the Council's vision in respect of putting the customer first

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY
CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 Specific risks relating to the proposed policy and procedures are:-

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

- Failure to respond appropriately to complaints;
- Delay in responding to complaints;
- Not addressing concerns resulting in loss of public confidence;
- Failure to identify trends or recurring themes and acting upon them

9.2 Heads of Service will be responsible for ensuring sufficient checks are in place to ensure complaints are dealt with appropriately, within the agreed timescales and ensuring that the customer receives a high quality response. Additionally customer feedback will be monitored by the Head of Customer Services.

9.3 Identified risks have been included in the Customer Services Risk Register.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

An easy to understand and accessible complaints process shows commitment to customer service and will continue to drive improved customer satisfaction. The recommended process will show that we take complaints seriously and welcome them as a way of identifying service improvements.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The process will apply to all customers and ensure that all complaints are handled consistently. An impact assessment based on the proposed procedure has been completed and there are no actions arising.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

Improvements in customer service generally results in a reduction of preventable contact which increases value for money, by increasing capacity to deal with other issues. Reducing the steps in the process and ensuring we provide a quality response first time will reduce further contact.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

None

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

None

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Better reporting will be possible by implementing the i-case software. A process that is consistent in both Redditch and Bromsgrove will enable us to provide comparative data, and as we move into more shared services remove the need to operate separate systems. Reporting currently in place will remain, but will be improved by providing heads of service with details for their areas. In addition we will be including details of Ombudsman's complaints and MP enquiries in future reports as both can be an indication of areas for improvement.

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

None

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

None

18. LESSONS LEARNT

None

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

None at this stage but in future users of the policy will be asked for their feedback and this will inform future amendments.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Through CMT
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Through CMT
Director of Policy, Performance and	Through CMT

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

Partnerships	
Head of Service	Author
Head of Resources	Through CMT
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Through CMT
Corporate Procurement Team	Through CMT

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

22. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Draft Customer feedback Policy.

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Amanda de Warr
 E Mail: a.dewarr@bromsgrove.gov.uk
 Tel: 01527 881241 or 01527 64252 ext 3177

MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT – DRAFT CUSTOMER FEEDBACK POLICY

Customer feedback is important to us. We want to know what customers think about our services and how we deliver them in order to be able to learn and improve.

This policy covers complaints, compliments, and comments about the services of Redditch Borough Council.

Complaints can be defined as *‘an expression of dissatisfaction, however made, about the standard of service, actions or lack of actions by us or our staff’*

Compliments can be defined as *‘an expression of satisfaction about how well we deliver service or how helpful a member of staff has been’*

Comments can be defined as *‘an opinion on how we could improve the delivery of our services’*.

Complaints

It is for the customer to decide whether or not to make a complaint and we will not try to discourage them. However, reporting a fault or problem is not necessarily a complaint but may be a request for service. Examples of complaints may be:

- we have not achieved the standards we say we will provide;
- we have not provided the service to the standard which the customer thinks is reasonable;
- we have given bad advice;
- we have not followed our own rules;
- we are carrying out our duties in an unsatisfactory way;
- our staff are behaving in an unacceptable way;
- we fail to do something we have been asked to do, and it is reasonable to expect that we should have done so; or
- we fail to do something which the customer could reasonably have been expected to do, even if we were not actually asked to do it.

This Complaints procedure cannot be used to deal with an issue which is any part of any legal action by or against us. Additionally, some issues are covered by different procedures and are therefore not to be dealt with under this policy or procedure. These include:

- employee and internal complaints,
- complaints from councillors unless they are complaining as ordinary members of the public, or acting as an advocate for someone else,

- where legal limits are in place, for example cases covered by our insurance procedures, parking and traffic offences, refusing planning permission, unless it relates to an issue where the proper procedure has not been followed or staff have acted incorrectly or inappropriately.

We can only deal with feedback that relates to a service for which we have responsibility, but we should refer customers to the appropriate organisation if the issue is outside our control.

An official complaint cannot be made simply because someone does not agree with the decision we have made.

Members should direct official complaints (as opposed to requests for a service) to the Customer Service Centre manager who will ensure they are channelled into the system.

COMPLAINTS PROCEDURES**WHO DEALS WITH COMPLIMENTS, COMMENTS AND COMPLAINTS?**

Any member of staff can take details and advise what will happen in the case of a complaint. An electronic form is on the intranet and can be used. This will be passed to the Complaints Champion who will ensure it is logged on to the Customer Feedback database.

Customer Champions record and monitor complaints to ensure they are dealt with in accordance with the agreed timescales.

Heads of Service will nominate someone to investigate the complaint and ensure responses are drafted for them to review. All responses to complaints will be sent by the Head of Service who is responsible for ensuring the response meets our standards.

The Head of Customer Service will deal with any cases where the customer believes the proper process in respect of handling complaints has not been carried out. The Head of Customer Services will ensure reports are compiled, provide CMT and Members with details of numbers of complaints, trends, lessons learned and will assess the process to ensure the timescales are being met. The Head of Customer Services will also ensure customers are surveyed about their satisfaction and will report complaints and compliments data to customers via the web and at Customer Services Centres.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Appendix 1

20th October 2010

Complaint received.

All details will be recorded on the i-case system on date of receipt.

Each Head of Service will ensure there are procedures in place within their service to investigate complaints immediately.

Customer Champions will pass the details on to the Head of Service and the appropriate officer to investigate the matter.

Acknowledgement can be made via e-mail or letter. Wherever possible complainant to be called to make initial contact and clarify complaint.

Acknowledgement of complaint (or full response if possible) will be made within 2 working days.

Head of Service to request investigation and draft response to be prepared.

Care will be taken to ensure that the matter has been fully investigated and clear details provided to the complainant in a language they understand. Response should fully answer complaint and be empathetic and admit if we have made a mistake, or could have done better. Clear details of our actions should be provided.

The response will be sent from the Head of Service, who is responsible for checking the quality and accuracy of the response.

Full response to be sent as soon as possible and within 15 working days.

It is accepted that some complaints are complex and will take longer to investigate. Where this is the case, the customer will be advised in writing that there will be a delay, given the reason why and told when the full response will be forthcoming. However we will avoid delaying a response at all times.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

GARDEN WASTE COLLECTION SERVICE - OUTCOMES OF TRIAL

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Brandon Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment And Health
Relevant Head of Service	Guy Revans, Head of Environmental Services
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The report contains details of the trial garden waste service which is running from March to November 2010 and recommendations for future service delivery.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

- 1) **the preferred option for the future of the service, from the four options as summarised in paragraph 5.3, be approved together with any subsequent increase to the Capital Programme 2010/11 be approved and funded from the saving in grant as detailed in this report; and**

RESOLVE that

- 2) **Officers explore options for the sharing of the service with Bromsgrove District Council, including roll out of the service across the whole Borough, as part of the transformation programme of environmental services during 2011/12; and**
- 3) **Members note the outcomes of the trial garden waste collection service.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 In January 2010 Members agreed that a trial chargeable garden waste collection service would be operated across two trial areas of the Borough during 2010.
- 3.2 The service was offered to approximately 4,800 households and began in March, running to the end of November at a charge of £35 per customer.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 A garden waste service is a key way of increasing performance against NI 192 which measures the amount of household waste re-used, recycled and composted.
- 4.2 The trial service was offered to around 4,800 residents across two trial areas in the west and east of the Borough. There was a greater level of customer take up in the west (10.5%) than the east (2.6%) with the overall take up rate at 6.7%.
- 4.3 62% (a very high response rate) of customers who have used the trial service responded to a user survey and all those who responded (with one exception) said that they would continue to use the service.
- 4.4 All districts in Worcestershire offer a chargeable garden waste service (see Appendix 2 for full details).
- 4.5 We know that an amount of biodegradable garden waste is disposed of in grey bins and also that a lot of residents use orange sacks to dispose of garden waste in the summer months. A small percentage of Redditch's grey bin waste is currently landfilled and the majority is sent to be treated at an energy from waste facility in Warwickshire but there is a need to support the county wide approach and reduce the amount of biodegradable waste which is disposed of.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of running the trial garden waste collection service is approximately £12k and is funded by income generated.
- 5.2 Originally it was estimated that the trial would result in a shortfall of £6k based on a 10% take up but this has been mitigated by not having to hire in vehicles and optimising use of existing fleet.
- 5.3 There are four options for moving forward as summarised below:
- a) Stop the service;
 - b) Maintain the existing level of service in two trial areas;
 - c) Extend the trial service in an area where we expect to get a higher level of take up (see appendix 3 for a list of proposed streets);

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

- d) Stop the trial in the east and increase west trial to cover 10,000 properties;
- e) Extend the service to all suitable properties across the Borough.

5.4 The estimated cost of identified options for the future service based on a charge of £35 per customer, are detailed in the table below:

	OPTION b	OPTION c	OPTION d	OPTION e	OPTION e
Service components	Maintain existing trial areas	Add 5,000 properties to west trial, maintain east	Stop in east and increase west trial to cover 10,000 properties (figures based on 10% take up)	Borough wide approx 30,000 properties (10% take up)	Borough wide approx 30,000 properties (7% take up)
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
Publicity printing & delivery	3	5	8	30	30
Operational costs (staff & vehicles & Fuel)	9	27	27	86	86
<i>Total cost of running service</i>	12	32	35	116	116
Income received	12	30	35	105	74
Shortfall	-	2	0	11	42

Estimated charge per customer to cover cost of service	£36	£37	£35	£39	£55
---	------------	------------	------------	------------	------------

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

Additional wheeled bins required (approx £21 each)	Already have bins	£11k*	£16k	£63k	£44k
---	--------------------------	--------------	-------------	-------------	-------------

*for the extension of the area to 5,000 properties, green bins can continue to be used

5.5 For any revision to the service a number of bins would have to be purchased for customers. There is currently a £15k saving within the service area relating to grant received for waste management. It is proposed that this saving be utilised to fund capital costs arising from the additional bins. Option c and d could be funded from this saving. Approval of Option e would result in additional funding being identified or an increase in charge to the customer of between £39 and £55.

5.6 It should be noted that there will be a requirement to purchase brown bins if the service is rolled out across the town on a long term basis. However, the type of bin would depend on who provided the service, which will be looked at as part of the transformation programme for environmental services in 2011/12. Therefore brown bins should not be purchased until the outcome of the transformation process is known.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

Under the Environmental Protection Act 1990 the Council has a duty to collect household waste, which includes garden waste generated by households, but may make a charge for its collection.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

7.1 The Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy (JMWMS) 2009 sets the Partnership a target of 43% recycling/composting by 2014. As a signatory to the JMWMS, Redditch Borough Council has committed to play its part and increase its re-use/recycling/composting rate (NI 192) and provision of a garden waste collection service helps to do this. All other Worcestershire districts provide residents with a chargeable waste collection service (see Appendix 2).

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

7.2 Currently, the majority of residual waste collected in Worcestershire is land filled. The Partnership needs to reduce the amount of biodegradable waste sent to landfill in order to meet Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme limits in future years. Whilst the majority of residual waste collected in Redditch is disposed of through an energy from waste facility in Warwickshire, there is a need to consider Redditch's arrangements in a county wide context.

7.3 Unless the service is offered Borough wide, it is recommended that residents continue to be offered the option of purchasing up to two orange sacks per fortnight for the disposal of extra household waste. During the summer months orange sacks are often used for the collection of garden waste.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

Provision of good quality, customer focused waste collection services meets the Council priority of a 'Clean and Green' Borough.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 A risk management plan will be developed as part of the roll out of the service, should this be agreed. The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:

- a) loss of income due to lack of customer take up;
- b) failure to increase performance (NI 192) and meet county wide targets set in the JMWMS;
- c) County Council levied Landfill Allowance Trading Scheme (LATS) penalties if limits for the amount of biodegradable waste landfilled in Worcestershire are exceeded;
- d) failure to secure a local delivery point for the disposal of the garden waste increases running costs and the risk of under recovery

9.2 These risks will be entered into the risk registry.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

9.3 All risks are being managed as follows:

- a) loss of income and lack of waste collected leading to poor performance will be minimised through effective promotion and maximised efficiency of the collection service, looking for ways to minimise hire costs etc.
- b) an option to mitigate any loss of income is to stop the service completely whilst options for a shared service are considered as part of the transformation of environmental services;
- c) Negotiations are currently underway with WCC to source a local delivery point and it is likely that this will be in place for March 2011.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 1 20% of residents across Worcestershire and Herefordshire have said that they would be prepared to pay for a collection of garden waste (JMWMS consultation, May 2009). Other Worcestershire authorities have found that there is a demand for the service (see Appendix 2). Full details of customer consultation carried out as part of the trial are included in section 19.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The needs of all customers are considered in the delivery of waste collection services, including the garden waste service. Assisted collections, different sized bins and information on the service in different formats are all available to residents upon request.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

- 12.1 In accordance with the JMWMS, it was agreed that the service should aim to be cost neutral.
- 12.2 Members may wish to consider increasing the charge of the service to reduce the risk of running at a deficit. The charges made by other Worcestershire districts are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 12.3 The option of sharing the service across Redditch and Bromsgrove is one which will be explored further as part of the transformation programme for environmental services during 2011/12.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

12.4 The aim is for the service to be self financing including provision / replacement of bins to existing customers

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

13.1 In 2009/10 **2,216** tonnes of garden waste were taken by residents to the Household waste site which involves residents using their own vehicles to transport small amounts of waste. If we estimate that each load weighs 100kg, then this equates to over 22,000 separate visits. Whilst operating the service increases transport emissions, there is potentially a reduction in the number of individual public visits to the Household Recycling Centre.

13.2 The Strategic Environmental Assessment which forms part of the JMWMS, states that “***options which have area wide green waste collections secure more benefits overall than other options because of increased tonnages of waste recycled, principally biodegradable waste***” (SEA p.38).

13.3 The service has an impact on climate change indicator NI185 due to increased transport emissions. The table below includes estimated figures for the trial service. Mileage has been minimised by the size of vehicle used and next year, we will be able to dispose of the garden waste locally rather than transporting it to Pershore.

	Mileage undertaken	Resultant CO2 kg/ tonnes
Collection mileage	3855	10,140
Disposal mileage	6820	17,939
Total mileage	10,675	27,979

13.4 In 2008/09 the total carbon arising from the council’s fleet was 590 tonnes. Transport emissions from the trial service will have added approximately 6.3% to overall fleet emissions but if we consider collection only this would be 2.3%. If the service were to be rolled out across the town, this would result in an estimated increase of 13.7% on the total carbon emissions from the council’s fleet (based on one vehicle working for 32 weeks).

13.5 Garden rounds are larger than ordinary collection rounds as they need to cover a wider area, however they are based on existing geographical rounds to ensure that rounds are as efficient as possible in terms of transport distances.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

- 13.6 Whilst Redditch Borough Council's waste currently goes to an energy from waste facility, diverting biodegradable waste from this route could provide capacity for other Worcestershire waste to be diverted from landfill.
- 13.7 There may be indirect benefits relating to public attitude as given the opportunity to recycle more can lead to additional sustainable behaviours.
- 13.8 There was a risk that a garden waste collection would reduce the amount of home composting. However, door step surveying found that the delivery of publicity in the two trial areas seemed to have increased the number of residents that have taken up home composting. In accordance with the Waste Hierarchy, our initial aim was to prevent waste and our publicity materials promoted home composting as the best way to deal with garden waste, ***“our garden waste collection service is specially designed for residents who generate a lot of garden waste but don't have sufficient home composting facilities.”***
- 13.9. It is likely that statutory CO2 targets will be introduced in the future.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

Agency staff would be employed to operate the service if it is agreed that it will be further rolled out during 2011. This would continue until the preferred option of service delivery has been identified as part of the transformation programme.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 Since the introduction of targets for increasing the amount of waste recycled and composted (NI 192), one of the key reasons for providing a garden waste service has been to improve performance. As part of the trial 52 tonnes of garden waste have been collected for composting to the end of August. Performance against NI 192 for the first quarter of 2010/11 has been estimated at **25.5%** compared to the first quarter of 2009/10 which was 28.22%.
- 15.2 Now that all other Worcestershire authorities provide a similar collection of commingled recyclables and also a garden waste collection (with a food waste collection in Wychavon), Redditch's performance in comparison with Worcestershire districts is reducing as shown in the table below:

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

Authority	Estimated NI 192 Outturn 2010/11
Bromsgrove DC	40%
Malvern Hills DC	33%
Redditch BC	29%
Wychavon DC	44%
Worcester City	35%
Wyre Forest DC	29%

- 15.3 The following table shows the number of fly-tips reported by the public and reported by cleansing crews in the two areas where the trial collection service is taking place, there has not been a reduction in fly-tipping levels in the two trial areas:

Area	Number fly-tips April – Sept 09	Number fly-tips April – Sept 10
East	170	199
South West	59	97

**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF
CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

There are no direct community safety implications.

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

There are no direct health inequalities implications.

18. LESSONS LEARNT

Full details of the outcomes of the trial service are included at Appendix 1. It has allowed us to assess: level of customer demand, costs, operational and administrative impacts and effective publicity.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 19.1 As part of the trial several pieces of customer consultation were completed including. The comments made by residents from the two pilot areas who did not take up the service are summarised in the table below:

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

Comment	No. comments made
Already compost / have shredder	11
I'm retired and it gives me something to do (go to the tip)	9
Garden not big enough to create that much waste	8
Cost + it should be taken away with the "normal" waste	6
We have a gardener and they take the waste away	4
Not interested	5
Not happy with additional cost / already compost / go down tip / Put it in grey bin	5
Appalled its not free. Already compost. Put rest in grey bin	2
Brilliant service. Are you going to keep it?	1
Lost leaflet. Want service, leaflet given	1

19.2 A face to face survey of residents who used the Household Recycling Centre (HRC) to dispose of garden waste for composting was also completed. 52 people were surveyed and these were from many different parts of the Borough. 10 people who we spoke to were in the garden waste pilot area and their comments are summarised below:

- a) 2 people in the west area had not heard of it but said they would take up the service;
- b) 8 people said they had not taken up the scheme because they didn't have enough garden waste, they felt it was too expensive or because they prefer to bring it to the tip themselves.

36 people who we spoke to were not in the garden waste pilot area and their comments are summarised below:

- a) 13 people said it was too expensive;
- b) 13 people said they didn't have enough waste for a regular collection;
- c) 7 people said they would take it up if it became available to them;
- d) 1 person said that if they got too old to drive they would use it;
- e) 1 person said they like bringing it to the HRC;
- f) 1 person had about 5 compost bins but brought bigger stuff to the HRC.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

19.3 The majority of people use the HRC over the summer months only and it was once a month or less that they came to use the HRC to dispose of garden waste. Overall everyone we spoke to preferred the method of contact via a leaflet through the door and the majority of people we spoke to were older residents (age 50+).

19.4 During August a postal survey was carried out of all residents who used the trial service. There was a very positive response to the survey with a 62% response rate and all those responding saying that they were happy with the service and would use it again, with one exception where a resident had found they did not produce enough garden waste.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	No
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No
Climate Change Manager	Yes

21. WARDS AFFECTED

There are a number of affected wards and these vary depending on the preferred option; appendix 3 gives a full list of affected streets.

22. APPENDICES

Appendix 1	Outcomes of trial garden waste collection service
Appendix 2	Details of the garden waste services offered across Worcestershire
Appendix 3	Proposed list of streets for extension of trial service
Appendix 4	Garden Waste Strategy – Overview & Scrutiny Referral

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Draft Revised Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy 2009

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Sue Horrobin
E Mail: sue.horrobin@redditchbc.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 64252 extn. 3706

Appendix 1 - Details and outcomes of the trial service

- 1.1 The trial service was offered to approximately 4,800 households in two different areas of the Borough; an area of the town in the west (Webheath, Callow Hill, Hunt End and Walkwood) with a higher level of traditional housing with larger gardens (2,310 properties) and the other area in the east (Winyates East and Matchborough East of the town in new town properties with smaller gardens (2,488 properties). As per Member request, the areas were selected to represent different housing types and customers across the Borough and matched existing waste collection rounds for ease of administration.
- 1.2 A number of things were done to promote the new service including:-
 - An initial introductory A5 flyer to targeted households
 - An information guide (how to use the service) to those taking part
 - A bin sticker (to confirm receipt of payment) to those taking part
 - A follow up A5 flyer to residents who hadn't taken up the service
 - Bin tags to highlight contamination issues to those taking part when needed
 - New pages on the web site.
- 1.3 Because this was a trial service in specific areas, it was not possible to "universally" promote this service although a small article did appear in the local paper at the start of the year.
- 1.4 Requests for service were handled by the Contact centre and information was also made available on the website. A checklist of areas /addresses taking part were linked to the pages so the CSA's knew which residents were applicable for the service. This was very important as the service was only available to a small number of households.
- 1.5 As this was a trial, we were only able to offer two payment methods – by telephone or payment in person at either the Town Hall or the outer one stop shops. New booking forms were created for customers who chose to book in person. All requests for service were recorded into the M3 system which is used to manage all waste, cleansing and landscape services.
- 1.6 Green 240 Litre wheeled bins were used for the pilot scheme, as they could be re – used if it is decided not to continue with the service. A sticker was attached to the bin to identify it as a garden waste bin. Bins were delivered to customers in March, two weeks before the first collection, with detailed information on what was suitable to be put in the bin. Collection was from the edge ('curtilage') of a customer's property, to be out for collection on the same day as the grey bin.
- 1.7 Collections were made using our own 15 tonne refuse collection vehicle and occasionally using our own 26 tonne. Staffing was a combination of existing employees and agency workers. On each occasion a driver

and a loader were used for collection and a driver only for the disposal trip to Pershore.

- 1.8 For the trial service the garden waste has been taken to Pershore for composting at the Hill & Moor site.

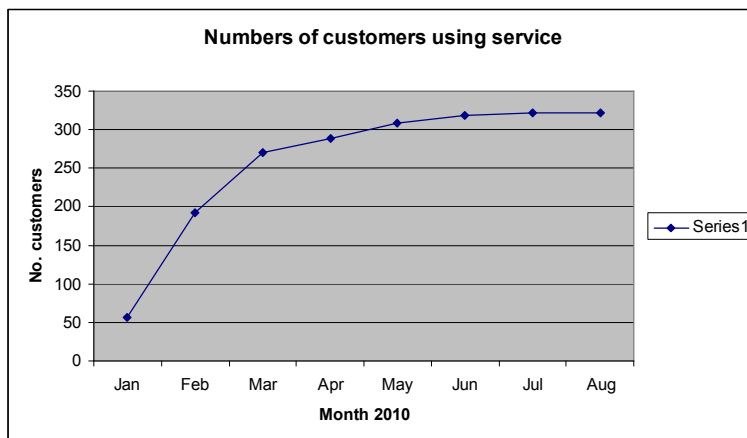
2.0 Outcomes of the trial

- 2.1 The trial in two distinct areas of the town has confirmed there is a variation in take up across the town as detailed in the table below:

Figures of paying customers from total properties offered the trial garden waste collection service (July 2010)

Area	Properties in area	Take up	%
East	2487	73	2.9
West	2310	242	10.5
Total pilot area	4797	322	6.7

- 2.2 A total of 322 customers have taken up the service and the following graph shows how numbers have slowly increased since the service was launched:



- 2.3 The imbalance of uptake and the spread out nature of the customers meant we had to re-assess the economies of the collection schedule. Collections in the east area were consolidated to one week to even the work load over 3 days in a 2 week period. This resulted in the following collection arrangements:
- 2.4 Travel to the disposal facility at Pershore took around 1hr 45mins round trip on each collection day, (3 times over a 2 week period) which tied up the vehicle and a driver for this unproductive period. This would not be viable to continue in the long term and we are working with WCC to resolve this should the service continue.

- 2.5 The average collection rate for the spread of customers across the town was between 25 to 29 bins per hour. This excluded the time taken to travel to Pershore.
- 2.6 No bins were lost or needed replacing during the trial.
- 2.7 No bins were tagged during the trial. All bins emptied only contained compostable items.
- 2.8 Throughout the trial period there were numbers of bins not presented for collection on the designated collection day. The number of bins not presented increased during Bank Holidays and holiday periods. From the start of the service in March we received a total of 28 enquiries for missed bins, and all were dealt with in the required time frame of 48 hours.
- 2.9 The publicity materials have worked well and have provided residents with all of the information that they need in order to take up and use the service. A similar approach will be used if Members decide that the service will continue but this does require leaflets to be hand delivered through letter boxes of targeted households which is resource intensive. This can only end if the service becomes town wide and we can use blanket leaflet drops in local papers or features in the local paper or Redditch Matters.
- 2.10 Due to the fact that this was a trial area there were a few teething problems – for example the west area included some long roads that had split rounds and consequently 5 addresses were booked for the collection service who were not in fact included in the pilot scheme and these were resolved on a case by case basis.

Appendix 2 - Details of garden waste services offered across Worcestershire

Authority	Service start date	Areas covered	Charge to customer	Est. no. properties using service	Service timescale
Bromsgrove	April 2006	District wide	Began as a free service, charge introduced March 2010 for £30 Payment methods include, post (cheque), in person, online, or telephone. £30 and a one off fee of £20 for the brown bin. Only accept direct debit as a form of payment.	17,000	March - November
Wyre Forest	April 2010	Not all areas are covered in this service and there is a checklist to see if you are applicable. Currently targeted at insert number households but no capacity to take on any more properties (@31 st August)	£32 (does not include people who are on a sack collection) Payment method is Direct debit only.	1,200	March - November
Wycharvon	April 2008	Available to all residents who have space for a bin.	£60 Residents can pay via the Customer Service Centre, in person or fill out a form. £30 and a registration fee of £10 Payment is taken online or over the telephone by card payment.	8,600 with a waiting list of 800!	Year round
Malvern	March 2010	District wide as long as have space for a bin		2,100	March - February
Worcester City	August 2009			2,500	February - November

Herefordshire Council
 Garden waste can be put out for collection in Herefordshire Council in green sacks at the same time as your normal refuse collection. **However, these sacks will be sent to landfill.** The cost of this service is 60p per sack. Green sacks are available from any [Customer Service Centre](#).

Appendix 3 – List of proposed streets for extension of trial service including existing trial

<u>West Area</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>No. of properties</u>
Acre Lane	Webheath	7
Birchfield Road	Webheath	154
Blackstitch Lane	Webheath	67
Blockley Close	Webheath	17
Boxnott Close	Webheath	12
Brotherton Avenue	Webheath	30
Church Road	Webheath	47
Coleford Close	Webheath	17
Corner Lane	Webheath	25
Crumpfields Lane	Webheath	92
Defford Close	Webheath	47
Downsell Road	Webheath	51
Dunstall Close	Webheath	12
Earls Close	Webheath	18
Foxlydiate Lane	Webheath	36
Foxlydiate Lane - Springhill Drive	Webheath	5
Foxlydiate Lane - Springhill Gardens	Webheath	5
Grazing Lane	Webheath	17
Great Hockings Lane	Webheath	40
Heathfield Road	Webheath	150
Heathfield Road - Heathfield Court	Webheath	
Hennals Avenue	Webheath	22
Hill Top	Webheath	6
Knightsford Close	Webheath	8
Lordswood Close	Webheath	44
Lower Grinsty Lane	Webheath	16
Lyndenwood	Webheath	
Malfield Avenue	Webheath	30
Michaelwood Close	Webheath	49
Minworth Close	Webheath	
Neighbrook Close	Webheath	34
Packwood Close	Webheath	80

Pumphouse Lane	Webheath	11
Raglis Close	Webheath	11
Reyde Close	Webheath	30
Reynard Close	Webheath	84
Sandygate Close	Webheath	32
Shaws Close	Webheath	15
Sheepcroft Close	Webheath	57
Sheltwood Close	Webheath	10
Shirehampton Close	Webheath	60
Springvale Road	Webheath	49
Sydnull Close	Webheath	21
Tynsall Avenue	Webheath	21
Weatheroak Close	Webheath	58
Yeadon Close	Webheath	24
Alton Close	Headless Cross	11
Archer Terrace	Headless Cross	5
Ashton Close	Headless Cross	32
Bascote Close	Headless Cross	40
Belmont Close	Headless Cross	26
Birchfield Road	Headless Cross	156
Birchfield Road - 358-366	Headless Cross	
Birchfield Road - Birchfield Court	Headless Cross	
Bredon View	Headless Cross	26
Burns Close	Headless Cross	26
Byron Road	Headless Cross	26
Carlton Close	Headless Cross	16
Chapel Street	Headless Cross	24
Charles Street	Headless Cross	36
Clent Avenue	Headless Cross	55
Coleridge Close	Headless Cross	22
Cranham Close	Headless Cross	93
Dorridge Close	Headless Cross	12
Duxford Close	Headless Cross	43

West Area	Area	No. of properties
Eadie Mews	Headless Cross	10
Elgar Close	Headless Cross	6
Epsom Close	Headless Cross	19
Erwood Close	Headless Cross	30
Evesham Road	Headless Cross	162
Fairbourne Gardens	Headless Cross	19
Feckenham Road	Headless Cross	155
Fenwick Close	Headless Cross	28
Fordbridge Close	Headless Cross	36
Goldthorne Close	Headless Cross	14
Great Barn Lane	Headless Cross	20
Guiting Close	Headless Cross	3
Hamilton Road	Headless Cross	19
Harrison Road	Headless Cross	19
Highfield Road	Headless Cross	9
Jubilee Avenue	Headless Cross	77
Longfellow Close	Headless Cross	88
Malvern Road	Headless Cross	121
Mansell Road	Headless Cross	3
Marlpit Lane	Headless Cross	28
Mason Close	Headless Cross	34
Mason Road	Headless Cross	197
Milton Close	Headless Cross	25
Noonan Close	Headless Cross	5
Plymouth Close	Headless Cross	65
Plymouth Court	Headless Cross	
Rectory Road	Headless Cross	44
Rectory Road - Rectory Court	Headless Cross	

Rectory Road - St Lukes Cottages	Headless Cross	
Rochester Close	Headless Cross	5
Rookery Close	Headless Cross	13
Scott Road	Headless Cross	5
Shelley Close	Headless Cross	16
Spinney Mews	Headless Cross	11
Spinney Walk	Headless Cross	6
Stonehouse Close	Headless Cross	
Tennyson Road	Headless Cross	79
The Meadway	Headless Cross	143
The Rough	Headless Cross	
Vaynor Drive	Headless Cross	12
Woodend Close	Headless Cross	28
Woodside Avenue	Headless Cross	8
Wordsworth Avenue	Headless Cross	58
Austcliff Close	Crabbs Cross	39
Banners Lane	Crabbs Cross	92
Blythe Close	Crabbs Cross	14
Boultons Lane	Crabbs Cross	59
Campden Close	Crabbs Cross	50
Chandlers Close	Crabbs Cross	60
Church Down Close	Crabbs Cross	41
Crabbs Cross Lane	Crabbs Cross	47
Enfield Road	Crabbs Cross	63
Evesham Road	Crabbs Cross	292
Forest View	Crabbs Cross	49
Glenfield Close	Crabbs Cross	14
Jordans Close	Crabbs Cross	36

West Area	Area	No. of properties
Kenilworth Close	Crabbs Cross	36
Lea Croft Road	Crabbs Cross	89
Leckhampton Close	Crabbs Cross	5
Little Acre	Crabbs Cross	26
Littlewoods	Crabbs Cross	25
Priestfield Road	Crabbs Cross	4
Shakels Close	Crabbs Cross	9
Slimbridge Close	Crabbs Cross	62
St Peter's Close	Crabbs Cross	43
Stableford Close	Crabbs Cross	14
The Fearnings Cottages	Crabbs Cross	19
Ullapool Close	Crabbs Cross	4
Well Close	Crabbs Cross	64
Well Close - Glendale House	Crabbs Cross	
Windrush Close	Crabbs Cross	8
Woodberrow Lane	Crabbs Cross	25
Wychwood Drive	Crabbs Cross	24
Yvonne Road	Crabbs Cross	71
Avonbank Close	Walkwood	47
Bilbury Close	Walkwood	49
Damson Close	Walkwood	29
Drakes Close	Walkwood	24
Lightoak Close	Walkwood	59
Longborough Close	Walkwood	5
Milford Close	Walkwood	61
Moorcroft Close	Walkwood	35
Moorcroft Gardens	Walkwood	88
Morton Lane	Walkwood	5
Newport Close	Walkwood	32
Oswestry Close	Walkwood	43
Prudden Close	Walkwood	
Rangeworthy Close	Walkwood	50
Spetchley Close	Walkwood	66
Tidbury Close	Walkwood	99
Walkwood Crescent	Walkwood	20
Walkwood Road	Walkwood	112

Alderminster Close	Hunt End	3
Ashmores Close	Hunt End	40
Brookfield Close	Hunt End	48
Brookhampton Close	Hunt End	4
Chesterton Close	Hunt End	54
Claverdon Close	Hunt End	31
Coleshill Close	Hunt End	46
Dagtail Lane	Hunt End	31
Didcot Close	Hunt End	24
Ditchford Close	Hunt End	19
Elmhurst Close	Hunt End	18
Elmstone Close	Hunt End	16
Enfield Road	Hunt End	48
Farmcote Close	Hunt End	10
Featherbed Lane	Hunt End	4
Feckenham Road	Hunt End	24
Hunt End Lane	Hunt End	33
Love Lyne	Hunt End	8
Stonepits Lane	Hunt End	38
Tippings Hill	Hunt End	8
Wadbury Hill	Hunt End	6
Weavers Close	Hunt End	5
Weavers Hill	Hunt End	10
Brookhouse Lane	Callow Hill	13
Callow Hill Lane	Callow Hill	15
Foxholes Lane	Callow Hill	73
Green Lane	Callow Hill	6
Parmington Close	Callow Hill	23
Partridge Lane	Callow Hill	34
Sillins Lane	Callow Hill	16
Stanford Close	Callow Hill	10
Summerhouse Close	Callow Hill	21
Tanwood Close	Callow Hill	27
Thornccliffe Close	Callow Hill	6
Underwood Close	Callow Hill	89
Upleadon Close	Callow Hill	12
Valley Close	Callow Hill	13
Windmill Gardens	Callow Hill	5
Woodbury Close	Callow Hill	33
Woodgreen Close	Callow Hill	8
Wychbold Close	Callow Hill	10

<u>West Area</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>No. of properties</u>
Kempsford Close	Oakenshaw South	47
Lineholt Close	Oakenshaw South	79
Mercot Close	Oakenshaw South	123
Newton Close	Oakenshaw South	28
Oakham Close	Oakenshaw South	86
Perryfields Close	Oakenshaw South	67
Rockford Close	Oakenshaw South	94
Stoneleigh Close	Oakenshaw South	81
Towbury Close	Oakenshaw South	61
Welford Close	Oakenshaw South	20
Yar Mill Close - Grangers Lane	Oakenshaw South	30
Kempsford Close	Oakenshaw South	47
Lineholt Close	Oakenshaw South	79
Mercot Close	Oakenshaw South	123
Newton Close	Oakenshaw South	28
Oakham Close	Oakenshaw South	86
Perryfields Close	Oakenshaw South	67
Rockford Close	Oakenshaw South	94
Stoneleigh Close	Oakenshaw South	81
Towbury Close	Oakenshaw South	61
Welford Close	Oakenshaw South	20
Yar Mill Close - Grangers Lane	Oakenshaw South	30
		7799

<u>East Area</u>	<u>Area</u>	<u>No. of Properties</u>
Winyates way- St Georges Court	Winyates	4
Holyoakes Close	Winyates East	28
Birmingham Road MG	Mappleborough Green	3
Norton Close	Matchborough East	12
Allensmore Close	Matchborough East	32
Munsley Close	Matchborough East	48
Bishopstone Close	Matchborough East	21
Cradley Close	Matchborough East	23
Ledbury Close	Matchborough East	66
Kenchester Close	Matchborough East	50
Hatfield Close	Matchborough East	27
Garway Close	Matchborough East	73
Goosehill Close	Matchborough East	25
Felton Close	Matchborough East	104
Jackfield Close	Matchborough East	38
Easenhall Lane	Matchborough East	29
Haseley Close	Matchborough East	65
Ganborough Close	Matchborough East	11
Farnborough Close	Matchborough East	42
Dunchurch Close	Matchborough East	35
Cosford Close	Matchborough East	22
Binton Close	Matchborough East	50
Atherstone Close	Matchborough East	38
Ansley Close	Matchborough East	35

	East	
Romsley Close	Winyates East	23
Quibury Close	Winyates East	23
Petton Close	Winyates East	47
Atcham Close	Winyates East	112
		1241

POTENTIAL ADDITIONAL WEST AREA PROPERTIES

	Area	No. of Properties
Astwood Lane	Astwood Bank	45
Astwood Lane - Moat Court	Astwood Bank	4
Avenue Road	Astwood Bank	70
Badger Brook Lane	Astwood Bank	17
Badger Brook Lane - Doebank House	Astwood Bank	5
Beverley Close	Astwood Bank	18
Butler Street	Astwood Bank	21
Castle Street	Astwood Bank	32
Castle Street - Castle Court	Astwood Bank	14
Chapel Road	Astwood Bank	17
Chapel Road - Chapel Court	Astwood Bank	6
Chapel Street	Astwood Bank	17
Chapel Street - Adj 17	Astwood Bank	1
Chestnut Road	Astwood Bank	39
Church Road	Astwood Bank	54
Church Road - Adj 6	Astwood Bank	1
Church Road - Church Court	Astwood Bank	8
Croft Lane	Astwood Bank	4
Cyprus Avenue	Astwood Bank	24
Dark Lane	Astwood Bank	20
Dark Lane - Manders Close	Astwood Bank	10
Dark Lane - The Orchards	Astwood Bank	3

Evesham Rd - 1210	Astwood Bank	13
Evesham Road	Astwood Bank	266
Evesham Road - 1184-1186	Astwood Bank	11
Evesham Road - Adj 760	Astwood Bank	2
Evesham Road - Manor House	Astwood Bank	8
Evesham Road - Manor House Lane	Astwood Bank	3
Evesham Road - RO 1196	Astwood Bank	2
Evesham Road - RO Post Office	Astwood Bank	1
Evesham Road - Tookeys Drive	Astwood Bank	1
Feckenham Road	Astwood Bank	49
Foregate Street	Astwood Bank	58
Foregate Street - Post Office Walk	Astwood Bank	2
Gorsey Close	Astwood Bank	37
High Street	Astwood Bank	34
Hoopers Lane	Astwood Bank	22
New Road	Astwood Bank	21
Overdale	Astwood Bank	8
Popes Lane	Astwood Bank	3
Popes Lane	Astwood Bank	7
Poverty	Astwood Bank	6
Priest Meadow Close	Astwood Bank	83
Queen Street	Astwood Bank	4

Dewsbury Close	Astwood Bank	13
Doebank Drive	Astwood Bank	2
Edgioake Lane	Astwood Bank	1

Additional West properties cont.

Red Lion Site	Astwood Bank	5
Retreat Street	Astwood Bank	37
Rowborough Close	Astwood Bank	4
Sambourne Lane	Astwood Bank	10
The Saltway	Astwood Bank	12
Tookeys Drive	Astwood Bank	5
Western Hill Close	Astwood Bank	59
Yeomans Close	Astwood Bank	52
High Trees Close	Oakenshaw	59
Ladbrook Close	Oakenshaw	31
Mickleton Close	Oakenshaw	204
Mitcheldean Close	Oakenshaw	17
Cornwell Close	Wirehill	15
Danzey Close	Wirehill	10
Ettingley Close	Wirehill	28
Fernwood Close	Wirehill	33
Green Lane	Wirehill	22
Nine Days Lane	Wirehill	33
Ashperton Close	Southcrest	21
Byford Close	Southcrest	4
Torrs Close	Southcrest	11
Pool Bank	Southcrest	1
Dulais Close	Southcrest	4
Eastnor Close	Southcrest	7
Gilbertstone Close	Southcrest	22
Foredrift Close	Southcrest	65
Compton Close	Southcrest	36
Hollowfields Close	Southcrest	71
Hollowfields Close - Adj 49	Southcrest	1
Ellerdene Close	Southcrest	56
		2539

Northside Close	Oakenshaw	20
Outwood Close	Oakenshaw	15
Painswick Close	Oakenshaw	43
Patch Lane	Oakenshaw	132
Peterbrook Close	Oakenshaw	44
Pheasant lane	Oakenshaw	1
Rosehall Close	Oakenshaw	71
Underhill Close	Oakenshaw	45
Whitchurch Close	Oakenshaw	23
Yarningale Close	Oakenshaw	52
Atworth Close	Wirehill	21
Batsford Close	Wirehill	50

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

HOME REPAIRS ASSISTANCE POLICY 2010

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Brandon Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment and Health
Relevant Head of Service	Angie Heighway, Head of Community Services
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To agree the proposed Home Repairs Assistance Policy 2010, a replacement for the existing Policy, this gives details of discretionary financial assistance to owners occupiers to improve housing standards.
- 1.2 The Home Repairs Assistance Policy is also in the process of being considered for approval by the other District Councils within Worcestershire.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

the Home Repairs Assistance Policy attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 From 1st June 2010 the delivery of the Disabled Facilities Grants, Kickstart and 'Lifetime Loans', now to be called Home Repairs Assistance, has been undertaken through the newly commissioned Home Improvement Agency, Worcestershire Care & Repair, managed by Festival Housing.
- 3.2 The Home Repairs Assistance Policy covers assistance given to bring properties in the private sector (owner-occupied) up to the Decent Homes standard or to respond to Housing & Health Safety Rating System (HHSRS) category one hazards. This financial assistance is offered as an interest-free loan. It is critical to the council meeting its decent homes targets for vulnerable occupiers and funding will be used to assist those households where work is less than £5k or who do not qualify for Kickstart funding.
- 3.3 Over the previous three years the Council has provided 138 loans for decent homes work to be undertaken.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The Home Repairs Assistance Policy seeks to meet the following aims;
- a) Increasing the percentage of vulnerable persons in the private sector whose accommodation meets the 'Decent Homes' standard.
 - b) Ensuring adequate conditions in rented accommodation.
 - c) Reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty.
 - d) Meeting the statutory duties of the Council to respond to health and safety issues in housing.
 - e) Meeting the recognised local needs and circumstances identified in the current Housing Strategy, Empty Property Strategy, Community Safety Partnership Strategy, Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy, Worcestershire Sustainable Community Strategy, and Worcestershire Supporting People Strategy 2010, regarding house conditions and their affect upon health and safety.
- 4.2 Officers from across the County have worked to produce a common policy for the provision of Home Repairs Assistance. This common policy means home owners will receive a standardised service regardless of where they live.
- 4.3 Through the use of a loan, the Council is able to maximise the use of resources, as the funding pot is, in time, replenished whilst still bringing properties up to decent homes standard.
- 4.4 Applicants for Home Repairs Assistance from the Council will only be considered if it is confirmed that the Kickstart Scheme is not suitable.
- 4.5 The introduction of Kickstart and maximum entitlement of Home Repairs Assistance being restricted to £5k should mean greater numbers of households are able to be assisted.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The Council's current budget is £150,000 for decent homes assistance for owner occupiers.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

The Regulatory Reform Order (2002) gave Local Authorities the freedom to determine individually the financial assistance they offer with the exception of Disabled Facilities Grants providing they adopt a policy outlining the assistance they offer.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

This policy will replace the Housing Assistance Policy 2005.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 Enterprising Community – Raising the standards of private sector housing by assisting occupiers improve their property to meet the 'Decent Homes' standard especially vulnerable occupiers.
- 8.2 Safe - Improved the safety of private sector properties by tackling HHSRS cat1 hazards.
- 8.3 Clean and Green – Assisting occupiers to improve the thermal efficiency of their properties and reducing households living in fuel poverty.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

There is a risk that if the proposed Home Repairs Assistance Policy is not approved, then the new Home Improvement Agency will have to operate a number of different policies across the county which will cause inequalities in service delivery.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

Customers will have increased opportunities through the use of the Kickstart Scheme.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

An equalities impact assessment has been undertaken in-conjunction with the other local authorities in Worcestershire.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

All works undertaken using Council funding will be required to follow procurement procedures agreed with the Home Improvement Agency.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

Assisting occupiers to improve the thermal efficiency of their properties will reduce the amount of fuel they require.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

None.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

None.

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

None.

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Improving the standard of properties will have a positive impact on the occupier's health and well being.

18. LESSONS LEARNT

None.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Consultation has taken place with the Home Improvement Agency and the local authorities within Worcestershire.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Community Services	Yes
Head of Resources	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	Yes

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards.

22. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Home Repairs Assistance Policy 2010

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Housing Assistance Policy 2005

24. KEY**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Matthew Bough
 E Mail: matthew.bough@redditchbc.gov.uk
 Tel: 01527 64252 ext:3120

Redditch Borough Council

Home Repairs Assistance Policy 2010

APPENDIX 1

1 Introduction

The Reform Order

In July 2002 the Government issued legislation, the Regulatory Reform (Housing Assistance) (England and Wales) Order 2002, which requires all Councils to adopt and publish a policy as to how they intend to use the powers set out this legislation.

The purpose of this document

This Home Repairs Assistance Policy (HRA) sets out the basis on which Redditch Borough Council will offer financial assistance for works of repair or renewal in the private housing sector.

All housing assistance approved under this policy will be discretionary and are subject to the Council having sufficient funds. The policy does not affect the offer of mandatory Disabled Facility Grants.

The Council will review this policy on a regular basis to take into account changing policies at national and regional level and all available information on the condition of private sector housing in the Borough.

The aim of this policy

The key objective is to assist vulnerable people achieve decent, suitable and affordable homes in sustainable communities and in particular will aim to;

- Increasing the percentage of vulnerable persons in the private sector whose accommodation meets the 'Decent Homes' standard.
- Ensuring adequate conditions in rented accommodation.
- Reduce the number of households living in fuel poverty.
- Meeting the statutory duties of the Council to respond to health and safety issues in housing.
- Meeting the recognised local needs and circumstances identified in the current Housing Strategy, Empty Property Strategy, Community Safety Partnership Plan, Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy, Worcestershire Sustainable Community Strategy, and Worcestershire Supporting People Strategy 2010, regarding house conditions and their affect upon health and safety.

APPENDIX 1

2 Purpose and Form of Home Repairs Assistance

Home Repairs Assistance may be offered by Redditch Borough Council in accordance with this policy towards the cost of:

- (i) the improvement, repair or adaptation of existing living accommodation including mobile homes and houseboats
- (ii) any other initiatives which are consistent with the aims and objectives of the Council's Private Sector Housing Strategy

The Council may enter into partnership with other organisations or agencies to deliver financial assistance.

The assistance will be focused primarily on particular clients' e.g. disabled, elderly and vulnerable households across the city and on particular themes, for example to improve energy efficiency and eradicate fuel poverty.

3 Persons Eligible for Home Repairs Assistance

Any person who makes an application for Housing Assistance must:-

- (i) be over 18 years of age at the date of the application, and
- (ii) live in the dwelling as his/her only main residence, and
- (iii) have an owner's interest in the dwelling (other than an interest by virtue of being a Registered Social Landlord under Part 1 of the Housing Act 1996 or being eligible for such registration), or be a tenant or licensee of the dwelling, alone or jointly with others but not being a member of the landlord's family, with a tenancy or license permitting occupation of the dwelling for a minimum period of 12 months after approval of the housing assistance, and
- (iv) have the power or duty to carry out the works and where appropriate have the owner's consent in writing to carrying out the works, and
- (v) satisfy such test(s) of resources as the Council may have in place
- (vi) not be ineligible, by virtue of the Housing, Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996, regulations made under the Act or any other enactment.
- (vii) homeowners have the primary responsibility for ensuring their homes are properly maintained but we will assist vulnerable homeowners to make sure they have the opportunity for achieving decent homes. Where available we will assist homeowners to take advantage of private finance to resolve their problems, thereby maximising the impact of available public funds.
- (viii) Residential Social Landlords or their tenants will not be eligible for HRA.

APPENDIX 1

- (ix) Ensure that no breach of statutory requirements occurs, for example any necessary planning consent is obtained, planning conditions are adhered to and building regulation requirements met.

4 Types of Assistance Available

The type of assistance available to home owners and tenants will be based on a mixture of advice, private finance and public finance (if available) to priority cases based on the need and circumstances of the applicant.

- The basic information, advice and “sign posting” service will cover repairs, maintenance and improvements including information on builders, energy efficiency, other rehousing options, etc.
- Advice to homeowners about where they might be able to access private finance. This includes the range of financial opportunities accessed via Worcestershire Care and Repair Agency and/or the Council which will be available this year.

The Home Repairs Assistance will be provided in accordance with the following hierarchy:

- Level of client’s own savings that are reasonably available
- Client’s ability to access alternative sources of funding such as charities
- Client’s ability to extend a mortgage or secure an affordable loan
- Provision of funding through the Kickstart Scheme.
- Home Repair Assistance (HRA) for works under £5k, when the above means have been considered and found not to be able to meet the assessed works for property.

APPENDIX 1

5 Home Repairs Assistance	
Eligibility criteria	<p>Owner-occupiers or private tenants with a repairing responsibility in receipt of one or more of the following means tested benefits:-</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Working Tax Credit (with an income, after tax, of less than £15,460) • Income Support • Council Tax Benefit (doesn't include single person or disabled person discount) • Pension Guarantee Credit (not pension saving credit) • Jobseekers allowance (income based only) • ESA (income related) • Income support/job seekers allowance/working tax credit/housing benefit/council tax benefit/guaranteed pension credit. • disabled persons who are in receipt of attendance allowance or disability living allowance • household savings of less than £16,000.
Works qualifying criteria	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Property in need of essential repairs as determined by the Housing Act 2004 as a 'Category 1 Hazard' in order to make the property healthy, safe, wind and weatherproof. 2. Property in need of repairs to achieve the 'Decent Homes' Standard. <p>Priority will be given to qualifying applicants whose homes present a Category 1 Hazard.</p>
Conditions	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Level of grant is restricted to up to a maximum of £5,000 within any 5-year period. 2. Grant repayable in full to the Council should the property be disposed of or sold. The charge will be registered with Land Registry or as a local land charge 3. Must have lived at the relevant property for at least 12 months. 4. Once approval has been given, the applicant has until 6 months from the date of approval to complete the works.
Maximum grant	£5,000.00

APPENDIX 1

Notes. This is a discretionary loan and subject to available resources. A charge is placed on a property receiving Home Repairs Assistance. If demand for assistance exceeds the budget available, the Council does not undertake to maintain a waiting list.

6 Making a Formal Application

All applications must be provided through Worcestershire Care and Repair Agency and must include the following original documentation:-

- (i) Where the estimated cost of the works exceeds £1,000, a minimum of two quotations is required to be set out on the schedule of housing assistance provided by the Council. If the estimated works is below £1,000 the number of quotes required is at the discretion of the Housing Policy Manager, having regards to the relevant procurement policy. The Council may accept less than two quotations or use a previously approved contractor where the works involve specialist services.
- (ii) Particulars of the work to be carried out including where appropriate plans, specifications and specialist reports.
- (iii) Details of any professional fees or charges relating to the work and for which assistance is being sought.
- (iv) Confirmation of planning and/or building control approval where appropriate.
- (v) Proof of ownership from a solicitor or mortgagee, or copies of the title deeds/land certificate, or copy of the tenancy agreement or licence to occupy.
- (vi) Where the application is the owner or landlord, a signed undertaking for the Council to place a charge on the property to ensure repayment of the Home Repairs Assistance if the conditions imposed by this policy with regard to future occupation, letting or ownership are broken.

The application will only be considered complete when the Council has all the information it needs to be able to make a decision on the application.

7 Restrictions on Assistance

No assistance will normally be given for work started before formal approval of an application, except that:

- (i) The Council may in exceptional circumstances exempt an application from this condition for example where a defect may present a serious risk to health and safety.
- (ii) The Council may, with consent of the applicant, treat the application as varied so exclude any works that have been started before approval.

Home Repairs Assistance will not normally be available for:-

- repair/replacement of porches, conservatories, outbuildings etc

APPENDIX 1

- cosmetic repairs or redecoration
- completion of DIY jobs started by the occupant or others
- works which are covered by a household insurance policy

The Council will not consider an application for assistance in respect of premises built or converted less than 10 years from the date of the application.

No assistance will be given in respect of properties owned by Statutory Authorities or trusts. This includes properties owned by Registered Social Landlord, NHS Trusts and Police Authorities.

The Council will assess whether prices given by contractors meet value for money. In determining this, the Officer will give consideration to similar jobs priced within the last year. The Officer may also choose to do a further check on the price by asking a regularly used contractor to price for the work.

The Officer should also give consideration to the procedure for identifying new contractors.

In the event that the Officer believes the price for contracts are too high and identifies an appropriate price for this work (which is lower), then they must advise the client that the total eligible grant or assistance will be the lower amount. The client is under no obligation to use the cheaper priced contractor but must be aware that the Council will only make a loan up to the value of the lower price.

The Council recognises that these policies cannot cover every likely situation and there will be people who genuinely are in need of some form of urgent support that are precluded from accessing them due to a certain aspect. In these situations the council may consider offering assistance in exceptional circumstances.

8 Supervision of Works

Worcestershire Care and Repair Agency will have the responsibility for supervision of the works with the applicant and not the Council.

9 Payment of Assistance

The Home Repairs Assistance will only be paid if

- (i) the assisted works are completed within twelve months from the date of approval unless the delay was caused by Redditch Borough Council, and
- (ii) the assisted works are carried out in accordance with the specifications set out in the formal approval or as varied with the agreement of the Council, and
- (iii) the assisted works are carried out to the satisfaction of the Council and the applicant, and

APPENDIX 1

- (iv) the Council are provided with an invoice, demand or receipt for payment in an acceptable format. Any such invoice must contain sufficient detail for the Council to identify in full the works carried out and the price charged and must not be provided by the applicant or a member of his/her family. The work must have been undertaken by a contractor approved by the council (in writing).

The Home Repairs Assistance may be paid in one lump sum on satisfactory completion of the works or in instalments (“stage payments”) as the work proceeds. Stage payments will only be made where the Council is satisfied the value of the work completed exceeds the value claimed. The final payment shall be a minimum of one tenth of the total value of the Home Repairs Assistance approved.

No Home Repairs Assistance will be given until binding agreements appropriate to the form of assistance have been formally executed.

The Council will not enter into any Form of Contract with a builder or contractor to complete the assisted works.

10 Repayment of Home Repairs Assistance

General

- The Home Repairs Assistance loan is repayable to the Council on the future transfer of ownership of the property. A charge against the property will be placed with Land Registry or a local land charge.
- If an applicant is approved but it subsequently appears to the Council that the applicant (or one of two or more joint applicants) was not, at the time the application was approved, entitled to the assistance approved, then no payment shall be made (or no further instalments paid) and the Council may seek to recover immediately any payments made together with interest accruing from the date of payment.
- If the applicant is the owner of a dwelling in respect of which Homes Repairs Assistance has been approved and ceases to be the owner before the works are completed he/she shall repay to the Council on demand the total amount of Housing Assistance that has been paid.

Breach of Undertakings

- Where an owner occupier has given a signed undertaking to occupy a property as his/her principal residence after completion of the assisted works, and if the owner ceases to occupy the relevant dwelling as their principal residence the owner shall repay on demand to the Council the total amount of Home Repairs Assistance paid out.
- Where a landlord (or owner) has given a signed undertaking that the property will be available for letting for a period specified after completion of the assisted works, and if the landlord ceases to make the relevant property available for

APPENDIX 1

letting during the specified period then the landlord shall repay on demand to the Council the total amount of Home Repairs Assistance paid out.

- Where the Council has the right to demand repayment but extenuating circumstances exist, the Council may determine to waive the right to repayment or to demand a sum less than the full amount of Home Repairs Assistance.

Death of Applicant

- If the applicant should die before the before the Home Repairs Assistance is approved, the application will be treated as withdrawn.
- If the applicant should die after approval of the Home Repairs Assistance or whilst the approved works are in progress, the Council may at its discretion agree to completion or making good of the works and pay the Home Repairs Assistance in full or, if the works originally agreed are not completed in full, an appropriate proportion of the Home Repairs Assistance.

Additional Conditions

The Council reserves the right to impose additional conditions when making a grant approval. These may include but are not restricted to:

- i. A contribution to the cost of the assisted works by the applicant
- ii. Housing accommodation being maintained in repair after completion of the assisted works.
- iii. The right of the Council to recover specialised equipment when no longer needed.

Breach of any additional conditions gives the Council the rights to seek repayment of the Home Repairs Assistance on demand.

11 Decision and Notification

The Council will notify applicants in writing whether their application has been approved or refused. The decision will be notified as soon as reasonably practicable.

If the application is approved, the notification will specify the works that are eligible for assistance, the value of the assistance, the form the assistance will take and the builder/contractor who will carry out the works

If the application is refused, the Council will give the reasons for the refusal and also confirm the procedure for appealing against the decision.

APPENDIX 1

12 Re-determination of Amount of Grant

Where the Council is satisfied that because of circumstances beyond the control of the applicant which could not have reasonably been foreseen, the cost of the assisted works has either increased or decreased, the Council may at its discretion re-determine the assistance given in accordance with the framework set out in this document and notify the applicant accordingly.

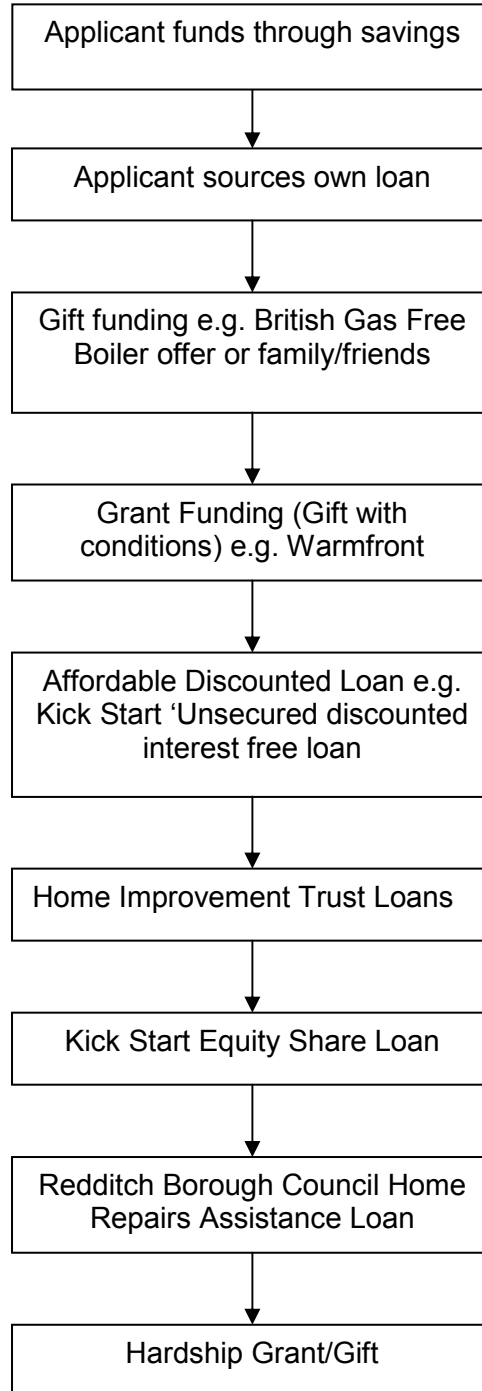
13 Appeals Against Decisions

Any person who is aggrieved by a decision not to give financial assistance as a consequence of this policy may appeal to seek review of the decision.

- The appeal should first be made in writing to the Head of Community Services. If the person appealing remains dissatisfied they have the right to go through the Council's Corporate Complaints procedure or approach the Local Government Ombudsman.

APPENDIX 1

Appendix A Hierarchy of Assistance



REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

REGIONAL HOUSING POT GRANT PROPOSALS

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Brandon Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment and Health
Relevant Head of Service	Angie Heighway, Head of Community Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To consider proposed uses of the Regional Housing Pot Grant for loans to landlords of houses in multiple occupation (HMOs) to the value of 50% of the required work, subject to a maximum of £3,000 per unit of accommodation that is repayable when ownership of the property is transferred, Private Sector Housing software and research & intelligence projects.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

- 1) That up to £30,000 of the Regional Housing Pot be transferred to the 2010/11 Capital Programme for loans to landlords of HMO's; and

RESOLVE that

- 2) That up to £10,000 of the Regional Housing Pot be used for the purchase of appropriate management software for the Private Sector Housing Team and;
- 3) That up to £50,000 of the Regional Housing Pot be used for the following strategic housing research & intelligence projects including
 - Private Sector Stock Condition report
 - Strategic Housing Market Assessment
 - Worcestershire Housing Strategy
 - Worcestershire Local Investment Plan

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Council currently has £154,000 unallocated Regional Housing Pot Grant from its 2009/10 & 2010/11 allocation. This Grant was given via the Regional Housing Board for the purpose of dealing with issues regarding non decency of properties occupied by vulnerable people in the private sector.
- 3.2 The Government set a target for Local Authorities to achieve 70% of vulnerable occupiers living in decent housing in the private sector by 2010. The Council has exceeded this target. "Vulnerable" households are defined as those in receipt of income or disability related benefits.
- 3.3 The last Private Sector Stock Condition Survey and Housing Needs Survey were completed in 2005 and 2006 respectively, and are at the end of their useful life.
- 3.4 There are no current systems in place within the Council to monitor complaints regarding private sector housing issues. Officers are unable to ascertain who is dealing with which complaint and at what stage the complaint is at and this ultimately impacts upon customer service.
- 3.5 The Council has given 'Lifetime loans' to HMO landlords for a number of years however no allocation was requested for 2010/2011. Without assistance landlords may choose to no longer provide this type of accommodation.
- 3.6 There are an estimated 170 HMO's and are considerably older than the rest of Redditch with 64% of HMO's built before 1919.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Houses in multiple occupation (HMO's) pose far greater risks to their occupants than single household dwellings, in particular in respect of fire. The Housing Act 2004 introduced mandatory licensing of larger, higher risk HMO's
- 4.2 There are an estimated 170 HMO's in the Borough. The stock condition survey 2005 found that 76% of HMO's had at least one problem in terms of unfitness, disrepair and energy efficiency and 64% had inadequate fire precautions.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

- 4.3 Without assistance landlords may choose not to operate HMO's which will have a significant impact on the provision of accommodation for single people and add further pressures on the Council's waiting list.
- 4.4 In order for the Council to have effective strategic housing and planning policies the Council is required to make assessments of the market and condition of the properties in the Borough. The Assessments will also assess the viability of current and future market and affordable housing developments and the impact and needs required from the private sector in meeting demand.
- 4.5 The Council is currently working with the local authorities in Worcestershire to produce a Countywide Housing Strategy and the Local Investment Plan for Worcestershire with the Homes & Communities Agency.
- 4.6 The Local Investment Plan will be used by the Homes & Communities Agency when considering the funding requirements and priorities for Worcestershire and Redditch.
- 4.7 In order to performance manage and provide information to assist in the strategic direction of the Private Sector Housing Team a database system is required to ensure the limited resources of the team are effectively utilised.
- 4.8 Owners of properties are now able to convert house's in to HMO's without planning permission, therefore more proactive inspections are required to ensure any HMO's meet the required standards for this type of property.
- 4.9 Officers will bring a further report on proposals for the remaining monies.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council has £154,000 from the Regional Housing Pot unallocated. The allocation of this report's projects will leave £64,000 unallocated for future projects.
- 5.2 Officers are not able to confirm if an allocation for 2011/12 will be made following the comprehensive spending review announcement.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Housing Act 2004 introduced a measure for assessing health and safety hazards (HHSRS) and a landlord licensing requirement for houses in multiple occupation (HMOs).
- 6.2 Local Authorities have flexibility in providing discretionary assistance for repairs under the Regulatory Reform Order (RRO) (Housing Assistance) Order 2002.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Housing Assistance Policy was agreed by Council on the 30th of January 2006 which introduced loans to landlords of HMO's
- 7.2 The Private Sector Housing Strategy was approved in December 2009.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 Enterprising Community- Raising the standards of private sector housing by assisting landlords improve their property to ensure tenants live in a safe and secure environment.
- 8.2 Safe - Improve the safety of private sector tenants by ensuring HMO properties have adequate fire precaution.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

The Council's planning and housing policies will be at risk if appropriate research does not provide a robust evidence base.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

Providing landlords with financial assistance to undertake necessary works will enable the Council to ensure the safety of residents and assist in keeping HMO's within the housing market.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

None

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

All research & Intelligence work will be let following the Council's standing orders.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

Results from the private sector stock condition survey will assist the Council to utilise its resources more strategically for energy efficiency and reducing fuel poverty.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

One part time officer is funded from previous Regional Housing Pot funding to undertake the Council's statutory duty to license and monitor licensable HMO properties.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

None

16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998

None

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

Improving the conditions of the private sector stock will have a positive effect on resident's health & well being.

18. LESSONS LEARNT

Without a robust evidence base the Council is unable to ensure its limited resources are provide in the correct areas and to vulnerable residents.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

Officers are discussing with Bromsgrove District Council an appropriate software system.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	yes
Chief Executive	yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	yes
Head of Community Services	yes
Head of Resources	yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	yes
Corporate Procurement Team	yes

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Matthew Bough
E Mail: matthew.bough@redditchbc.gov.uk
Tel: 3120



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 15th
September, 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Diane Thomas (Chair), Councillor Anita Clayton (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Bill Hartnett, Robin King, William Norton, Mark Shurmer, Graham Vickery, Adam Griffin and Peter Anderson

Also Present:

Councillor Roger Hill

Officers:

E Hopkins, A Heighway and J Pickering

Committee Services Officer:

M Craggs and I Westmore

78. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Councillor Quinney. Councillor Griffin was the named substitute in her absence.

Members were informed that Councillor Banks had been replaced on the Committee by Councillor Anderson.

79. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any party whip

80. MINUTES

The wording of minute 69 was amended to clarify that Mr Simon Oliver was a local resident and consultee on the Climate Change Strategy rather than a consultant by occupation.

.....
Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 15th September, 2010

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meetings of the Committee held on 25th August 2010 be confirmed as a correct record.

81. ACTIONS LIST

The Committee considered the latest version of the Action List and specific mention was made on three of the Actions, namely:

a) Courses available after the closure of the REDI Centre – Action 1

Officers would report back to the Committee in the near future with information on which courses were to be discontinued.

b) Work Programme – Action 4

Members were informed that Councillor Vickery had met with Jess Bayley to discuss the matter of undertaking a Task and Finish Group on the issue of *Promoting Redditch*. A preliminary report was expected to be received at the forthcoming Committee meeting on 6th October 2010.

c) Budget Scrutiny Workshops – Action 10

Members were informed that the first workshop, to take place on 25th October 2010, 5.00pm, would predominantly be an information sharing session which would allow for more informed discussion at the second budget scrutiny workshop that was due to take place on 22nd November 2010 at 5.00pm.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

82. CALL-IN AND SCRUTINY OF THE FORWARD PLAN

Members were informed that the Forward Plan was the same version received at the previous meeting.

The members received the decision notice from the Executive Committee meeting of 8th September 2010. Councillor Vickery informed the Committee that, having raised concerns over the work of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP), the Executive Committee

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 15th September, 2010

agreed to task the O&S Committee with pre-scrutinising and auditing each of the strategies involved. The Chair commented that this had represented a particularly important piece of work for the Committee, especially in terms of helping to raise educational attainment and easing health inequalities through the Sustainable Communities Strategy.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

83. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

No draft scoping documents were received.

84. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee considered the following reviews in progress:

External Refurbishment of Housing Stock

The Committee was informed that a number of Councillors had contacted the Chair prior to the meeting to propose that the scope of the proposed Task and Finish Group review of housing stock within Woodrow should be widened to encompass the whole of the Borough. It was felt that this might prove more beneficial to the Borough as a whole.

However, proponents of confining the review to Woodrow argued that the review needed to be specific to Woodrow as its housing stock was unique within the Borough and should therefore be reviewed in isolation. Concern was also raised that widening the scope of the review might make it difficult to complete a thorough review within a mutually agreeable timeframe.

Following further concern that it would be unusual to alter the scope of a review after it had been initially agreed by the Committee, it was suggested that the terms and conditions of the review could be widened.

It was subsequently proposed that a short sharp review of Woodrow's housing stock could be undertaken before the Committee further considered whether to pursue a wider review.

The review of the Joint Worcestershire Hub was covered within item 8.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 15th September, 2010

RESOLVED that

Councillor Vickery to work with officers in undertaking a short-sharp review of Woodrow housing stock before reporting back to the Committee meeting on 6th October 2010.

85. JOINT WORCESTERSHIRE HUB TASK AND FINISH REVIEW - WRITTEN SUBMISSION

Members considered the Joint Worcestershire Hub Task and Finish Group Review. The Committee was invited to produce a written submission for the consideration of the Task and Finish Group for consideration at the meeting of the Group on 29th September and made a number of suggestions:

- 1) Users should be notified of their position in the queue if placed on hold.
- 2) The 'Hub' should be renamed to more accurately define and represent the service given.
- 3) A face-to-face walk in service should be installed to the particular benefit of older people.
- 4) Staff should be adequately trained to cater to district council specific queries
- 5) The service must be more efficiently run and the costs involved more transparent.
- 6) The Highways Department must be more responsive to public demand.
- 7) The accuracy of HUB responses should be subject to more rigorous monitoring.

In addition, it was commented that the staff responsible for the Hub should be focused on delivering continual improvements to the service in line with improvements in technology rather than inviting suggestions for improvement through a task and finish group review. On the contrary, the Chair argued that it was essential that the responsible officers at the County Council received the written submission from the O&S Committee as planned.

RESOLVED:

Officers to incorporate the Committee's proposals within a written submission to the Joint Worcestershire Hub Task and Finish Group for their consideration.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 15th September, 2010

86. SUB-REGIONAL CHOICE BASED LETTINGS - PRESENTATION

The Committee received a presentation on the Sub-Regional Choice Based Letting Project. This included background information, financial information, and potential advantages and disadvantages of joining the Project.

Having received the presentation, Members raised a number of concerns regarding the prospect of the Council joining the Project. In particular, concern was expressed that it would reduce the availability and subsequent choice of housing stock for Redditch residents by enabling non-Redditch residents within the sub-region to bid for its housing stock. Members thought that the potential demand from non-Redditch residents would be considerable due to the absence of existing housing stock across other parts of the sub-region.

Members also suggested that it would not be in the best interests of Redditch to adopt a regional housing allocation strategy in place its own through joining the Project.

Members doubted that the supposed benefit of providing greater housing choice for residents across the sub-region would be realised as council house tenants were traditionally less mobile in terms of moving to a property in another location compared to private tenants.

It was suggested that it might be appropriate to forward the report onto the Borough Tenants Panel for their consideration.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the Council retain the local Housing Allocations Policy and Redditch Home Choice System for the reasons stated in the preamble, above, and review in accordance with the existing constitutional framework;**
- 2) **the report be forwarded to the Borough Tenants' Panel for consideration; and**

RESOLVED that

- 3) **the report be noted.**

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 15th September, 2010

87. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 1 - APRIL TO JUNE 2010

The Committee received an oral summary of the provided report. In particular, members heard that the entire performance framework was currently undergoing a period of change.

Regarding BV 012, members queried whether the Executive Committee had a plan to tackle increasing levels of staff sickness. Officers informed the Committee that, although the Executive did not currently have such a plan in place, the Corporate Management Team was in the process of reviewing corporate sickness levels and were piloting new policies which had been successful within other local authorities and also the private sector in reducing sickness levels.

Members raised concern that it had been recorded that the Council had recycled fewer items. It was subsequently suggested that this was largely due to problems with recycling equipment at the Norton recycling plant and did not necessarily reflect current recycling levels at the Council.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted

88. QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 1 - APRIL TO JUNE 2010

The Committee received an oral summary of the provided report and were informed that future reports would follow a different approach with a greater focus on providing an analysis of the figures.

It was proposed that future reports provide more detailed information on Council revenue in order that they more accurately reflect the Council's budgetary position.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted

89. WORCESTERSHIRE SCRUTINY CHAIRS AND VICE CHAIRS NETWORK - FEEDBACK

Councillor Hartnett provided the Committee with an oral report from the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Network

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 15th September, 2010

meeting in Kidderminster on 13 September 2010 which Councillor Thomas had also attended. The Committee was informed that Councillors Hartnett and Thomas had, in principle, supported the Council's continued involvement in the Network, subject to a number of caveats. The Network agreed to meet either three or four times per annum, with the intention to hold the next meeting before the end of the year in Redditch.

A member suggested that the Network should be ambitious in terms of its scope for scrutiny.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted

90. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

91. WORK PROGRAMME

Members were informed that dates had been set for portfolio holders to individually attend future Committee meetings.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 9.20pm



Overview and Scrutiny

Committee

Tuesday, 21st September, 2010

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Diane Thomas (Chair), Councillor Anita Clayton (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Peter Anderson, Jack Cookson, Bill Hartnett, Robin King, William Norton and Brenda Quinney

Also Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy and Roy Banks, (substitute co-opted representative for UNISON).

Officers:

R Cooke, J Godwin and J Staniland

Committee Services Officer:

J Bayley and M Craggs

92. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Shurmer and Vickery. Councillor Cookson was named as the substitute for Councillor Shurmer.

93. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

There were no declarations of interest nor of any party whip.

94. SCRUTINY OF THE FORWARD PLAN

The Committee received the Forward Plan and considered which items were suitable for scrutiny.

RESOLVED that

the Committee scrutinise both the Review of the Dial a Ride Service and also the 2011/12 Grants Policy prior to consideration of both items by the Executive Committee.

.....
Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st September, 2010

95. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

Councillor Carole Gandy attended the meeting to propose that a Task and Finish review be undertaken on work experience opportunities for young people in Redditch.

The Committee was informed that young people within Redditch, in particular those around the ages of 13 and 14, had very limited choice from where to undertake their work experience. Members heard that, in many cases, the scheme was ineffective as the lack of choice was leading to young people undertaking work experience not in area of their interest. The apparent shortcomings of the scheme was seen as a significant area of concern as it was commented that the Borough contained a significant number of young people who were neither in education, employment or training (NEETs).

Members were further informed that key member organisations of the Local Strategic Partnership were unaware of the work experience scheme and consequently how to attract students through the scheme. Members raised concern that this lack of awareness from potential providers was possibly commonplace across the Borough.

Further investigation into the scheme's apparent failings was required to discover how it could be improved. An acknowledgement that the scheme was sufficiently funded increased the sense that its ineffectiveness needed to be tackled. It was also proposed that the availability of apprenticeships for, typically, 14 year olds, could be worth investigating.

Members suggested that entry to the scheme could be staggered to help ensure that the available work experience opportunities for eligible young people were not significantly reduced. Members also suggested that young people should be given the ability to experience a variety of different sectors to help develop their own sense of how they might wish to be employed in future.

Members cautioned that it was not within the remit of the Council to direct the work experience scheme. The Council could instead focus on educating the appropriate bodies on the scheme's current shortcomings and act in an advisory role to help improve its effectiveness. It was therefore proposed that the Council should liaise with the local schools as part of the review to learn their perspective.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st September, 2010

Members further commented that the scheme could be extended to 16/17 year olds, in particular recent school leavers, as they arguably had a clearer idea of where they would like to pursue future employment.

RESOLVED that:

- 1) a Task and Finish review of Work Experience Opportunities be launched;**
- 2) Councillor Anderson be appointed to Chair the Task and Finish Group; and**
- 3) the report be noted.**

96. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee considered the following reports in relation to current reviews:

a) External Refurbishment of Housing Stock

The Committee noted that it had been resolved at the previous meeting that a short-sharp review would be undertaken on housing stock in Woodrow. Relevant Councillors were due to visit Woodrow on 6th October along with Officers to observe the conditions and would report their findings to the Committee in November.

b) Joint Worcestershire Hub

Members noted that Officers had submitted a written report containing the Committee's recommendations for service improvement recorded at the previous meeting to the Joint Worcestershire Hub Task and Finish Group. The submission would be considered at the Group's next meeting on 29th September 2010.

RESOLVED that

the update reports be noted.

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

The Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel provided a summary of the written report of the Panel meeting held on 7th September 2010.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st September, 2010

RESOLVED that

the report be noted

98. ARROW VALLEY COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE - AUDIT TRAIL REPORT

The Committee received a presentation concerning an audit trail for the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre's (AVCC) contractual arrangements, due for consideration by the Executive Committee on 29th September.

The Committee was informed that the contract took the form of a management operation contract and not a Service Level Agreement. This approach corresponded with the recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee when members considered the subject earlier in the year.

The proposed term of the agreement for ten years would provide the contractor the scope to increase the value of the centre through service innovation.

The Committee heard that pre-qualifying questionnaires were distributed in advance of the specification to help ensure that the new contract would be operational from the outset of the 2011/12 financial year. The contract lease was to be for a fixed term of ten years. This would prevent the contractor from being able to automatically roll the contract over into a new ten year period.

The Chair thanked the Officers for the informative presentation.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted

99. PITCHEROAK GOLF COURSE - OPERATIONAL OPTIONS

The Committee received a presentation concerning the review of the operation of Pitcheroak Golf Course over the previous eighteen months and considered the options for future provision.

The Committee heard that the host club of the Pitcheroak Golf Course, Kingfisher Golf Club (KGC), had performed extremely well in terms of attracting increased membership and casual players against the backdrop of a sharp national decline in golf participation and golf club membership. However, despite this, it was expected

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st September, 2010

that KGC would not meet the Council's annual income target. This was largely attributed to disappointing revenue figures of non-golf services.

Members gave their support to KGC and praised its performance in the current economic climate and falling golf participation. Members also encouraged Officers and KGC to continue to work with local schools to help attract young people to the sport to the potential short and long term benefit of the Council and KGC.

The Chair thanked the officers for the informative presentation.

RECOMMENDED that:

the Council extend the current arrangements for a further operating period to enable the Council to:

- 1) determine the long term commitment of the Hereford & Worcestershire Golf Partnership; and**
- 2) review the non-golf related elements of the operation; and**

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

100. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

101. WORK PROGRAMME

Members were reminded that a delegation from Stratford District Council were to due to attend the Committee meeting on 6th October 2010 to learn from the Committee's approach to undertaking overview and scrutiny. Stratford Councillors would submit questions regarding the Committee's approach ahead of the meeting as part of their preparation. Officers would forward these questions to Members for their consideration.

The Committee was also informed that the Charging Policy Update report and Disabled Facilities Grants report, due for consideration during the meeting on 6th October 2010, would be received at the following meeting on 27th October 2010.

RESOLVED that

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 21st September, 2010

the report be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.20 pm

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

ADVISORY PANELS, WORKING GROUPS, ETC - UPDATE REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Michael Braley, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

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. RECOMMENDATIONS

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 <u>underlined</u>)	<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> / Vice-Chair: Cllr Anderson Guy Revans.	Next meeting – 16th November 2010.
2.	Economic Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Pearce</u> / Vice-Chair: Cllr Braley John Staniland / Georgina Harris	Next meeting – 2nd November 2010.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

3.	Housing Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Quinney Liz Tompkin	Last meeting – 22nd June 2010.
4.	Leisure Contracts Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Hopkins</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Anderson Kevin Cook	Last meeting – 16th August 2010
5.	Planning Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Pearce</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr M Chalk John Staniland / Ruth Bamford	Next meeting – 3rd November 2010

B. OTHER MEETINGS

6.	Constitutional Review Working Party	Chair <u>Cllr Gandy</u> / Vice Chair Cllr Braley Steve Skinner	Last meeting – 13th September 2010.
7.	Grants Panel	Chair / To be appointed at first meeting Vice Chair Cllr Braley Angie Heighway	Next meeting – Being arranged at present.
8.	Member Development Steering Group	Chair <u>Brunner</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Braley Steve Skinner / Trish Buckley	Last meeting – 27th September 2010
9.	Procurement Steering Group	Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Hall Sue Hanley	Last meeting – 18th January 2010.

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

20th October 2010

10.	Church Hill District Centre – Members' Panel	Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> Jim Prendergrast	Last meeting - 24th August 2010
-----	--	---	---------------------------------

22. APPENDICES

None.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Ivor Westmore
E Mail: ivor.westmore@redditchbc.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 64252 (Extn. 3269)

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

ACTION MONITORING

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.
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 Council, as Community Leader, expected to receive in terms of education provision for the Borough and its children and young people.	
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.	

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

Portfolio Holder(s) / Responsible Officer	Action requested	Status
16th June 2010		
M Braley / T Kristunas	<p>Quarterly Budget Monitoring – Quarter 4</p> <p>Officers undertook to provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Councillor Chance with additional information regarding Item 8 Debit; and 2. all members of the Executive Committee a breakdown of amounts held in specific reserves from public donations. 	
M Braley / H Bennett / J Godwin / T Kristunas	<p>Quarterly Performance Monitoring – Quarter 4</p> <p>Officers undertook to provide:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Councillor Chance with additional information on the percentage of Council Tax collected by the Authority in the year (BV009) and One Stop Shop: customer satisfaction (WMO 003) 	
8th September 2010		
M Braley L Tompkin / T Kristunas	<p>Irrecoverable Debts</p> <p>Officers undertook to respond to Councillor Braley as to whether the damage inflicted upon void properties constituted criminal damage.</p>	
29th September 2010		

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

20th October 2010

M Braley / I Westmore	Advisory panels – Update Report Officers undertook to update the details of Chair and Vice Chairs subsequent to recent changes	Updating carried out
G Hopkins / I Westmore / R Cooke	Redditch United Football Club (RUFC) – Financial Position Statement The Council to write to the Football Association and the Professional Footballers' Association expressing concern at the numbers of non-league clubs finding themselves in financial difficulty and requesting that those bodies do more to support the sport at a grass-roots level.	Letters to both organisations drafted
<u>Note:</u>	<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 29/09/10

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

Document is Restricted

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

Document is Restricted

