

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wed 8 Jul
2009
7.00 pm

Committee Room Two
Town Hall
Redditch



www.redditchbc.gov.uk

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- 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:
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**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
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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

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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 the Ringway Car Park.

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).



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 8 July 2009

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs: P Mould (Chair) W Norton
D Smith (Vice-Chair) J Pearce
K Banks D Taylor
G Chance D Thomas
R King

1. Apologies and named substitutes	To receive apologies for absence and details of any Councillor (or co-optee substitute) nominated to attend this meeting in place of a member of this Committee.
2. Declarations of interest and of Party Whip	To invite Councillors to declare any interest they may have in items on the Agenda and any Party Whip.
3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 12)	To confirm the minutes of the most recent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as a correct record. (Minutes attached) All Wards
4. Actions List (Pages 13 - 16)	To note the contents of the Overview and Scrutiny Actions List. (Report attached) All Wards
5. Call-in and Pre-Scrutiny	To consider whether any Key Decisions of the Executive Committee's most recent meeting(s) should be subject to call-in and also to consider whether any items on the Forward Plan require pre-scrutiny. (No separate report). All Wards

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<p>6. Task & Finish Reviews - Draft Scoping Documents</p>	<p>To consider any scoping documents provided for possible Overview and Scrutiny review.</p> <p>(No reports attached)</p> <p>All Wards</p>
<p>7. Task and Finish Groups - Progress Reports</p>	<p>To consider progress to date on the current reviews against the terms set by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.</p> <p>The current reviews in progress are:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none">1. Council Flat Communal Cleaning – Chair, Councillor P Mould;2. Dial-A-Ride – Chair, Councillor R King;3. National Angling Museum – Chair, Councillor P Mould; and4. Neighbourhood Groups – Chair, Councillor K Banks. <p>(Oral reports)</p> <p>All Wards</p>
<p>8. Budget Strategy and Budget Deficit - discussion</p> <p>(Pages 17 - 80)</p>	<p>To discuss the Council's budget strategy and budget deficit in detail and to determine whether the subject requires further scrutiny.</p> <p>(Reports attached)</p> <p>All Wards</p>
<p>9. District Centres Task and Finish Group</p> <p>(Pages 81 - 86)</p>	<p>To receive an update on actions that have been taken in response to the recommendations contained in the final report from the District Centres Task and Finish Group.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>All Wards</p>

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10. WMLGA - Scrutiny Skills Training	<p>To receive information from Members regarding the West midlands Local Government Unit course on Scrutiny Skills, which took place 1 July 2009.</p> <p>(Oral reports).</p>
11. Referrals	<p>To consider any referrals to the Overview & Scrutiny Committee direct, or arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Executive Committee or full Council• Other sources. <p>(No separate report).</p> <p>All Wards</p>
12. Work Programme (Pages 87 - 92)	<p>To consider the Committee's current Work Programme, and potential items for addition to the list arising from:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The Forward Plan / Committee agendas• External publications• Other sources. <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>All Wards</p>
13. Exclusion of the Press and Public	<p>Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Borough Director, during the course of the meeting to consider excluding the public from the meeting on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged, it may be necessary to move the following resolution:</p> <p>"That, under S.100 (A) (4) of the Local Government Act 1972, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (to be specified) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act".</p> <p>All Wards</p>



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 17 June 2009

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Phil Mould (Chair), and Councillors K Banks, G Chance, R King, W Norton, D Taylor, and D Thomas

Also Present:

Councillor M Braley
M Collins, (Vice-Chair, Standards Committee)
S Nelmes and I Rassool (BWB Consulting)

Officers:

C Flanagan, C Hemming, S Mullins, J Staniland, L Tompkin and C Wilson

Committee Services Officer:

J Bayley and H Saunders

13. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

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

14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

15. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27 May 2009 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

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Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 17 June 2009

16. ACTIONS LIST

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

a) Scrutiny of the Countryside Centre

Members were informed, in relation to Action One, that Councillor Anderson was due to attend a presentation in June on the usage of the Countryside Centre. He had advised that once he had seen this presentation he would be able to provide the Committee with further information on the possible progression of this proposed scrutiny exercise.

b) National Angling Museum Domain Names

Officers informed the Committee, in relation to Action Three, that the four domain names requested by the Committee had been bought by the Council.

c) Budget Strategy and Deficit Information

Officers informed the Committee, under Action Twelve, that they had not received any requests for further information for this item which was due to be considered at a meeting of the Committee on Wednesday 8 July. The Chair urged Members to forward any requests for information relating to this item to Officers as soon as possible.

d) Public Transport in Redditch

The Committee was informed that, as a response to Action Ten, Officers had contacted the Chief Executive of Worcestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT) to invite a representative from that organisation to attend a future meeting of the Committee to discuss public transport access to the Alexandra Hospital. The PCT had confirmed that they would be willing to attend a meeting but that responsibility for many of the concerns highlighted by the Committee regarding public transport access to the hospital lay with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust. They would however, endeavour to provide a response to the Committee's query regarding community transport access to the hospital. Officers confirmed that they had contacted the Chief Executive of Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust and were awaiting a response from him.

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On a related issue, Officers explained that they had received further information regarding the installation of a bus stop close to the Arrow Valley Park which had been discussed at the previous meeting. Councillor Pearce had attended a meeting with Officers at Worcestershire County Council where she had been informed that it was feasible to install a bus stop close to the Arrow Valley Park. One bus stop could be installed which would service people both leaving and entering the park in a circular route and would utilise the existing number 60 bus route. In order to progress this proposal, the County Council had to submit a bid for funding by the end of the month. Councillor Pearce had sought advice from Officers about how this proposal could be endorsed by the Committee. Officers had advised that as the timeframes involved in making a recommendation regarding this proposal were limited Councillor Pearce should progress this using a different route. Councillor Pearce had subsequently contacted the Council's Leader, Councillor Gandy, regarding this issue.

The Committee agreed that it wanted to make a recommendation in support of Worcestershire County Council pursuing this proposal and asked if it would be possible to make a recommendation straight to Council. Officers agreed to explore options that would enable the Committee to have this recommendation considered at the forthcoming full Council meeting.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **Officers investigate the means by which the Committee could recommend at full Council that the Council endorse Worcestershire County Council's plans to install a bus stop close to the Arrow Valley Park;**
- 2) **the Actions List be noted.**

17. CALL-IN AND PRE-SCRUTINY

The Committee discussed an item for pre-scrutiny. The Chair referred to an item on the Forward Plan that was due to be considered at a meeting of the Executive Committee on Wednesday 26 August. This item related to possible options for the use of the former covered market in Redditch town centre. The Chair suggested that this report be discussed by the Committee before being presented to the Executive Committee. The

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Committee agreed that this issue be considered at its meeting due to be held on Wednesday 19 August.

There were no Call-ins.

18. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

There were no draft scoping documents. The Chair informed the Committee that as some of the current Task and Finish Groups were nearing completion, capacity would exist to progress new Task and Finish Groups. Councillor Thomas noted that the Executive Committee had approved the need for further work to be undertaken on the allocation of funding to the Third Sector and that this could provide further Task and Finish Group work.

19. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee received reports in relation to current reviews.

a) Council Flat Communal Cleaning – Chair, Councillor P Mould

This was considered under item nine of the agenda.

b) Dial-a-Ride - Chair, Councillor R King

Councillor King informed Members that the Group had completed its third meeting. At this meeting, it had requested that Officers provide some background statistical information about the service. It had also discussed arrangements for the Group to visit the Dial-a-Ride Office and to spend an afternoon on the Dial-a-Ride buses in order to observe how the service operated first hand. The Group had requested that drivers of the Dial-a-Ride service be asked to make a note of the number of passengers they carried on each journey for a month.

c) National Angling Museum – Chair, Councillor P Mould

The Chair informed the Committee that the next meeting of the Group was scheduled to take place on Thursday 2 July at Forge Mill Needle Museum. The Group was due to look at the current collection and to consider possible methods that could be utilised to further promote the town's fishing tackle heritage at the museum. The Chair confirmed that the Group had discovered that another National Angling Museum project was already underway elsewhere in the country so it was unlikely that the Council could pursue this option further.

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d) Neighbourhood Groups - Chair, Councillor K Banks

Councillor Banks confirmed that the first meeting of the Neighbourhood Groups Task and Finish Group would take place on Tuesday 23 June at 6.00pm. Councillor Thomas noted that she had been approached by PC Fergus Green who had asked if he could give evidence to the Group.

RESOLVED that

the Task and Finish Group update reports be noted.

20. WORCESTERSHIRE LAND DRAINAGE PROTOCOL

The Committee considered updated information regarding flood and land drainage management which had been presented to them at a previous meeting in March. Officers explained that they wished to provide Members with further information regarding the development of the Flood and Water Management Bill. Officers explained that a report was due to be considered by the Executive Committee regarding guidance and protocols that the Council would need to develop to ensure that the Council complied with changing legislation regarding flooding.

Consultants from the firm BWB Consulting provided a presentation to Members on the Flood and Water Management Bill 2009. They began the presentation by outlining the key objectives of the Bill. They explained that the Bill had been initiated to address some of the disparities in current legislation and that the main objective of the Bill was to clarify the roles and responsibilities of each of the organisations and authorities expected to deal with flooding and drainage issues in the local area.

Members were informed that the Bill was in a draft format and was currently subject to consultation. It was expected that the Bill would receive Royal Assent in the summer of 2010. One of the key changes that the Bill was designed to initiate would be to enhance the role of local authorities in flood management. There was an expectation that County and Unitary authorities would assume a leadership role in addressing local flooding concerns and co-ordinating the work of stakeholders involved in dealing with flooding issues. County and Unitary authorities would also be expected to publish a strategy for local flood risk management in their area.

The Council would need to consider several issues in response to the Flood and Water Management Bill. Worcestershire County Council would be responsible for prioritising the use of funding to

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address flooding in the County. Under these circumstances it would be important for Redditch Borough Council to promote the Borough's priority flooding areas to ensure that these were not downgraded in any flooding prioritisation exercise that might be undertaken by the County Council.

It was suggested that, as rainfall and resultant flooding incidents were not often restricted to local authority borders, increased collaborative work with other local authorities was needed. The Committee was informed that local authorities based in the South of the County had been working together to promote their flooding needs to the County Council. Officers suggested that the local authorities in North Worcestershire should also work together to address cross border issues and to promote their flooding priorities to the County Council in order to attract funding.

The Chair thanked Officers and the consultants from BWB Consulting for attending the meeting.

RECOMMENDED that

- 1) **the policies and procedures regarding watercourse dredging maintenance, drainage and landscape maintenance and drainage enforcement be approved by the Executive Committee at its meeting on 12 August 2009; and**
- 2) **the Council work with other local authorities in North Worcestershire to promote local flood and land drainage priorities in order to attract available funding from Worcestershire County Council; and**

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

21. COUNCIL FLAT COMMUNAL CLEANING TASK AND FINISH GROUP

The Committee considered the draft report of Council Flat Communal Cleaning Task and Finish Group. The Chair of the Group, Councillor Mould, explained the Group's rationale for each of the recommendations which had been highlighted in the report.

Officers raised concerns with regards to recommendation 1b that *"subject to statutory consultation procedures for secure tenants and consultation with leaseholders being undertaken by the Council, a*

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service charge be imposed on all tenants and leaseholders to cover the cost of this cleaning”. They questioned what would happen if the majority of tenants responded that they did not want to pay for this service. The Chair explained that if, as a result of the consultation, it became clear that the majority of tenants and leaseholders did not want to pay for cleaning the Council would not be able to implement this recommendation. Officers suggested that the wording of this recommendation be altered to reflect the fact that the Council would undertake consultation to establish if there was support for the introduction of a service charge. The Committee approved this suggestion.

Members raised concerns regarding the format of this consultation. They explained that they did not think that an officially worded letter would be adequate to engage tenants and leaseholders on this issue and that any response that the Council might then receive was likely to be negative. The Committee agreed that the consultation should be tenant-led and make use of the Council's current tenant participation structures. Officers pointed out that the Members involved in the Task and Finish Group had made it clear that they wished to take a lead in the consultation process.

Members queried the extent of the problems that the Council might encounter when collecting this additional service charge from tenants. Officers admitted that they had experienced difficulties in collecting service charges from tenants in some of the flats where the communal areas were currently cleaned. This was why it was imperative that the consultation was as effective as possible to try to get tenants on board with the proposals.

Members queried if the charge could be imposed on leaseholders. Officers confirmed that the Council could not make leaseholders pay the charge as the Council would be unable to make any changes to the terms of their lease. It would be up to the Council to convince leaseholders to voluntarily pay the service charge.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the wording of recommendation 1b be altered to reflect the fact that the Council would need to undertake consultation to establish if there was support for the introduction of a service charge; and**

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- 2) **the Executive Committee be asked to consider the recommendations of the Council Flat Communal Cleaning Task and Finish Group, as amended by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee and as detailed in the resolutions above.**

22. COUNCILLOR CALLS FOR ACTION (CCFAS) - PROCEDURE

Members considered information provided to them detailing case study examples of Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA) processes used by other local authorities. Officers informed the Committee that the case studies demonstrated how the process could be documented and that the style of presentation either consisted of complex directions or a series of questions and answers. Members commented that they thought some of the examples appeared to be lengthy and set out in an unappealing style. They queried if the process had to be uniform across all local authorities or whether there was scope to tailor the approach to fit local circumstances. Officers explained that there was a degree of flexibility for local authorities to develop their own approach. There were however, certain elements that had to be incorporated.

Officers asked Members if there was any one particular example that they would prefer to use as the basis for Redditch's CCfA procedures. Members confirmed that they thought that the Kirklees example should be used.

RESOLVED that

Officers develop the Council's procedure for the Councillor Call for Action in accordance with the example adopted by Kirklees Council.

23. FEEDBACK FROM JUNE SCRUTINY CONFERENCES

The Committee received feedback reports from Councillors who had recently attended training events and conferences.

- a) Crime and Disorder Scrutiny – 15 June 2009

Councillor Norton explained that he, along with one of the Overview and Scrutiny Support Officers, had attended an event in London regarding the scrutiny of community safety issues. The event had been aimed at informing Officers and Members about the new statutory duty for local authorities to

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establish a Committee to scrutinise community safety issues and Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnerships. He explained that one of the National Indicators was now focussed towards reporting on people's confidence level in local authorities and their partners to address community safety issues. Councillor Norton suggested that the Council might already be fulfilling this new role through the Committee's interview of the Portfolio Holder for Community Safety.

Members enquired about whether there had been any guidance provided about how to encourage partners to attend meetings. Members commented that there was a need for the Scrutiny Committee and Members to build up relationships with the Council's partners. Officers explained that they had already received a letter from the Chief Executive of West Mercia Police Constabulary enquiring about what procedures the Council would be implementing to enable the scrutiny of crime and disorder issues. In this letter, he had also confirmed that West Mercia Police would be willing to send a representative to any meetings where required.

Officers explained that they had spoken with Community Safety Officers and it had been suggested that a meeting take place which would be attended by relevant Officers and the Chair of the Committee to discuss methods for scrutinising community safety issues. Once this meeting had taken place, it was suggested that further information should be provided for the consideration of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

b) Centre for Public Scrutiny (CfPS)– June Conference

Councillor Thomas explained that she had recently attended the Centre for Public Scrutiny's (CfPS's) annual conference. The conference took place over a period of two days.

One of the main features of the first day was a presentation from the shadow minister for Local Government highlighting key points from their Green Paper on Local Government. Among the proposals was one which would provide local authorities with the choice of moving back to an enhanced Committee system. Councillor Thomas voiced her concerns about this proposal especially given the progress Overview and Scrutiny had made at Redditch since it had been introduced.

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Councillor Thomas explained that she had also attended the Good Scrutiny Awards on the evening of the first day of the conference when awards had been given to local authorities that had undertaken good pieces of scrutiny. She suggested that in future, any successful scrutiny exercises undertaken at Redditch Borough Council should be submitted for consideration in this awards process.

On the second day of the conference, Councillor Thomas explained that she had attended a workshop presented by Jo Dungey regarding the new legal framework to scrutinise the Council's partners. This session had provided useful information about the new powers for scrutiny especially in relation to the scrutiny of the Local Area Agreement but had also highlighted the problems of trying to undertake this in two tier authority areas.

RESOLVED that

- 1) further information about scrutiny of community safety issues be considered at a meeting of the Committee on Wednesday 29 July;**
- 2) a copy of Jo Dungey's publication "Changing Place: Local Area Agreements and Two Tier Authorities" be circulated to Members;**
- 3) Officers investigate the new powers available for scrutiny and any limitations that might apply in two tier authority areas; and**
- 4) the reports be noted.**

24. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

25. WORK PROGRAMME

The Committee considered the Committee's Work Programme. Officers advised the Committee that the Economic Advisory Panel had been considering the Town Centre Strategy but it had been suggested that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee could undertake some pre-scrutiny on the proposals contained within the Strategy.

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The Economic Advisory Panel and the Planning Advisory Panel were due to receive a presentation from consultants working on the strategy on the evening of Thursday 20 August. It had therefore been suggested that members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee attend this presentation.

Officers informed Members that all of the Portfolio Holders' reports had been scheduled onto the Committee's Work Programme.

RESOLVED that

- 1) members of the Committee attend a presentation regarding the Town Centre Strategy on Thursday 20 August;**
- 2) the Committee consider the Town Centre Strategy at the meeting of the Committee scheduled for Wednesday 2 September; and**
- 3) the Committee's Work Programme be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm
and closed at 9.10pm

Actions requested by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Date Action Requested	Action to be Taken	Response
14/01/09 1	The Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism proposed an item for scrutiny.	The OSSOs have consulted with the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism regarding this proposal. He has suggested that he would be prepared to postpone submitting a completed scoping document for this item until June 2009 for Member capacity reasons. He also explained that Officers are currently doing some work to address this issue and that it might therefore be prudent to postpone further consideration of this item until Officers have completed this piece of work. (TO BE DONE) Lead Member, Councillor Anderson, estimated completion date, 17/06/09.
04/02/09 2	Members received a presentation on the Shared Services Board and Joint Working and requested that Overview and Scrutiny be involved throughout the shared services process.	Relevant Officers to report before the Overview and Scrutiny Committee as part of the shared services process where appropriate. (TO BE DONE) – ONGOING.
30/04/09 3	Members requested that Officers purchase all four versions of the website domain name for the National Angling Museum.	Officers have confirmed that all four versions of the National Angling Museum domain names have been purchased on behalf of the Council. (DONE).
27/05/09 4	Members requested that copies of the reports relating to the budget strategy and deficit, which were considered at a meeting of full Council on 6 April 2009, be circulated amongst member of the Committee for comment. Members also requested that the item be rescheduled for consideration at a meeting of the	Copies of the reports were circulated amongst members of the Committee on 8 July 2009. the Committee's Work Programme was altered accordingly. (DONE).

	Committee on 8 July.	
17/06/09 5	Officers provided further information about the potential to install a bus stop at the Arrow Valley Park, which had been discussed at the previous meeting of the Committee, had become available. A bus stop could be introduced which would provide access to the park on the number 60 circular route. This could be installed by WCC using funds from the Kickstart Bus Funding scheme. Members agreed that they wanted to urge the Council to support WCC over taking this action at the forthcoming meeting of full Council and asked Officers to find a suitable method of doing this.	A Notice of Motion was submitted at a meeting of full Council on 22 June 2009 (DONE)
17/06/09 6	Members were informed that proposals for the use of the Former Covered Market were due to be considered by the Executive Committee on 26/08/09. Members therefore requested that they pre-scrutinise these proposals.	The OSSOs have invited relevant Officers to discuss these proposals to a meeting of the Committee on 19 August and have noted this on the Work Programme accordingly. (DONE)
17/06/09 7	Members were informed that the proposed questions for the consideration of Worcestershire PCT regarding public transport access to the Alexandra Hospital had to be targeted to the Acute Hospitals Trust instead. Officers had approached the Chief Executive of Worcestershire Acute NHS Trust with these questions but had not received a reply to date.	Officers to further contact Worcestershire Acute Hospitals Trust for a response on this issue OSSOs (TO BE DONE)

<p>17/06/09</p> <p>8</p>	<p>Members discussed the examples given to them of Councillor Call for Action processes in other local authorities. Members requested that Officers write up a process based on the process established at Kirklees Council. Officers were asked to provide a further update about this item at the following meeting of the Committee on 08/07/09.</p>	<p>Officers have advised that it would be difficult to provide this information in time for the 8 July meeting and have therefore suggested that this be considered at the meeting due to be held on 29 July. Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services (TO BE DONE)</p>
<p>17/06/09</p> <p>9</p>	<p>Councillor Thomas informed Members about a report by Jo Dungey, from the Local Government Association (LGA), that provided useful information about the ambiguous nature of scrutiny powers for district authorities. Officers were asked to circulate copies of the report for Members' consideration.</p>	<p>The report "Changing Places: Local Area Agreements and Two-Tier Local Government" has been circulated to Members, OSSOs. (DONE)</p>

Glossary

CCfA	-	Councillor Calls for Action
OSSO	-	Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer

Council

BUDGET SAVINGS 2009/10 - 2011/12

(Report of the Acting Deputy Chief Executive)

1. Summary of Proposals

The Council is asked to consider the latest position on the budget options and to receive and consider the responses following the formal consultation period which ran from 23 February 2009 to 19 March 2009.

The report outlines the financial position agreed at Council on 23 February 2009 including the agreed budget bids and provides the most up to date position with regard to known variations.

Local Authorities are not able to approve a budget in which anticipated sources of income are less than the proposed expenditure levels.

2. Recommendations

The Council is asked to RESOLVE that

- 1) **the Council specify from the schedule of savings (which have been subject to formal consultation) which to approve for the forthcoming three years 2009/10 to 2011/12;**
- 2) **the variations and impacts on the budget to those matters formally consulted upon be noted; and**
- 3) **Officers provide a future options report to enable Members to consider the potential for re-investment in services to assist with the economic downturn.**

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

Financial

- 3.1 The estimates which support this Council's consideration form part of the Council's General Fund revenue budget requirement for 2009/10. Savings of £793.6k are required to achieve a balanced budget for 2009/10. The financial implications are as set out throughout this and the original report to Executive and Council on 23 February 2009.

Legal

- 3.2 A statutory framework exists to ensure that Local Authorities set a balanced budget. The annual budget brings together the Council's expenditure plans and the ways in which income is raised to finance that spending. Local Authorities are not able to approve a budget in which anticipated sources of income are less than the proposed expenditure levels.

Local Government Act 2003

- 3.3 There are a number of requirements that the Council's Section 151 Officer (the Council's designated Senior Finance Officer) has to include in budgetary reports. These issues and the Section 151 Officer's comments are fully detailed in the report reproduced at Appendix 1.

Policy

- 3.4 There are significant policy implications arising from this report, dependant upon which options the Council chooses to support.

Risk

- 3.5 The risks of implementing the proposed savings have been identified within the relevant appendices.

Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.6 The Councils revised Priorities were agreed by Council in December 2008. The alignment with the Councils priorities are stated within the budgetary schedule, which include environmental issues.
- 3.7 Financial sustainability will be supported by meeting the necessary savings levels to achieve a balanced budget.

Report**4. Background**

- 4.1 At the 18 February 2009 meeting of the Executive Committee and subsequent meeting of full Council on 23 February 2009, the Council agreed the following:-
- a) The Initial Estimates for 2009/10;
 - b) Revenue Bids categorised as unavoidable and high, (Appendix 1 - Pages 185/186);

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- c) General fund bids for capital resources categorised as unavoidable and high, (Appendix 1 - Pages 187/188);
 - d) Housing Revenue Account bids for capital resources categorised as high (Appendix 1 - Page 191) and that;
 - e) the savings/additional funding, detailed at (Appendix 1 - Pages 193-201) be approved for the purpose of consultation.
- 4.2 The original Executive report of 18 February 2009 is reproduced to provide clarity to Members.

5. Key Issues

5.1 The updated Medium Term Financial Plan reported to Council on 23 February 2009 highlighted the requirement to make savings (either in savings or increased revenue) to meet the budget deficit(s) for the years 2009/10 to 2011/12. These figures include all of the bids approved by Council on 23 February 2009.

5.2 Savings required:-

a)	2009/10	£793,600
b)	2010/11	£1,643,300
c)	2011/12	£1,857,000

5.3 In order to meet the budget deficit in the medium term, a schedule of potential savings proposed by the Corporate Management Team has been subject to a period of formal consultation from 28 February 2009 to 19 March 2009.

5.4 As a result of the previous Council decision 4 members of staff were placed "potentially at risk of redundancy" and **X** staff advised of the potential TUPE arrangements should there be the transfer to alternative providers (REDI Centre and Matchborough West / Batchley Community Centres).

5.5 Following final decisions of Council the staff ultimately at risk will have the opportunity to secure alternative employment with the Authority via the redeployment process.

Variations

5.6 Councils attention is brought to the following variations / information which has been confirmed / notified following the last meeting of Council.

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LABGI

- 5.7 The LABGI Year 3 contingency distribution of £123.1k was built into the budget assumptions for outturns for 2008/09 and estimated general fund balances. To date LABGI allocations for the year's 209/10 to 2011/12 have not been advised so no variation to the plan is advised.

Benefits Subsidy

- 5.8 Notification was received on 12 March 2009 from the Department of Works and Pensions that £255k of "retrospective withheld benefit subsidy" will be paid to the Authority. This payment was received on 16 March 2009. The impact of this being a "one off" payment is that it increases the potential level and schedule of savings to the following:-

Original recommended savings 9/10	£960,700 (Original schedule)
Benefit Subsidy	<u>£255,000</u> (revised schedule)
	£1,215,700

- 5.9 This one off payment has no impact on subsequent years savings for 2010/11 and 2011/12 and these remain as stated within the original schedule:-

2010/11	£1,478,500
2011/12	£1,585,300

- 5.10 It is proposed that Officers prepare a report for Members' future consideration which outlines a range of options to assist / mitigate against the impact of the economic downturn. Members may wish to consider a further level of reinvestment in services which could positively assist individuals and communities at such a difficult time.

Outturn figures

- 5.11 No additional information is currently available to advise Members of any amendments to the General Fund outturn figures for 2008/09.

Redundancy Costs

- 5.12 Dependant on the Councils final decisions, the potential redundancy figure of (£35,100) could be affected.

Pay Award

- 5.13 The impact of the 2008 pay settlement means that an additional £25,700 saving has been identified and this will be returned to

General Fund balances. The pay award was originally budgeted at 3% with the actual award being 2.75%.

This additional saving / award has not at this stage been refactored into the revised savings schedule.

Local Area Agreement (LAA)

- 5.14 Worcestershire County Council have advised of the intention to provide each of the 6 district Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) with reward grant funding at the level of £20,000 per annum for five years to assist in the administration / support of the LSPs. This grant has not been factored into the budget estimates and will be considered by the Redditch LSP at the first opportunity

Additional revenue requirements

- 5.15 If Members do not agree to the following saving proposals then additional revenue will be required for 2009/10 and each subsequent year thereafter:-

Fireworks - Additional £15,000 revenue required
Pest Control - Additional £5,000 revenue required

Consultation

- 5.16 The consultation process which concluded on 19 March 2009 consisted of:-
- a) Detailed discussion with directly affected staff;
 - b) Staff briefings and issued core brief / intranet; articles and updates
 - c) Meetings with the Trade Unions;
 - d) Public consultation via the Media / Local press
 - e) Email direct to the Acting Joint Chief Executive.
- 5.17 In total there were **X** responses received from staff and **X** responses from members of the public / stakeholders. A summary of the responses received are enclosed at Appendix 2 for Members consideration.
- 5.18 Officers of the Corporate Management Team have overviewed / considered the submissions and provided a response to each of the issues. Where there have been multiples of the same issue raised (i.e. petitions) there is one composite response.
- 5.19 A full pack of all the consultation responses will be made available to the Group Leaders and available electronically to all Memebers.

Timetable

- 5.20 Once agreed by Council, implementation will commence immediately, unless otherwise specified. As a result of the need to undertake full and proper consultation the full year impact of some of the savings will not be achieved in 2009/10 and the savings have been reduced to reflect this.

6. Other Implications

Any Community Safety, Human Resource, Social Inclusion and Sustainability implications have been included in the main report and supporting appendices.

7. ConclusionNet Position

- 7.1 Subject to Members decisions at Council, any changes to the schedule of savings will alter the net position for the forthcoming 3 years, i.e.
- | | | | |
|----|---------|-------------------------------|----------------------------|
| a) | 2009/10 | (£132,000) revised (£387,000) | including Benefits subsidy |
| b) | 2010/11 | £164,800 | |
| c) | 2011/12 | £274,900 | |
| d) | Overall | £307,700 revised £52,700 | including Benefits subsidy |

Therefore the overall balance of required savings : £52,700.

- 7.2 Additional savings will need to be made in order to balance the three year plan. Council has agreed to the following reports being brought before Members by the end of July.
- a) Arrow Valley Countryside Centre and Forge Mill Museum - Reports outlining the options and potential for alternative management arrangements and / or transfer to alternative provider(s).
 - b) Shopmobility and Dial-a-Ride - Business cases to be developed to consider revised arrangements / options to deliver long term sustainability within both schemes.

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7.3 Members have also indicated that consultation and future financial planning will commence in June 2009 for years 2010/11 and thereafter.

8. **Background Papers**

Previously published Council and Executive reports and minutes.

9. **Consultation**

Directors, Corporate Management Team and Financial Services Manager.

10. **Author of Report**

The author of this report is Sue Hanley (Acting Deputy Chief Executive), who can be contacted on extension 3601 (e-mail: sue.hanley@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

11. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 Executive Committee report 18 February 2009 - General Fund Revenue Budgets & Capital Bids 2009/10 - 2011/12.

Appendix 2 Summary of consultation received on Budget Strategy Options - March 2009.

Appendix 3 Compilation of all received responses (Confidential to Members).

RESPONSES TO CONSULTATION

STAFF RESPONSES

REF	SUBJECT	SUGGESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE
1.	Firework display	Charge entrance fee	Charging for this event has already been reviewed in recent years and would actually see the cost of the event increase. The need for fencing to ensure everyone pays, install cashiers and pay points, security and audit purposes significantly increase the required budget to run the event. The site is also situated in a park land of 900 acres and so residents could stand outside of the performance space or on the mound and still enjoy the firework show without paying. This was reviewed as part of previous strategies. We have even tried a donation system and the return was extremely minimal. This event is run as a community safety event We will of course examine all avenues with alternative operators
1.	Countryside Centre	Promote facility to generate income	This will be a major consideration as part of the forthcoming review on the Countryside Centre. The centre is advertised within the budget available which is small and the team at site engage as much editorial as possible from the local papers and magazines.
6.	Countryside Centre	Cafe is badly run & could be improved	This will be a major consideration as part of the forthcoming review on the Countryside Centre and Forge Mill.
9.	Arrow Valley Park & Centre	Would be a shame to lose the Centre - best thing about Redditch.	This comment has been noted.

<p>19.</p>	<p>AVCC Duty Manager post</p>	<p>Opposed to proposed dissolution of Duty Managers post. There is a requirement for this job position to ensure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective day to day running of the centre • ensure H&S standards • supervision/development of staff • secure grant funding • marketing/promotion • plan and deliver program of events etc • liaison with partners and park users groups 	<p>Thank you for comments and observations concerning the proposed deletion of the Duty Managers position at the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre, as indicated in the options for the 2009/10 budget strategy.</p> <p>You have made several comments, and I would like to take this opportunity to offer the following response.</p> <p>I can confirm that the existing vacant post of Duty Manager is the post indicated in the proposal for a potential saving in the budget strategy.</p> <p>The rationale for the proposal, is the length of time the service has operated with no permanent appointment to the position and without any detriment to the operation. This will have no impact on existing substantive terms and conditions and the projected saving will be achieved without effecting the current operation significantly.</p> <p>Due to the Budget Strategy there is a need to complete a review of the Countryside Centre during 2009/10 year. The exact timescale of this review have yet to be confirmed.</p> <p>Through conversations with line managers pending the outcome of a review, there is obviously a need for a Duty Manager presence at the site and this will be addressed as part of this review process.</p> <p>I believe that your line Manager, has spoken to you on this matter and has confirmed the following.</p> <p>In the absence of a management presence, he requires you to continue in your acting up role, but to 100% and not the 80% of the duties you that currently undertake. You confirmed that you</p>
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			<p>are happy to continue to 100% of the role and this will be implemented as swiftly as possible.</p> <p>Thank you for taking the time to feedback on the Budget Strategy proposals, and if you need to make any enquiries in relation to this matter, please contact Line Manager in the first instance.</p>
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2.	Forge Mill/AVC	Need to have a brief from Members on what trying to achieving from a review of these services, e.g. how much want to reduce budget deficit on each service; when review should be completed; when new arrangements should commence; main aims/outputs for each of the sites; are they supportive of both options to retain services in house as well as potential outsourcing	An initial meeting has been held with the Leader, Deputy Leader and Portfolio Holder on the scope and ambitions of the review. Staff to be briefed.
6.	Forge Mill	Do more with heritage aspect & Hire out as a venue	<p>The majority of events are run in-house by RBC. The events programme has significantly increased over the last two years, with attendances to the Museum increasing by 50%. 74 events were run through the museum and Countryside Centre</p> <p>We currently hire part of the facility for wakes, 'ghost' walks, wedding photos etc We also hire the facility to external companies who do outdoor productions/plays</p> <p>There are also regular group bookings such as the Women's Institute and group bookings/coach tours from all over the Country throughout the year. To do anything more involved would involve investment into catering facilities/ wedding co-ordinators</p> <p>Included in the Budget Strategy were bids for revenue funding to extend the contract of the Heritage Access Officer. The Museum displays Needles and Fishing items which is what Redditch is renowned for. The Bordesley Abbey site is Redditch's prime Heritage site and we are submitting a Heritage Lottery Bid to carry out an interpretation project on Bordesley Meadows</p>

12	Forge Mill meeting room	<p>Promotion re meeting place after funerals</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The lack of an alcohol license- most people even if the main mourner or deceased refrained like to meet at a place where there is a choice of beverages so to celebrate and or lighten the occasion.• The lack of available menu options when requested – one funeral director had requested this information for a pack that is put together for this purpose. I.e. function facilities.• Finally they (inc. countryside centre) are not recognised as being facilities for such an event, and as with most things relating to funerals there is an habit mentality, or facilities are suggested by people who may have a vested interest i.e. partnerships or locally formed agreements within private sector. Therefore additional promotion of the rooms and what’s on offer could provide greater use. Maybe even an open day for funeral directors??	<p>We have worked with local undertakers to offer a low key venue for wakes. We are going to expand this to include provision of alcohol and catering. Officers are going to attend a licensee course. When this is in place it will be advertised. However, it will always be low key due to the size of the room and the fact that the facilities cannot compete with hotels/pubs etc.</p>
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1.	Business Rates	Business Rates Supplement Bill to support EDU - can RBC benefit from this & links to 'Enterprise' priority	The supplementary business rate option is only available to upper tier authorities such as county councils.
3.	HRA Savings	Can any savings made in the HRA be used to offset the overall budget shortfall?	The HRA is a ring-fenced account and cannot therefore be used to support the General Fund.
5.	Buy Back Scheme	Renegotiate on price to get a better deal	<p>These buy backs are to replace the units taken from general housing stock to provide temporary accommodation when RBCs hostel at Upper Norgrove.</p> <p>The properties were inspected by our Valuers and by the Housing Service before we made offers to buy them to ensure that the costs of buying the property and bringing it up to a Decent Homes standard were not disproportionate. I understand that all the relevant Officers are satisfied that the properties represent Value for Money.</p> <p>My understanding is also that we have been looking for properties that require a minimum level of work to bring them up to standard so that they can be in use as soon as possible after we have bought them.</p>
17.	Shopmobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Should charge for service - including parking ticket. Whether this be a registration fee, per use, paying for parking. To ensure the service is income generating and continues. Hold a Charity Flag day (one was held in early 1980s when service began which council staff helped with). This could be reinstated. 	We still do organise a flag day each year, we are about to undertake a full service / business case review for this service area which will include options for applying a charge for service and in discussion with Kingfisher the options regarding charging for parking.
3.	Shopmobility	£26k cut from Kingfisher Centre - this amount was required to retain service at its current level	Please refer to response at item17 above
6.	Shopmobility	What do other Councils do? Do they need to be such expensive wheelchairs. It shouldn't attract a profit but should be self financing.	Please refer to response at item 17 above.

4 & 15.	Car parking charges	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Why not charge elsewhere ie MSP, Abbey Stadium, FM&BA. Could refund ticket if using the leisure centre or museum. • District Centres - shoppers parking is abused by 'long term stays' which doesn't encourage use of local shops (particularly Evesham Road, Batchley Road and Poplar Road). If not politically acceptable to charge, why not impose restrictions ie "1 max hour" and fine overstayers. Not only will this generate a bit more income but improve viability of dereg parking scheme and make the traffic wardens' profile better. 	<p>A consultant has carried out a feasibility study of car parks around the borough and the potential for charging and identified the prime sites for initial consideration and other sites were considered not to be economically viable. However if the car parking charges scheme is adopted, the intention would be to monitor the success of the scheme and possibly consider further sites.</p> <p><u>Abbey Stadium, Forge Mill & Bordesley Abbey</u> The problem is there would be minimal income as the majority of people parking are users and we would therefore be refunding them anyway.</p> <p><u>Abbey Stadium</u> Only potential income generator is Sunday mornings for the car boot sale which may be difficult to enforce</p>
6.	Dial A Ride	Seems to be an expensive drain on resources. Who actually uses it? Don't they have access to cars/public transport/ taxis? ... mobility benefits are to pay for 'mobility'	We are about to undertake a full service / business case review for this service area.
7.	Dial-a-Ride	Sell 'advertising' space on the back of the buses to local businesses	Please refer to response at item 6 above.
6.	Palace	Sometimes empty mid week - more 2 for 1 offers. Make the Council appear as a 'caring council & thinking of residents in economic climate'	This is something that has been discussed with the team and how to implement into the Point of Sale process and is worth further investigation
8.	Staff pay	Has the council budgeted for any pay increases/ legal challenges re equal pay claims? Has money been budgeted for single status? What is the risk re single status. If none does the council see single status as an opportunity to save monies and if so, how much?	

11.	Emergency Planning	Whilst working for BDC I was involved with Andy Coel & Jayne Burton in emergency resource planning & completed the emergency resource centre management course. I was unable to continue with them when I moved to RBC due to insurance issues but RBC seem not to have a similar policy in force. It would make sense to join forces, particularly as both districts are likely to be affected by most emergency situations, i.e. motorway pile-ups, weather issues etc.	We work in partnership with all Worcestershire district councils and the County Council in the area of emergency planning and continually seek to share resources wherever possible as part of our partnership agreement. We are also working closely with Bromsgrove to explore areas where sharing resources and joint working will benefit both authorities. This issue will be raised as part of those discussions
15	Development site at Oswald Street	Convert land to small car park and install pay and display meter	Please refer to response at item 4.
16.	Property Services	Reduced workload only applies to Right to Buy element of post. Reduce post to part-time, or decreased workload on RTB be covered by 1.5 Property Service Assistants. This allows for a greater saving.	Investigating this as an option
20.	Lifeline	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduce a standard installation charge for all new customers as from 1st April 2009. • Introduce an admin charge for all existing customers. 	As part of the current basket there is a requirement for the private sector lifeline to breakeven, therefore the proposals made will need to be introduced to achieve the income.
13.	Leisure facilities	Feels the council has a duty to providing these facilities to the community but do need to ensure they are as cost effective as possible.	The comment has been noted.

10.	Golf Course	Club House could be used for small parties, business meetings, conferences and more (only need a small facelift/refurb)	<p>The club house predominately serves the patrons of the course and has only a limited amount of provision and this has been for the caterer to provide seating space for meals and snacks etc. If other provision was progressed then this would conflict with operating of the base business and interfere with the golfers experience before and after their rounds, as there is no other self contained area to hire.</p> <p>With regards to parties etc this could only take place after the course had closed and then impacts on the local community. The present contract caterer has tried these types of events they led to issues with noise as the pavilion is not set up for this type of event or currently licensed</p>
14	Golf Course	<p>I have a basic knowledge of the golf course and thought with a loss of the golf professional, and assistant the daily bookings could be handled by the catering facility operator on a separate till, thus reducing our basic out goings. I understand this could create some difficulties but with a few minor changes to the building feel a good facility would be saved . On the other side we could invite committee, members of the course to bring in or do themselves some basic lessons to locals, schools, societies for small fees to promote future use of the course.</p>	<p>Members will consider the options. A potential pilot The potential pilot with alternative management arrangements could provide a saving to the Council but will have the potential to raise income through a more targeted approach to marketing. Putting in place a junior academy through the CGP and PGA network and support appropriately.</p> <p>Lessons are required to be carried out by a PGA standard level coach with the updated Criminal Records Bureaux checks in place to be able to work with young people.</p> <p>Without the ability to develop a thriving junior section there is no hope of any long term, sustainability of the course.</p> <p>The current club have committed to support the CGP but are unable to provide the volume of work needed to achieve a long term sustainable solution</p> <p>A review of the catering franchise fees etc will also take place once a final decision on the way forward has been taken</p>
18	Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very disappointed of proposal to close. Have used this facility and know others use it on a regular basis. 	The comment has been noted.
22	REDI	Pack 'Celebrating 21 years of Delivering Training in the Community'	Noted

IDEAS / SUGGESTIONS BY PUBLIC

REF	SUBJECT	SUGGESTION	RESPONSE
1.	Pitcheroak Golf Club	With the proposed closure of Pitcheroak Golf Club coupled with the stripping out of Pitcheroak Wood I can only conclude that the land is being primed for development. Would you please advise as to how it will be sold, what sized lots and will it be a public or private bidding sale.	The proposal is not to strip out the park, but to return it to public open space. Please be assured that there are no plans to sell the land or develop on the site, and never have been.
2.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	I have been following the developments regarding the municipal golf course on Plymouth Road, Redditch. I thought it might be worth mentioning that if there is any thought of development of the course (though it is doubtful) it should be taken into account that slow worms (<i>Anguis fragilis</i>) are resident in this area.	Please refer to response at item 1.
3.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	The Council owned golf course should be disposed of. There is no reason to keep this since it only caters for a very select proportion of the local population. There is very little evidence to support the argument that the golf course is fully inclusive. If officers say otherwise, then ask them for the proof! You may want to review previous Best Value Review findings and recommendations, since these may help to draw your own conclusions. The Policy Team/Leisure Services should hold these.	The comments have been noted.
4.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	There is no need for a local authority to provide and maintain a golf course, this should be carried out by another body. There are 3 golf courses in a small town, the other 2 are not Council owned and appear to do very well, therefore there is no reason why the other cannot do the same.	The comments have been noted.

5.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	<p>Whilst fully understand the need to save in the current climate, my concern is not that some time in the future the site will be built upon, I would think that if its empty long enough that would eventually be inevitable. My concern is what happens after closure. It's a large open area currently policed by golfers themselves. If the course is closed the whole area effectively becomes a giant park with no vehicular access. Have potential costs of policing this area been taken into account? Not just talking about a few kids messing around noisily at night. Regularly visit AVP and have to negotiate the precautions set up to keep caravans off. How many would fit on to an abandoned golf course? My concern is that we will lose a fantastic local resource. and it will inevitably fall into disrepair unless the council pays for its upkeep and when it is a complete eyesore that is when the decision will be made to sell off the land. I can only think of development as a viable option and as such the houses we are assured will not be built will be built to save us from the terrible eyesore and problem area it has become. Please set my mind at rest and publish details of what will happen to the area if it is closed.</p>	<p>The proposal is not to strip out the park, but to return it to public open space. Please be assured there are no plans to sell the land or develop on the site now or in the future, and never have been.</p>
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<p>6.</p>	<p>Pitcheroak Golf Course</p>	<p>View with deep concern that this facility may close. In a time when world is in financial freefall, its closure may seem a little insignificant. It is a time when the general public will have their minds on other things. Therefore I think it is a time when elected councillors should stand up and be counted. They should protect these facilities from closure, once gone they will never return. The Govt. has I believe helped to the tune of £98k the introduction of free swimming for the elderly in Redditch. Why then can they not help fund another healthy pursuit - golf. I and many others have taken advantage of learning to pay golf at this facility, the young and the old particularly are advantage. It is for them I plead you not to close this course. I am aware the course is loosing £135k, have we by any change, because of concessions forced the course into the "RED"? I understand that there will be an actual saving of only £80k due to the fact that the course would still be maintained as a park area. Surely all the furore over obesity and its inevitable cost should be reason enough to keep this facility open.</p>	<p>Officers have continued to promote the facilities, however, the course has seen an increase in the deficit over the last few years.</p> <p>The Council is considering all options and unfortunately there are no easy decisions to be reached on ensuring a balanced budget.</p> <p>The comments have been noted.</p>
<p>7.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Strongly object to the proposal to close or change the nature of the course in order to expedite savings in RBC's budget. This course is one of the few original remaining Redditch open spaces which defines the character of its neighbourhood and provides a valuable leisure opportunity for a portion of the population who couldn't afford to join a private health club. (Indeed many, in particular young people, would be unlikely to be accepted for membership at such clubs, due to their inability to maintain such things as expensive dress codes).</p>	<p>The Council is considering all options and unfortunately there are no easy decisions to be reached on ensuring a balanced budget.</p> <p>The comments have been noted.</p>

		<p>With increasing levels of unemployment and rising pensioner population, it is vital, in the current climate of the encouragement of healthy exercise, to have an affordable way for everyone who so wishes, to enjoy social/health benefits of golf. Also believe that if the Council were to hand over the running of the course to a private organisation, there would inevitably be a rise in fees which would defeat the arguments outlined above.</p> <p>Re proposal to demolish club house and let the course revert to open public parkland. This would require management to stop area becoming wild and unsafe and has to involve an expense to the Council. At the moment some of these costs must surely be met by the course fees paid by golfers. In addition to the hard work of the Council ground staff, one of the reasons the area is so pleasant is due to the fact that it is a defended area - there is a constant flow of golfers keeping an eye open for anything untoward on the course. Take that away and there is potential for unchecked vandalism and asb. I believe that the Council has a duty to provide affordable leisure facilities such as this course. Look elsewhere to make saving, such as council management infrastructure, where the effects will not be felt at the point of delivery of such facilities to Redditch citizens.</p>	
<p>8.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Are the Council aware of how many youngsters use this facility? There are few leisure activities in Redditch as it is and to lose one would mean even less facilities for our kids. The alternative? an increase in unsocial behaviour. Surely the council have some obligation to provide leisure facilities as well as day to day services like bin collection, it can't be an either or. Pitcheroak is a good meeting</p>	<p>See 14 above 1) Yes with a specified coaching level if lessons are to take place. However this can be provided in a different way to at present and is currently under examination with a proposal in place 2) Yes to maintain 45 acres of golf provision, specialist fine turf knowledge is required. The course cannot be managed as standard Public Open Space.</p>

		<p>place to make friends/learn good social skills which will be invaluable in later life. This facility is not just for the kids, all other groups use this facility including the old. It provides affordable golf and should not be confused with local private golf clubs which are out of reach for the working person.</p> <p>Urge the council to explore ways of keeping it open ie</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1) Does it need a full time professional, 2) Does it need a full time grounds man, 3) Does the council have grounds persons in other areas of the council which could be shared with Pitcheroak, 4) Could the course be run by a private concern, hence providing rental income for the council. <p>Not aware of the gross takings from the green fees, however, with the above savings surely this would make the course viable.</p> <p>The council should provide leisure facilities for its residents, why should every area make a profit? Be forward looking, things will not always be this bad. Closing the course will be irreversible and will be looked back as a very bad decision in years to come.</p>	<p>3) This already happens where specialist green keeper knowledge is not required i.e. general mowing and tree maintenance, however at other courses e.g. the Redditch Private course has 4 FTE Green Keepers & 1 Head Green Keeper, where Pitcheroak has only FTE Green Keeper who supplements other areas of Landscape work across the town when required.</p> <p>4) This has been examined in the past and not adopted by the Council. An alternative management arrangements will be considered as part of this current consultation period which could enable an assessment to help make the course more cost effective</p> <p>The closure of the course is only one option for members' consideration. Services that are not statutory will always be inline for potential efficiency savings</p>
<p>9.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Ask the Council not to close the course. This delightful 9 hole course is an ideal municipal pay as you go course which has helped people like myself and my son (from age 9 years) to learn to play and then enjoy the game for many years. I'm sure many others have benefited and hope many more will benefit in future. When enquired for son at other courses which require membership found it very much a "closed shop". You seemed to have to "know someone" and be part of the "in crowd" to</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p>

		<p>be able to be nominated/accepted as a member. The whole atmosphere was “stuffy” and “elitist”. Pitcheroak allows the casual golfer a cheaper and more flexible alternative, whilst still being tough enough for a challenge and it available to everyone. Also the exercise for the oldies.</p>	
<p>10.</p>	<p>Golf Course</p>	<p>Fail to understand how you can consider closing this down. It is very popular and much loved facility used by many teenagers and youngsters. It also greatly enhances the surrounding area visually. If you close this down, not only are you depriving the local population of an important resource but what exactly are you going to do with it? If you are going to only continue to provide services which are financially profitable, you may as well shut up shop completely now. Also 3 weeks from this going public to cut off date for comments is quite frankly an insult and yet again smacks of back handedness. No doubt if you decide to turn this into, say, a park, at some point, just like when you closed the schools down, there will be a later, back office decision that perhaps although it was publicly announced that it would never happen, you should sell the land off for building. How profitable then. And I presume that the people in their ivory towers who will no doubt make the decision to close it down, do not live by it and therefore, once it starts to fall into disrepair, and starts to have the same problems as say Morton Stanley, with gangs of youths roaming round, hidden form public gaze, vandalising/drinking, you will be unaffected. Along the whole length of Plymouth Road, the houses that back onto said golf course will be vulnerable</p>	<p>The area is designated public open space.</p>

		<p>to burglars and vandals? Oh but then of course the money you save closing the course, you can spend on providing an extra Community Support Officer to deal with the increase in break ins.</p> <p>I would have expected your website to have easily available links so that you can log on and email regarding this, but you clearly intend to make it as difficult as possible for people to complain.</p>	<p>The home page of the website contains a link to the pages on the consultation and also the link to an email address to send comments.</p>
11.	Golf Course	<p>Lived in Redditch for nearly 38 years and have not visited AVCC, watched the Xmas lights, have been to one bonfire - but have spent many a frustrating day on the golf course. Seems to be a well used amenity which gets lots of older people out and about and gives some people something to do. It seems to me that all the things people want are closed down for savings - surely there must be a different option to closing this golf course. This would seem to be the last municipal course left in Redditch and if it was closed many people would not be able to enjoy this sport - we are constantly being instructed by the Govt etc to be more healthy and by closing this you are taking a real source of exercise away from many people.</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p>
12.	Golf Course	<p>Read with dismay the council decision to consider closing the course, which is over 100 years old and has within it the Redditch Kingfisher Golf Club. The quick win option to close the course is very short sighted. Has the council considered the amount of money needed to decommission the course and the money required to turn the course into a park area? A considerable amount of effort has been put into the course in recent years from both the Redditch Kingfisher Golf Club and the Council. The investment in upgrading a number of tees, health and safety improvements and</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p>

		<p>improved drainage and watering facilities for the greens will all go to waste if the course is closed. Once decision taken to close a facility, it will be virtually impossible to reinstate. A short term decision to save money by closing the course would have long term implications. Concerned that the council is secretly using the proposed closure to add land to its 'green' land bank in the Redditch area. Whilst Pitcheroak is not suitable for housing development, by adding it to the 'open space' land bank this would allow the council to close other 'open space'. When the demand for commercial development returns in the coming years the council would be able to sell off other 'open space' whilst retaining its target for 'open space' in Redditch. The golf course provides a great opportunity for people of all ages and diverse backgrounds to come together and play an ever increasingly accessible sport. Without the provision of a public course in Redditch people would be forced to look outside the Redditch area to play the game and in most instances people would not be able to afford to pay private membership fees. RBC is trying to encourage people to become more active, a decision to close the course would have a detrimental effect on this drive. A significant number of young/old people play golf at the course and removing it would have a terrible impact.</p>	
14.	Golf Course	<p>As one of many old age pensioners who enjoy a couple of hours exercise each week playing golf with others of the same age group, am very saddened and annoyed that this facility could be taken away from us. If that were to be the case, there is no way that could afford the high fees to</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p>

		<p>join a private golf club. Cannot believe that local council members would deliberately treat Redditch senior citizens in such a way as to deny them the one bit of physical exercise that they can afford. Beg you NOT to close such a fantastic facility</p>	
15.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	<p>Why should we subsidise the comparative few who want to play golf - keep it open but the charges made should reflect actual cost of running it. If they are not prepared to pay then close it. Redditch has plenty of open land nearby already - sell it for housing.</p>	<p>These comments have been noted.</p> <p>The land, however, is designated as Public Open Space.</p>
16.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	<p>Appalled to have read about proposal to take away and close the long established golf course. This has been part and parcel of Redditch for very many years. It is a part of open green space offering pleasure and exercise for the public. What are they closing it for? Possibly to "sell off" the area for building purposes, to leave it to go to rack and ruin or to get vandalised. What a sight that will be too! It will cost more money to keep it cleared of rubbish and vandalism than to keep it as it is now.</p> <p>Would be a tragedy to lose this space from the centre of Redditch with the facilities it offers. Understand that the Worcs. Golf Charity have made an offer to take on the handling of the course to enable the area to remain an open space and keep it for the pleasure of Redditch people. What is wrong with that scenario? It takes it off your hands.</p>	<p>As part of the consultation, alternative proposals will also be considered.</p>

17.	Golf Course	Based on sparse information provided, disappointed the council is considering withdrawing funding for the course. Subject to removal of funding, will this mean that the course is privatised or potentially face closure? This is the only municipal course in the Borough and feel it is a service that should be maintained.	The current proposal is for closure, however, alternative proposals will also be considered.
18.	Golf Course	A lot of senior citizens play at the club as we cannot afford to play at the other clubs. Where would children be able to play, there is very little for Redditch youngsters to be entertained.	These comments have been noted, however, Redditch Borough Council does provide a range of activities to meet the needs of younger people.
19.	Golf Course	Proposal by company to run golf course (rent or purchase of land and premises).	Officers have met with the consultee and agreed that currently, depending on the decision taken at Full Council, if it is a 12 month trial is considered this would give time to start talking more about alternative proposals for the longer term.
21.	Golf Course	Proposal to close this facility is foolhardy step in light of health advice to be active and fit. This is the only such course in Redditch and would rob many people of the chance to play cost effective golf. Proposal to change its use to parkland seems short sighted. There are a number of parks in the borough giving the community easy access. To create another park out of Pitcheroak would not improve facilities but in the long term cost money for upkeep. At present there is an income from the course albeit insufficient to cover present day costs. It should not cost as much for upkeep as quoted figures. Should the current spending remain would expect a considerable improvement in its condition. Along with this if the condition was improved you would see an increase in its use by golfers from other areas so bringing in revenue which parkland would not do.	These comments have been noted.
23.	Pitcheroak	Signed petition against the closure of the golf	The petition has been noted.

	Golf Course	course.	
24.	Golf Course	Opposed to closure and would like to see it to continue to give Redditch people a place to play and exercise even if it means a slight increase in fees to those playing.	These comments have been noted.
25.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	Object to the inclusion of the closure of the golf course without an undertaking that the area will be retained for open space purposes. The golf course land has been designated as open space on the Local Plan for many years and council should express a commitment to retain it as such	Agreed.
32.	Golf Course	Live by the course and see the wide variety of people that use the facilities. There are many youngsters and never seen any behaviour to be worried about. Offers older people opportunity to keep active and for families to spend time together, all at a reasonable cost without prohibitive fees to belong to a private club.	These comments have been noted.
34.	Golf Course	Taking this facility away will do harm to the less well off/to the kids. We as a society owe it to our children to provide cheap recreation. Thought golf course would be franchised out and didn't realise it still cost this amount but this could be covered by a wage freeze.	These comments have been noted.
35.	Golf Course	Opposed to closure of golf course	This comment has been noted.
36.	Pitcheroak Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Request that this be removed from the list. Worcs & Herefordshire County Golf Partnership working with leisure on locally created golf initiatives, but if it remains on the threatened list, formally request representation in any consultative process 	Representations have been made and discussed with the controlling group members.

37.	Golf Course	<p>At present over 60 junior players are coached by the resident professional. It is the only affordable way in which members of the public, especially youngsters, can play golf or start playing at affordable costs. Feel that closure does not make sense when considering the amount of money the council has actually spent on the course during the recent 5 year development plan. If the course closes this would be a criminal waste. There is a lack of advertising. Members report they have never seen any advertising in the local press for the golf course and does not get a mention in local information literature. Suggest postponing the decision for 1 year during which the council and the onsite Kingfisher GC instigates a concerted advertising campaign locally.</p>	<p>These comments have been noted and will be considered as part of the final decisions.</p>
38. & 52.	Golf Course (duplication)	<p>Strongly object to closure or changing the nature of the golf course. One of the few original remaining open spaces in Redditch which defines the character of its neighbourhood and provides a valuable leisure opportunity for a portion of the population who could not afford to join a private golf club. It is vital to encourage healthy exercise and to have an affordable way for everyone who wishes to enjoy the social and health benefits of golf. Re proposal to demolish clubhouse and revert to open public park land - this would require management in order to stop space becoming wild and unsafe which will involve an expense. Some of these costs must be met by the course fees paid by golfers. Constant flow of golfers means that it is a defended area and taking this away will mean there is potential for unchecked vandalism and asb.</p>	

42.	Golf Course	This provided my only chance to get into golf which has given me a great deal of pleasure, kept me physically active and fit and made lots of good friends. Very sad to learn of council plans to close such a popular and worthwhile facility just because it is not profitable. Do public parks have to be profit making?	Public parks do not have to be profit making.
43.	Golf Course	Very upset to learn of possible closure. Understand the Hereford & Worcester Golf Partnership has put forward a plan for the use of the course promoting the game within schools and encouraging new players. This seems ideal opportunity to keep the course open, at the same time providing the facility for local people. once the course is closed it would never reopen. Where else, but a municipal course, can young people and new players try the game?	Please refer to response at item 16.
44.	Golf Course	Closure of the course in the long term will be an event the council will regret. It is a jewel of Redditch town, which its people are proud of, and has overseas visitors. The course is naturally beautiful, so well maintained and cared for and over the last few years reached a peak of excellence, all praise to RBC ground staff.	These comments have been noted.
46.	Golf Course	Members of golf club are 100% behind Hereford & Worcs Golf Partnership and willing to support them in whatever capacity is needed. If you are looking for creative ways of encouraging golf for beginners, with the reddicard contingent already in place, you have a ready made sporty community who would be very willing to try a new sport that is open to them. In my experience a lot of barriers to golf lie around price, time and stuffiness of the game and as soon as these are addressed golf becomes infectious with anyone who plays it. Pitcheroak is ideally positioned to eliminate these barriers as it is very reasonably priced, and the club is run by very approachable and friendly members. These can only be	Please refer to response at item 16.

		<p>assets for the partnership to pro actively work with in order to make Pitcheroak a success. A lot pf private clubs are facing recruitment problems with falling numbers of members renewing their membership. We are already seeing these private golf club members joining Pitcheroak, as it is the cheaper option. Again during these difficult times this is surely another benefit for a professional partner to take advantage of an opportunity to sell the benefits and encourage the facilities that Pitcheroak can offer.</p>	
48.	Closure of Pitcheroak Golf Course	<p>Objection to proposed closure and concerned about short term effects and long term place for the space. Currently golf course offers an affordable service and should be seen as a long term asset, not a short term cost reduction solution. I am interested in the alternative use options for the space if the course is closed and subsequent measures/decisions taken:</p> <p>1) Why was the proposal for takeover by the local golf club rejected?</p> <p>2) What were the actual cots of running the course year on year for the past 5 years (advertising, upkeep, electricity, etc) vs predicted cost savings?</p> <p>3) What will happen to the space if the golf course is closed - short term and long term?</p> <p>4? What plans will be made to make the space secure and ensure asb does not occur (specifically the car park/club house)? The misuse of the land is a real risk. ASB is a major concern for communities, high on the political agenda and is a real threat if the course closes.</p> <p>5) What reassurance can you give the local residents, particularly those whose properties back onto the course that the land will not be sold for building in the future?</p>	<p>1. The proposal for takeover by the local golf club has not been rejected it will form part of the consultation and be considered at Council on the 6th April 2009.</p> <p>2. Over the past 5 years there has been a steady increase in the deficit between the income and expenditure, current predictions for 2009/10 are a deficit of £127,000.</p> <p>3. In both the short and long term if the golf course was to be closed then the area would be left and managed as public open space.</p> <p>4. The council already has experience of managing public open space in relation to the club house, if the course were to be closed this would be demolished.</p> <p>5. The Leader of the Council has publicly confirmed that it is not there intention now or in the future to consider any alternative if the golf course is closed other than to manage the area as public open space.</p>

49.	Golf Course	<p>Councillors might protest that they won't use land freed up by closing the golf course for housing but this is undoubtedly a first step in a possible development process. I have been contacted by possible partners for the Council to continue to provide golf at the course. I urge the Council to look very carefully at the potential that new partners would bring to the golf course and to not shut the course until a suitable future for golf to continue has been secured.</p> <p>There are several good reasons not to shut the golf course but highest amongst them is that the course should provide to young and old the chance to take up a sport that will give them important exercise and social opportunities in the heart of their town.</p> <p>Social implications of cutting leisure opportunities - As well as health implications there are social implications too! Where will young people go if they are priced out of leisure centres? Or if the golf course is closed and players cannot afford to play golf at private clubs? We already have ASB in the cemetery next door to the golf course and in Morton Stanley Park. It makes no sense to close this facility and leave it as open space. One of the best ways of tackling anti social behaviour is to provide good quality and affordable leisure facilities for people to use. Closing them down and increasing charges are steps in the wrong direction.</p>	Please refer to response at item 48.
50.	Golf Course	<p>Object to possible closure. It is an important local amenity and is used by all ages, especially youngsters and adults new to the game. Vital facility where people can learn to play at a reasonable cost. Many of the users couldn't afford to play at local private clubs where fees are in excess of £600 pa. Once this fine course is allowed to be developed into parkland it will never be possible to revert it back to a golf course. Believe the H&W Golf Union have</p>	Please refer to response at item 16.

		<p>offered to run as an academy which seems a sensible option as the academy would encourage the use by local schools. More lessons/coaching clinics would be available for all ages/abilities, thus new golfers produced, and increased usage/revenue.</p> <p>Have costs of turning into parkland been taken into account, eg club house demolition, car parking, security, litter/dog bins, etc. Sub-let to H&W Golf Union or similar.</p>	
52.	Golf Course (duplication - see 38)	Objection to closure	This comment has been noted.
59.	Golf Course	Concerned about possible loss of facility - valuable local amenity.	This comment has been noted.
79.	Golf Course	<p>Protest about closure:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • when government concerned about obesity/fitness • best 9 hole course in country • is park accessible/DDA compliant if it becomes parkland • all traces of clubhouse would have to be removed • it will still need to be maintained. • ASB problems. 	This comment has been noted.

3. & 4.	Greenlands & Rubicon Business Centres	I feel the Council should look to find an alternative provider for the Greenlands & Rubicon Business Centre. Both buildings were intended to support business start ups, but this has not been the case. There are many businesses that have been using these premises for some time. It was originally intended that they would only be in there for a fixed period of time. Unfortunately due to poor management of these premises, the lack of proactive approach to generate more business start ups and vested interest in keeping the status quo, have all contributed to the present situation.	The Business Centres are currently being considered by the Economic Advisory Panel. From an EDU perspective the EDU strategy when it goes to Exec on 1 July will include an action plan that will probably include some activities associated with the centres. The detailed actions are not yet known. A sliding scale of rents may be considered so that the longer tenants are there the more the rent goes up – to encourage them to leave so that they truly are an “incubator” facility for new businesses.
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3.	Neighbourhood Offices	The arguments put forward to retain N’hood Offices are bogus. An independent piece of work should be commissioned to test the need for this facility. Based on my own personal experience, very few people use these facilities. If people need to pay bills at a n’hood level then a feasibility study should be carried out to assess whether this can be done at local post offices.	As part of the agreed Customer access strategy the objectives are to consider offering and providing different access channels and ensuring best value. As part of this strategy the One Stop Shop Advisory Panel is considering various options involving to date presentations from external providers and discussions with other agencies. Members are keen to see the impact of the introduction of the swipe card on the usage of the One Stop Shops and will review the outcomes following implementation in April 2009.
4.	Neighbourhood Offices - sell them.	These are not a necessity, people can pay rent through various means, i.e. direct debit and OSS at Town Hall. Free bus passes mean that it is easy for older people to come into town to pay bills etc and it also helps the economy by encouraging people into the town centre.	As part of the agreed Customer access strategy the objectives are to consider offering and providing different access channels and ensuring best value. As part of this strategy the One Stop Shop Advisory Panel is considering various options involving to date presentations from external providers and discussions with other agencies. Members are keen to see the impact of the introduction of the swipe card on the usage of the One Stop Shops and will review the outcomes following implementation in April 2009.

3.	Housing stock	The Council should follow Bromsgrove's example with regards to its housing stock. This should be transferred to an external housing provider. Bromsgrove has gained various accolades for this and more importantly, residents have benefited. There is no reason why this cannot be done in Redditch.	The Government is currently reviewing the Housing Subsidy system and the Council will subsequently be producing a Housing Revenue Account Business Plan this will take account of all of the options for maintaining the housing stock including retention.
4.	Housing stock	Should be run by another body as it is in Bromsgrove very successfully. Co-op Homes provide an excellent housing service and the Council cannot be expected to maintain a high level of housing services indefinitely especially in the present climate.	The Government is currently reviewing the Housing Subsidy system and the Council will subsequently be producing a Housing Revenue Account Business Plan will take account of all of the options for maintaining the housing stock including retention.
20.	Sheltered Housing	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Lights are on very brightly 24/7 inside and out. Fit sensors to limit use and save power and reduce cost. • Windows in corridors are opened if it gets hot instead of turning radiators down • This could save money if applied to all sheltered accommodation and council buildings 	In this years budget allocation we have £60 000 for energy conservation projects in Sheltered schemes, Asset maintenance have a number of planned projects that include TRV,s , energy efficient lighting and controls . We will also be giving advice to site managers on measures they can adopt to improve energy efficiency.
30.	Roxboro House (and other schemes)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limited parking at Roxboro House, but people with cars bidding for properties and then complain. Should make it known there is limited parking when advertising the property. 	Will include the fact that there is no parking at Roxboro House and limited parking in the area when advertising this scheme.
3.	Shared Working	There should be greater emphasis on shared services. I know you are looking into this but more can be done. For instance there should be a rationalisation of management at all levels and back office functions such as HR, Finance, Policy, etc.	

3.	Shared Working -	There is a potential case to be made for Council's Benefits staff and Job Centre staff working together - so people only fill out claim forms under one roof. May also reduce benefit fraud	
3.	Recruit staff to Benefits and Economic Dev And retention of REDI Centre	It would be a mistake not to recruit staff in Benefits & Economic Dev teams, especially in present economic climate. Economic dev function of the Council should be strengthened to help develop the area to diversify away from the manufacturing sector where there is no added value. We need to invest in people to reskill them. This means the REDI Centre has a key role to play providing a supportive environment to help people get back into work. It would be a mistake to offload the REDI Centre. It would be beneficial to review its existing remit and tailor it to meet new demands in the present economic climate.	<p>REDI Centre comments have been noted.</p> <p>There is a budget bid associated with more officers in EDU. In addition an EDU Strategy will go to Executive Committee in July.</p>
4.	Economic Dev	It is crucial to protect all jobs within the Council. Most workers live in the town and as the towns manufacturing base is in deep trouble, the Council as an employer is key to providing employment in the area and helping to boost the economy. The close proximity to the town centre means that employees spend their wages in Redditch rather than outside. The Council also provides a useful service to Redditch residents in terms of advice & guidance particularly in difficult times.	
4.	REDI centre	Should be part of the NEW College, as it does not perform a unique service and caters for a small minority. It could be done easily by the college	The proposal for consultation is the transfer of the service to an alternative service provider. It is important that the provider is assessed to ensure that the ethos of Redi is retained and the community needs are met.

27.	REDI	In considering any alternative service provider there needs to be a change to the current management arrangements, ensuring there is one overall manager responsible for the service.	In considering an alternative service provider part of the negotiations will be to ensure the structure is viable.
40.	REDI	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Feels the Centre provides a lifeline to disabled people and allows people to study at their own pace. Staff friendly and helpful. • Concerned the centre will lose its personal touch and people may find class sizes daunting 	<p>The current proposal for the Redi Centre is to explore/negotiate the continuation of the Redi provision by an alternative provider to the Council itself.</p> <p>Should this proposal be agreed by Council, Officers would then look to start the process for making arrangements to procure the service by an alternative provider. Existing courses that users of the service are currently taking will be honoured. The existing staff, under this proposal, would be transferred to the alternative service provider and Members have expressed that the ethos of Redi be maintained wherever possible.</p>
53.	REDI Centre	As a student, appreciate the benefits of the centre with its friendly and professional staff who have invaluable experience and expertise to enable them to deliver both knowledge and direction tailored to individual needs. As a single parent the centre has provided good career prospects. Impartial advice, guidance and skills/ interests assessment is available which for some is the key starting point in returning to work, whether from career gap or simply a change of career. REDI Centre must remain available to the community as it stands. A huge stepping stone for many into employment or higher education and reject any proposals to banish funding for this centre of investment for the people of Worcs.	Please refer to response at item 4.

54.	REDI Centre	Have attended a number of courses at REDI and it has been a lifeline. Suffer from depression and the Centre has helped so much in terms of being on a smaller scale and helping to get back into the outside world mixing with people. All my experiences at the centre have prepared me for getting back into the work environment and giving me confidence. The staff and tutors are helpful, take time to listen to you and very supportive.	These comments have been noted.
49.	REDI	Very impressed with range of training and advice available along with the number of partners they deal with. Redi work with the unemployed and people who may not be ready for college but want to access education & training. The Redi Centre was established to help unemployed people and deal with the shortfall in training in a previous recession and to threaten its future now, during another downturn, would be short-sighted and wrong. The Centre fills an educational need that sits well with NEW College, apprentice and training schemes & our schools in Redditch & it should remain if at all possible.	Please refer to response at item 4.
63-76.	REDI	Letter of support for the REDI Centre, concern about any proposed changes and various accounts of what the centre has done for them	These comments have been noted.

3.	Asset Management Plan	Develop effective AMP including disposal of assets. Council does not have financial means to keep hold of the various community centres	The Council has commissioned the preparation of an up to date Asset Management Strategy which will be presented to the Executive Committee on the 1 st April 2009. This will address all of the council's assets.
4.	Community Centres	These are mainly occupied by Keep Fit activities and creches. They should be taken over by a community organisation ie BSG or sold as revenue	There is an ongoing review of Community Centres, including the option of the Centres being managed by Community Groups.
4.	Forge Mill	Forge Mill Museum is a scheduled ancient monument and heritage site that is dear to the people of the town and should not be lost, however, its usage can be enhanced ie venue for weddings. The surrounding land is ideal for photos and the venue itself is far superior to the dire Easemore Road one. Use to showcase local craftspeople similar to Jinny Ring and provide a venue for courses in craftwork.	<p>The majority of events are run in-house by RBC. The events programme has significantly increased over the last two years, with attendances to the Museum increasing by 50%. 74 events were run through the museum and Countryside Centre</p> <p>We currently hire part of the facility for wakes, 'ghost' walks, wedding photos etc We also hire the facility to external companies who do outdoor productions/plays There are also regular group bookings such as the Women's Institute and group bookings/coach tours from all over the Country throughout the year. To do anything more involved would involve investment into catering facilities/ wedding co-ordinators.</p> <p>Included in the Budget Strategy were bids for revenue funding to extend the contract of the Heritage Access Officer. The Museum displays Needles and Fishing items which is what Redditch is renowned for. The Bordesley Abbey site is Redditch's prime Heritage site and we are submitting a Heritage Lottery Bid to carry out an interpretation project on Bordesley Meadows</p>
24.	Forge Mill	Support of this service	This comment has been noted.

47.	Forge Mill	Hope that the current facilities at this site will not change. Feel in the past year great efforts have been made in bringing more visitors to the venue. Opening the coffee bar in June 2008 meant the facility became a great place for a cross section of people to use. We had many visitors new to the site, saying "we didn't realise how nice it was here".	Comments will be considered as part of the review of Forge Mill.
12.	Car Parking	This makes sense as it would drive people to think of alternative 'green' methods of travelling to the facilities.	This comment has been noted.
13.	Car parking charges And Arrow Valley Park and Centre	We are encouraged to get more exercise and make the most of local facilities. The lake and countryside centre are a superb place to do both with the whole family. Walk round the lake at least once every week with young some, undertaken pram fit classes, used the play areas, fed the ducks, bought food and drink from the café. Couldn't afford to do this if I had to pay for car parking. Majority of users are mums taking kids for a walk, elderly getting a daily dose of exercise and families at weekends - to implement a car parking charge would be to discriminate against children and the elderly and is an utter disgrace. The countryside centre is a valuable and well used resource - it is always busy when we visit - and again its future should be assured not put under constant threat.	Comments regarding parking charges will be considered as part of the final decision by Full Council on the 6 th April. The purpose of a review of the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre is to look at securing the longer term viability of the Centre and how best this can be achieved.
15.	Parking charges at Arrow Valley	Concerned about parking charges - if nominal, people might pay, but if not you will have parking on all the adjacent roads causing danger and congestion and people crossing busy roads to get from a free parking area to the park.	These comments have been noted.
16.	Car Parking	Disagree with this. Yet another green open space	These comments have been noted.

	Charges at AVCC	<p>which is used by many people for walking, jogging, teaching children about wildlife, etc. There is people exercising their dogs, and themselves, fishing, entertaining the children at the Countryside Centre and helping them to make different items and to learn about life outside of towns and using the play areas for exercise. The café would also suffer by loss of trade if less people are using the park.</p> <p>We pay far too much for Council tax etc so the pleasure we have by taking a walk round the lake and park would be marred and more than likely curtailed should a charge to park one's car be implemented.</p>	
15.	Arrow Valley CC	Would be a pity to lose the person from the Countryside Centre - Birmingham has its park rangers and the system works well	These comments have been noted.
24.	Arrow Valley CC	Would like to see this continue at a high standard	This comment has been noted.
26.	Arrow Valley Lake	The lake is a fantastic free/cheap leisure service. To charge parking will make the lake become a no go zone. Especially in current economic climate with families struggling, to go to the park where you can park for free and enjoy the surroundings	These comments have been noted.
28.	Charging for Health Walks in AV Park	Think it is a bad idea to charge people for taking part in health walks given current drive to reduce obesity levels. If charges are introduced, should only relate to expenses directly attributable to the walks, e.g. insurance.	<p>Health walks are becoming a popular activity to reduce obesity, increase physical activity and to create for some people a support network of friends etc that would not be otherwise available.</p> <p>The Council has received funding to provide a health walking co-ordinator via the PCT, sports partnership and also the Community Investment fund from the govt. The grant aid is given so that all barriers to participation are removed and this includes charging. The funding for activities is provided so that sessions are free to encourage attendance. It is not possible to charge. Our costs are covered but we receive no income from the</p>

			<p>activity. Where we have provided walking guides/hosts in the past this has been on a voluntary basis by the leaders who we have covered for insurance purposes.</p>
31.	Car park charging at AV Country Park	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feel this would be unpopular move and will discourage people from visiting the park with a consequential loss of revenue to the visitor centre 	These comments have been noted.
32.	Car Parking Charges at AVP	This would cause more parking on the highways which surround the park - there would also be set up costs for barriers, machines and security risk.	The set up costs have been taken into account when considering the option of introducing car parking charges. If the scheme is introduced, Officers would monitor the impact on surrounding areas.
39.	Arrow Valley Park and C/Centre	Opposed to any cuts in funding to the park and centre. Opposed to the introduction of charges to any of the car parks. All sections of the community, young and old, use the park to take healthy and enjoyable exercise and recreation, and nothing should be done to impede or restrict their access to it.	These comments have been noted.
45.	Parking charges at AVCC	Redditch is supposed to be a 'healthy borough' and cutting back on areas that help people remain healthy is detrimental to us all and against all the Govt guidelines for healthy living. The Govt keep discussing how to help obese people and ye the council is prepared to charge to park at AVCC (the jewel in Redditch's crown) which is used by so many. Walking and enjoying the fresh air and surroundings can be enjoyed by anyone and at present costs nothing. Having to pay to park will put off so many people who use this.	These comments have been noted.
47.	AV CC Café	Use the park many times. We enjoy the centre and the events they hold. We strongly detest the catering facility. Find the food expensive and poor	These comments have been noted.

		quality. Service is below average and standards below par. The café is the hub of the centre and the council are losing many visitors because of how bad it is.	
61	Parking Charges at AV CC	Concern about proposed charges. Suggests that the Council could save money not doing things such as re-lifting paving in town.	These comments have been noted.
80	Parking Charges at AVCC	Concern about impact on Fitness Club - will charging lead to the public using the Club's private car park.	These comments have been noted.

4.	Council refreshments	Cut the amount of money spent on things such as lunch for visitors to Council and staff. The Town Hall is in the town centre and it would be far better to encourage visitors and staff to buy from shops and cafes thus keeping them in business.	
4.	Council magazine	This is a complete waste of money. There are 2 local newspapers that are perfectly adequate for info on the town and the Council's activities. I know of no one who thinks this is a useful production.	
12.	Identify best practice from other authorities	What has the council done to investigate what 'good looks like'? What best practice ideas has the council identified from other councils to avoid making rash decisions to close facilities? Instead of making short term/ill thought decisions they should look at what others do which has lead to sustainable solutions	
13.	Miscellaneous	Travel ban for staff No bonuses/pay rise for staff print both sides of paper ban private phone calls Don't commission 'paintings for mayor'	
15.	Pest Control Officer	Think removal of this post is a very bad move. People won't pay to have rats exterminated, they just won't report it or do anything about it and rats will run riot	
21.	Various	What about reducing the amount of street lighting? Are you sure that all Town Hall posts are required?	
29.	Various	1. Query re budget page of proposals - is it in £'000 or % points? 2. For Council staff to only take 1% or 1½% of their 3% pay increase	1. Figures quoted are all %. Due to rise in energy prices since the Council last went out to tender on energy. we are assuming a 100% rise in Gas & 70% rise in electricity prices compared to the budgeted amounts for these in 2007/08.

		<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Reduce 'balances' from £750,000 to £500,000 4. Half external advice (what's essential compared to nice to have) 5. Turn lights off (in Council building and library). 6. Instigate an in town penalty of £100 per night for any building (retail and office) who leave lights on after 11pm - could raise money to fund Christmas lights 7. Spend money on getting new businesses here - to create employment and get people off benefits 	<p>2. All our terms and conditions are governed by the National Joint Council, which is a national body, of which the pay award forms part of this. If we did not implement the figure that was agreed nationally we would be in breach of contract for all our employees. This could result in a higher cost to the council due to litigation claims. However in 2008/09 negotiations Employers put forward 2%, however after industrial action and arbitration we were instructed to award 2.75% by the arbitrators. Failure to implement this could again result in litigation. The negotiations for 2009/10 are likely to reflect what you are suggesting.</p> <p>3. In Feb 03 CIPFA published a guidance document on LA Reserves & Balances. The guidance does not prescribe the minimum level of balances to be held but recommends that consideration is given to the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the authority. During the consultation on this document it was suggested that the recommended minimum should be 5% of net expenditure. 5% for Redditch would mean maintaining balances at or around £650k. However just a 1% variation in gross income and gross expenditure is equivalent to £746k which would result in a significant reduction in balances. Taking into account all the increased pressures on limited resources, it is considered that a general fund revenue balance of £750k is a prudent minimum level.</p> <p>4. Spend on Advice & Guidance Services (BVPI 226a) is made up of various grants RBC has given to local charities to provide advice & guidance to local people - CAB £90k; WREC £8.5k; MECA/RICA £19k; Community Commonwealth £27k and All Womens House £16k (75% of their total grant for the period). The grants are allocated by Councillors.</p>
41.	Various	1. Redditch Partnership Sustainable Community Strategy Brochure - quality higher than needs	1. The Sustainable Community Strategy produced by Redditch Partnership is not a Council owned document. The funding for

		<p>to be. Should keep printing costs to a reasonable level on all Council information</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Disabled free parking and Shopmobility - not unreasonable for some charge to be made, particularly for car parking 3. Free bus passes - suggestion of £5 p.a. but are free passes a national right 4. AVP parking charges - feel this is reasonable if charges are reasonable but may mean people will park on roads local to park or industrial estate 5. Pitcheroak Golf Course - feel private golf course should make some contribution to maintaining Pitcheroak as should county or even national golf associations 6. Neighbourhood Groups - feel these have improved, have more content of feeding information to residents 	<p>the printing of this strategy came via NEW College and West Mercia Police as partners on the Local Strategic Partnership and not funded by Redditch Borough Council.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 2. Officers have explored the possibility of charging but, due to the additional adjustments and costs that would be involved, it would prove to be uneconomical to introduce. Also, in line with similar schemes in other authorities, disabled parking remains a free service. 3. The English National Bus Pass Scheme does not allow us to make a charge for the pass when it is first issued or an annual charge. However, if a pass is lost then we make a charge of £5 for a replacement pass, which is approximately the cost to us. 4. The Council is aware of the potential impact of introducing charges and has therefore looked at keeping the fees as low as possible. If the scheme is implemented, Officers will be monitoring any potential 'overspill' effects into other areas. 5. Officers are in discussion with the Golf Society and National Associations.
45.	Various	<p>What a sad day for Redditch if concessions removed from swimming, if the golf club closes, and with Dial A Ride being threatened. Many rely on this service to get them into town. Enclosure of letter in the paper (A Pyatt) which gives suggestions</p>	
51.	Various	<p>Objection to proposals to close the golf course, cut Christmas lights and stopping the annual firework display. Enclosed a petition of those wishing to keep the golf course open</p>	<p>The petition has been noted.</p>

4.	Palace Theatre	<p>Why does the Council maintain it? This is an asset to the town but it would be far better run by another body. Its productions are very limited and do not cater for vast majority of residents. There is nothing for young people and yet we are told that Redditch has very high numbers of under 25s. It has potential but needs to be run by professionals not the LA. If shared services are to be continued, there is also potential to provide a transport service to the Artrix which provides a much better repertoire and is known throughout the region as an excellent venue..</p>	<p>A major review took place prior to the refurbishment. The current budget with a building larger than previous has been maintained with the same small team. The youth theatre has increased its numbers and grants are successfully submitted to enhance the theatre operation and audience development for young people. We do try to cater for a wide range of productions and young people and the amateur societies do feature in the programme. However we need to increase the income where possible. We have undertaken a soft market test for outsourcing and although there are some companies that could be invited to negotiate within a tender specification it is apparent that they are only interested in commercial operation and not an operation that allows the community to be supported in their access to the facility. The building now sees 117,000+ attds through the building compared to 32,000 before the refurbishment. The Artrix is a very different operation and this is also heavily subsidised by Bromsgrove DC. The potential for linkage will be explored during the shared services agenda in the near future</p>
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12.	Bonfire/Fireworks	Amazed to see such a large event being provided without any charge. Even a minimal £1 per adult, 50p per child would have generated in excess of £10115k which would have covered the cost of the event. It would not be unusual to charge for such an event.	Charging for this event has already been reviewed in recent years and would actually see the cost of the event increase. The need for fencing to ensure everyone pays, install cashiers and pay points, security and audit purposes significantly increase the required budget to run the event. The site is also situated in a park land of 900 acres and so residents could stand outside of the performance space or on the mound and still enjoy the firework show without paying. This was reviewed during previous budget strategies. We have even tried a donation system and the return was extremely minimal. This event is run as a community safety event We will of course examine all avenues with alternative operators
13.	Bonfire/Fireworks	A small entrance fee should be charged of £1-£2 if necessary and remainder of the money required covered by advertising which you could sell. Need to start thinking more like a commercial enterprise.	Advertising and sponsorship has been tried in the past but due to the nature of the event and the minimal timespan it covers (2hrs at night) the return on investment by partners has been so minimal, if non existent, that we have not enjoyed repeat partnerships. The radio stations are paid to attend for the roadshow. Please refer to response at item 12.
15.	Fireworks	Would be a pity to scrap this and am sure people would pay to see them - they do for others. They attract a lot of people and deter people from having their own fireworks with inherent danger.	Please refer to response at item 12.
16.	Cancellation of Annual Bonfire	It would be a shame to stop this especially for the youngsters. Our children take our grandchildren to the bonfire night entertainment and they thoroughly enjoy themselves.	These comments have been noted.
24.	Bonfire/Christmas Lights	This could be a one off cutback with promises to reinstate as soon as economic situation improves and funding should be sought from local businesses	These comments have been noted.

26.	Fireworks/Xmas lights	Disagree with proposals to cancel Xmas lights, Firework display, closure of golf course. Christmas lights may the town look fabulous. Lot of people attend the fireworks and is a friendly atmosphere which all ages enjoy	These comments have been noted.
32.	Firework	Think the Council could justifiably not spend our money on the firework display there are so many other venues available.	These comments have been noted.
45.	Fireworks/Xmas lights	Families enjoy the fireworks held at AVP and what a poor town without the christmas lights.	These comments have been noted.
49.	Fireworks	The annual firework display is the most well attended event that the Council provide for residents. It is enjoyable, valued and a safe way for people to celebrate bonfire night as a community. It will be a great shame to see it scrapped and I would have thought that sponsorship of the event could provide at least some income to offset the costs of this excellent service. I cannot believe that the local fire brigade will be happy to see an increase in amateur, back garden fireworks emerge as the professional display is cut!	Please refer to response at item 13.
12.	Christmas lights	Ask local shops to contribute or pay in full for the provision of lights.	In November 2008 wrote to all Town Centre shops & businesses for contribution and received only two responses / contributions (less than £500). Unlikely to generate any income during current economic climate.
15.	Xmas lights	Seems a petty thing to cut - all towns have their Xmas decorations and for Redditch to have none is not entering into the spirit of Christmas - would traders in the area where the lights go contribute? Consider cutting back on where they do go	These comments have been noted.
16.	Christmas lights	The axing of the lights from the town centre gets another No Thank You. It is once a year for about 6 weeks which brings so much pleasure to	These comments have been noted.

		the public. It brightens peoples outlook and helps them keep looking on the bright side at, what is, such a stressful time of year.	
32.	Christmas Lights	Lack of lights would deter visitors from the town which will soon develop a neglected atmosphere	These comments have been noted.
49.	Christmas Lights	Finally, scrapping the Christmas lights. During this festive time of year local people want to enjoy their town centre whether it is for shopping or entertainment. Christmas lights are part of this, we do not want to encourage local people to go elsewhere and we should be encouraging outsiders into the town. Redditch should be proudly celebrating Christmas - not penny pinching and failing to support our local retailers. The Council's proposals are an assault on front line services and, to the shame of local Conservative Councillors, many will fall most heavily on those who have lost their jobs. I intend to fight these mean proposals tooth and nail. I urge the Council to reconsider and instead look at better ways of working in back office operations and being at the forefront of taking up government and other support instead of lagging behind.	These comments have been noted.
78.	Christmas Lights	If we keep the trimmings can they be another colour - not purple.	These comments have been noted.

17.	Leisure Services	Should look to rationalise services where there is a duplication. Duplication of services at Abbey Stadium, Arrow Vale, Kingsley, Hewell Road. These services could be rationalised to save money (rather than closing golf course).	Each site is complimentary in its programme to the other sites and are running at high percentage usage levels. The management team review the programme on a monthly basis. Where there is duplication in the programme it is due to customer demand or due to a complementary business need. The demand for time is always very high and the usage is much higher than the golf course covering many demographic groups across residents within the Town. Rationalisation will be taken into account with future delivery of new facilities if funding allows progression.
17.	Hewell Road	High maintenance costs of such an old building. It is one of 3 swimming pools in town, although servicing different local communities. On going maintenance issues and costs associated with the facility - considered as viable alternative to save money to golf course closure.	It is understood that Hewell Rd pool is time limited and will be minimally maintained until an alternative scheme is put before members in the coming months. There is a high usage of the site through key stage delivery of the schools swimming curriculum and swimming lessons and is the home to the Redditch Swimming club. The site currently sees 160,000+ attds as opposed to 14,000 at POGC. A new replacement facility at the Abbey Std site (if approved) will be more efficient in operation and maintenance and with increased income projected
17.	Reddicard	Should this discount scheme be maintained. Should we now consider removing the 'discount' to ensure a range of services are maintained.	The Reddicard has undergone a major review for fees and charges and the concessionary element of the scheme has been reduced from 50% to a 25% discount to aid the current budget strategy. All fees & charges are reviewed annually.
22.	Fees & Charges	After some searching found the full fees and charges 2009/10. Would like to know why it is not easily available via a simple link from the proposal overview. Daughter's swimming lessons will cost almost £10 more and it seems many of the childrens activities are subject to similar price hikes. At a time when children are less active a low cost activity is	A review has been completed of the fees and charges set for 2009/10 including comparisons with other authorities and consideration of concessions via the use of the Reddicard.

		wonderful, especially for those on low income, increasing prices for those who are least able to afford it is not the answer. Feel the extra charge will simply stop people going, meaning less revenue to ourselves. Please reconsider such high price hikes	
50.	Increase in fees & charges	Disappointing that the council no longer are prepared to fund concession rates at their present rates as this will affect usage at all sporting facilities. Leader in Advertiser states it is not fair for other tax payers to pay for services not used. Do not begrudge paying for services not used. Will we have a choice to pay for what services we use and have reduced Council Tax bill?	
49.	Fees & Charge	I disagree with the enormous increases in charges for leisure with some charges doubling or tripling. This will affect all users but those who currently benefit from concessions, like those who have lost their jobs, will get hit by far the hardest. At a time when people are losing their jobs and worrying about money the Council should be providing more affordable services not cutting them. New charges for parking at AVP and the precedent it sets for possible parking charges at other parks are a further attack on exercise and activity in Redditch? We are all more concerned about problems with inactivity and obesity and all these proposals cut back the opportunity of individuals to do something about it. I am also concerned that price increases of 75% and more will inevitably see fewer people accessing leisure facilities. I am therefore concerned these price rises could lead to the closure of some of our leisure centres.	Please refer to response for item 22.
35.	Free	From April offering free swimming for over	Yes, the costs will be covered by Government Funding.

	Swimming	60s/under 16s for the two public swimming pools in Redditch. Will the cost of this be totally covered by Govt funding and if not why do this in the present economic climate?	
24.	Dial A Ride	This is a service that should continue to benefit Redditch people	
33.	Dial A Ride	Ask that you save this services which helps so many older people to lead a better life. Because don't drive because of age, have taken great advantage of it and would miss it immensely. The office staff are so pleasant and helpful and the drivers are all first class and eager to do all they can to help people like me who are now 'not so good on their legs'.	
49.	Dial A Ride	Last time the Conservatives were in power they took free bus passes off older people and those with disabilities - now I understand they are considering taking money away from Dial a Ride. The Council should not be targeting services for the vulnerable in this way.	
62.	Shopmobility	Petition against the Cuts from approx 375 people	

55.	Grants to voluntary organisations	<p>Concerned about giving of grants to various organisations, e.g. Caribbean Roots, which like several other groups is representative of only a small section of the community. Cannot understand why the council is asked to finance it in park or whole. It is even more important that tax payers money is spent on essentials to benefit the majority, not on desirables, no matter how worthy they may be. At a time when elderly people are worrying about being able to afford to eat/keep warm, and many young people in danger of losing their homes because of job losses, I don't see how giving tax payers money to enable people to discover their roots can be justified. Also the Asian Womens house in West Avenue has been the recipient of many thousands of pounds of tax payers money over the years. Don't understand why these people are not expected to raise money to finance their own interests as so many others do. Fairest thing for both councils to do, is publish a list of grants etc in the local papers and give residents opportunity to say whether they consider this money to be wisely spent or if they would prefer for example roads and pavements to be kept in good repair and gritted in bad weather and for giving of charitable donations to be left to the discretion of the individual then perhaps council tax might not rise each year while services fall.</p>	
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55.	Contractors	<p>Another saving is where contractors do work which is left in an unsatisfactory state. Tax payers are having to foot the bill for poor work either by council contractors or by outside contractors, e.g. drainage works carried out by Severn Trent.</p> <p>Work done by tree surgeons - have driven off the grass leaving large ruts which are not reinstated by contractor.</p>	
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COMMUNITY FORUM RESPONSES

SUBJECT	SUGGESTION/COMMENT	RESPONSE
Pitcheroak Golf Course	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Support for alternative provider • Suggestion that Officers contact other golf clubs in the area to look at contribution towards young people accessing Pitcher Oak 	Comments noted. (Refer to other comments)
Fire works.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consider alternative venue to reduce costs and potential charging • Consensus from the Forum was that this is an important event and can be seen to effect community safety issues by reducing people having their own firework display 	Comments noted. (Refer to other comments)
Neighbourhood Groups	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Should be amalgamated with PACT process 	Comments noted. (Refer to other comments)
Shopmobility	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Approach Kingfisher Centre and look into charging car parking for disabled users to support the Shopmobility scheme (recognition that this has been suggested previously) • Officers to look at Voluntary Organisations to run the scheme as they have the ability to access alternative funding 	Will be considered as part of review.
Car Parking Charging	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Group highly concerned about charging at AVCC as it could result in a decrease in football and exclude certain clients. • Suggestion to provide a bus service to the park 	Comments noted. (Refer to other comments)

TRADE UNION RESPONSES (SUMMARY)

SUBJECT	SUGGESTION/COMMENT
Pay award	Savings made on current pay award & potential to save more
Vacant posts	Need to be closely monitored via Executive & transfer resources
Honoraria/ secondments	These should be rationalised / reported regularly to Executive
Sickness	Re-allocate staff where possible
Golf Course	Concern about loss of amenity to the town. Will affect more than just two council employed staff ie voluntary workers and cafe
REDI	Concern about long period of uncertainty for centre and staff over number of years. Detailed options appraisal and staffing structure required as part of a business case.
Community Centres	Only small number of staff affected - so why not retain.
Neighbourhood Groups	Review and see if required/affective
LABGI	Pleased to learn money forthcoming
Future Reviews	Request timetable for AVCC, FMM, Shopmobility, DAR
Consultants/ Agency	Review use and see if in house resources can be deployed.
Subsequent changes	Request that changes resulting from consultation are reported to TUs/Staff with full background and rationale.

Council

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126. NOTICE OF MOTION - LABOUR GROUP ALTERNATIVE BUDGET - AMENDMENT

A Notice of Motion had been submitted by Councillor Hartnett in accordance with Standing Orders 6 and 15 in respect of the Budget considered by the Council on 23 February 2009.

The Mayor advised that, as this Notice of Motion related to the following item, the amendment contained within the Notice of Motion would be considered alongside that item, Budget Savings 2009/10 to 2011/12.

127. BUDGET SAVINGS 2009/10 - 2011/12

The Council considered a number of proposals designed to address the budget gap following the end of the period of staff and public consultation on a range of options for achieving the required savings.

The Leader introduced a report detailing which of the basket of options that had been the subject of the consultation process were being recommended to continue to receive funding through the revenue budget. The proposed basket of options was tabled at the meeting.

Two of the more significant recommendations put forward saw the management of the Pitcheroak Golf Course and the REDI Centre being transferred to alternative providers. A potential service provider had already been identified for the golf course whereas the management of the REDI Centre would be the subject of a formal procurement process.

A number of further recommendations were highlighted. The provision of Christmas lights, a rat control service and the annual firework display were to remain in the Council's revenue budget going forward. A decision on the Neighbourhood Groups was to await the outcome of an Overview and Scrutiny review. Proposed car parking charges were now being recommended only for the Town Hall Car Park and Trescott Road Car Park until 6.00 pm at weekends.

During the course of the discussion, the following proposed amendment in respect of Budget Savings 2009/10 to 2011/12, and

.....
Chair

as detailed in the previously mentioned Notice of Motion, was the subject of a named vote in accordance with Standing Order 16:

'Following the public consultation on the Council budget for 2009/10, we move an amendment to the Budget considered by Council on 9 March 2009 (should read 23 February 2009). The amendment is as attached.' (at pages 11-12 of the Council agenda)

Members voting FOR the amendment to the motion:

Councillors Chance, Cookson, Enderby, Fry, Hartnett, Hunt, R King, W King, Mould, Shurmer and Taylor. (11 votes)

Members voting AGAINST the amendment to the motion:

Councillors Anderson, Braley, Brunner, Chalk, A Clayton, B Clayton, Hopkins, Field, Gandy, Hall, MacMillan, Norton, Pearce, Quinney, Smith and Thomas.
(16 votes)

Members abstaining from voting:

None.

Accordingly, the amendment fell.

Prior to the above named vote being taken, a further amendment to the original motion, which proposed the adoption of a range of further options in respect of revenue and capital bids, was the subject of a second named vote in accordance with Standing Order 16:

Members voting FOR the amendment to the motion:

Councillors Chance, Cookson, Fry, Hartnett, Hunt, R King, W King, Mould, Shurmer and Taylor. (10 votes)

Members voting AGAINST the amendment to the motion:

Councillors Anderson, Braley, Brunner, Chalk, A Clayton, B Clayton, Hopkins, Field, Gandy, Hall, MacMillan, Norton, Pearce, Quinney, Smith and Thomas.
(16 votes)

Members abstaining from voting:

Councillor Enderby.
(1 vote)

Accordingly, this second amendment to the Motion fell and it was subsequently

RESOLVED that

- 1) the proposals for the General Fund budget for 2009/10 to 2011/12, as set out below, be approved:

	2009/10 £'000	2010/11 £'000	2011/12 £'000
SAVINGS			
Pitcheroak Golf Course	42.7	56.9	56.9
Planning	53.2	53.2	
Shared Services	40.0	290.0	390.0
Vacancy Management	125.0	125.0	125.0
REDI	60.0	160.0	160.0
Print Unit	52.0	52.0	52.0
Procurement	70.0	70.0	70.0
Corporate Training	50.0	50.0	50.0
Arrow Valley Countryside Centre	24.0	24.0	24.0
Building Control	20.7	20.7	20.7
Head of Asset & Maintenance	25.0	25.0	25.0
Switchboard	3.0	3.0	3.0
In-Curtilage Parking	10.0		
Committee Services	14.0	14.0	14.0
Benefits Subsidy	40.0	100.0	100.0
Pay Award	60.0	120.0	180.0
Property Services	10.3	10.3	10.3
Licensing Officer	13.3	13.3	13.3
Community Meeting Rooms	45.0	61.0	61.0
Support Service Costs	25.0	25.0	25.0
Councillors' Personal Budgets	16.5	16.5	16.5
INCOME			
Forge Mill	10.0	10.0	10.0
Private Sector Lifeline	28.4	28.4	28.4
Car Parking (Town Hall / Trescott Road)	12.0	22.0	22.0
Dial-a-Ride	10.0	10.0	10.0
Arrow Valley Countryside Centre	10.0	10.0	10.0
TOTAL SAVINGS / ADDITIONAL INCOME	870.1	1,370.3	1,477.1
Less additional bids:			
Rat Control Service	5.0	5.0	5.0
Fireworks Display	15.0	15.0	15.0
Support for Minor Land Sales	10.0	10.0	10.0

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Revenue implications of savings	25.1		
TOTAL	815.0	1340.3	1447.1

- 2) **the Council not proceed with the suspended transfer of the REDI service, and the leasing of the REDI Centre, to the Trust (REDI Centre Limited);**
- 3) **the variations to, and impacts on the budget of, those matters formally consulted upon be noted; and**
- 4) **Officers provide a future options report to enable Members to consider the potential for re-investment in services to assist with the economic downturn.**

(Prior to consideration of this item, and in accordance with the requirements of Section 81 of the Local Government Act 2000, Councillor Braley declared a personal but not a prejudicial interest in this item, in view of the fact that he was a governor of an institution which might at some future time be considered as an alternative provider for the services at the REDI Centre.)

Item 8 – Budget strategy and budget Deficit – Possible Questions for Discussion

1. What was the intention when the council set the 3 year Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) that it would balance or run at a defect or even set a surplus?
2. What are the "rules" for setting MTFP can we set a defect in every /any year (assuming the current year must always show a balanced budget)?
3. At what stage does the council have to take steps to seek a balanced budget / MTFP?
4. Is there any maximum level of a defect which can be set in MTFP each year of the MTFP?
5. Is there any maximum level of planned surplus which can be set in MTFP for each year of MTFP?
6. How common place is it in local government (a) to have a MTFP (b) for MTFP to have a deficit?
7. Can we see examples of other councils MTFP to compare how written and set out?
8. What steps if any are the council currently taking to address the deficit in the MTFP (if so - when will they come to Council / O & S / Executive)?
9. What are the current projections of the MTFP (have they changed for the better /for the worse)?
10. How often will / can you report major changes to the MTFP to council/ O & S / executive?

**District Centres Task and Finish Group – Monitoring the Implementation of the Group’s Recommendations
Information for consideration at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on Wednesday 8 July 2009**

Recommendation	Approved by the Executive Committee and Council?	Amended?	Were budget/capital bids approved (if relevant)?	Officer responses (What action has been taken in response to this recommendation?)
<p>1. An Improvement Fund be established to provide a continual source of funding for improvements in Matchborough, Winyates and Woodrow District Centres, subject to further work being undertaken by Officers to develop the proposed Improvement Fund further.</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p align="center">No</p>	<p align="center">N/A</p>	<p>The establishment of an Improvement Fund would require Council approval in the same way as a budget bid. The total income from the District Centres is around £195k. The leases for the commercial properties in the Centres do contain clauses to allow the Council to levy a service charge which could contribute to an Improvement Fund.</p>
<p>2. The Council consider entering into arrangements with local companies to sponsor local bus shelters and roundabouts in order to generate further income that could be used to make improvements to the three centres.</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p align="center">No</p>	<p align="center">N/A</p>	<p>Officers from Legal Services have arranged a meeting with the Acting Director of Environment and Planning and with Landscaping Officers to discuss this proposal in</p>

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				<p>more detail. In particular, discussions will focus on the potential risks to the substantial contribution that the Council currently receives from Worcestershire County Council for our maintenance work on roundabouts. There is also an issue around the ability to simply go ahead with a named firm when an open procurement process has not taken place.</p> <p>The Legal Services Manager is due to provide a further update on the outcome of these discussions in due course.</p>
<p>3. Officers to work with the landlord of the Old Sticky Wicket Public House in Matchborough to facilitate the creation of a pub garden.</p>	<p>Only partially.</p>	<p>Yes – altered to the following:</p> <p>As Officers have pursued the creation of a pub garden at the Old Sticky Wicket Public House in Matchborough as far as is practicable, no further action be taken by Officers subject to the</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Property Services have spoken and written to the Landlord on several occasions. Due to the current economic climate, and the need to apply for planning permission for the change of use, the Landlord is reluctant to</p>

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		landlord taking active steps to pursue this matter in conjunction with the Council.		proceed at present.
4. A free 24 hour cash dispenser machine (ATM) be installed at the Woodrow Centre, outside the Costcutter supermarket.	No – it was rejected on the basis that the proposal was impractical.			No further action required.
5. Where there is scope the Council work with the Probation Service to deliver specific enhancement works in Matchborough, Winyates and Woodrow District Centres.	Yes	No	N/A	Following a staff turnover in the Probation Services this December we are currently negotiating our first community projects with the new staff team. The first two projects have been contracted. Should these be successful further projects could be nominated across RBC assets in the future.
6. The Council consider allocation of £500 for basic	Yes	Yes – The Executive	A revenue bid	

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<p>work on upgrading the security of residential properties in Winyates District Centre; this funding to be used to finance work by a Community Support Officer and a skilled manual worker / joiner / labourer.</p>		<p>Committee amended this recommendation by adding the following to the end of the recommendation “(Capital or revenue?)</p>	<p>was submitted in 2009. This bid was treated as a low priority. Not approved.</p>	
<p>7. The Council approach What’s Your Point community group to carry out painting and decorating works on the commercial shutters in the District Centres. A budget of £5,000 should be made available for these works. What’s Your Point to work with the commercial tenants to agree a colour scheme or appropriate design for the shutters.</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p>Yes – altered to the following: The Council approach What’s Your Point community group or any other community group to carry out painting and decorating works on the commercial shutters in the District Centres subject to a budget bid being made for the £5,000 required for these works and What’s Your Point / another group working with the commercial tenants to agree a colour scheme or appropriate design for the shutters.</p>	<p>A revenue bid was submitted in 2009. This bid was treated as a low priority. Not approved.</p>	
<p>8. Officers to arrange for the purchase of 20 road signs at a total cost of £4,500, directing traffic from the main arterial roads to the relevant District</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p>Yes – altered to the following: A budget bid be made for the</p>	<p>A revenue bid was submitted in 2009. This</p>	

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<p>Centres. The signs must include “Shopping Centre” as part of their wording.</p>		<p>purchase of 20 road side signs at a total cost of £4,500, directing traffic from the main arterial roads to the relevant District Centres. The signs must include “Shopping Centre” as part of their wording.</p>	<p>bid was treated as a low priority. Not approved.</p>	
<p>9. A capital bid is made for 2009/10 to undertake resurfacing and remodelling works within the Winyates centre in two key phases: Phase 1: resurfacing the bus lane and either footpath immediately left and right of the bus lane. Phase 2: remodelling of the footpath, entrances to the Winyates Pub and the old toilets.</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p align="center">No</p>	<p>A capital bid was submitted in 2009. This bid was treated as a medium priority. Not approved.</p>	
<p>10. The sections of the bus only lanes that travel through Matchborough, Winyates and Woodrow District Centres be maintained as bus only routes.</p>	<p align="center">Yes</p>	<p align="center">No</p>		<p>Property Services are not pursuing a change to the bus only routes at these centres.</p>

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<p>11. The Council investigates the relative costs of either contracting out or buying machinery to remove chewing gum from the paved surfaces in the three District Centres.</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Yes – altered to the following: The Council investigate the relative costs of either contracting out or buying machinery to remove chewing gum from the paved surfaces in the three District Centres, including the sharing of the service with another local authority, specifically Bromsgrove District Council.</p>	<p>N/A</p>	<p>Officers have trialled several types of equipment and have identified a preferred method of gum removal. The system removes gum using low pressure hot steam which emulsifies the gum and removes it from the paved surface without the need for a high volume of water. It does not remove the infill between bricks or pavements and there is minimal hazard to the public. This means that small work areas can be cordoned off and dealt with as required.</p>
<p>12. The Council redevelops all of the remaining three district Centres in future and that the Council considers Woodrow Centre as the next centre for redevelopment after the redevelopment of Church Hill District Centre has been completed.</p>	<p>Not really</p>	<p>Yes – altered to the following: The Council awaits the outcome of the redevelopment of the Church Hill District Centre prior to any further decision being made on redevelopment of the remaining District Centres.</p>		<p>Property Services are including redevelopment break clauses in all new leases in the District Centres to facilitate possible future redevelopment.</p>



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No Direct Ward Relevance

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12. WORK PROGRAMME

(Report of the Chief Executive)

Date of Meeting	Subject Matter	Officer(s) Responsible for report
ALL MEETINGS	REGULAR ITEMS	(CHIEF EXECUTIVE)
	Minutes of previous meeting Consideration of the Forward Plan Consideration of Executive Committee key decisions Call-ins (if any) Pre-scrutiny (if any) Consideration of Overview and Scrutiny Actions List Referrals from Council or Executive Committee, etc. (if any) Task & Finish Groups - feedback Committee Work Programme	Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive Chief Executive
	REGULAR ITEMS Quarterly Performance Report Quarterly Budget Monitoring Report Review of Service Plans 2010 / 13	Chief Executive Chief Executive Relevant Lead Heads of Service

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	<p>REGULAR ITEMS</p> <p>Oral updates on the progress of:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. the Council Flat Communal Cleaning Task and Finish Group: 2. the Dial-A-Ride Task and Finish Group; 3. the National Angling Museum Task and Finish Group; and 4. the Neighbourhood Groups Task and Finish Group. 	<p>Relevant Lead Head of Service</p> <p>Relevant Lead Head of Service</p> <p>Relevant Lead Head of Service</p> <p>Relevant Lead Head of Service</p>
OTHER ITEMS - DATE FIXED		
8 July 2009	Budget Strategy and budget deficit - discussion	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
8 July 2009	District Centres Task and Finish Group – Update Report on Response to Recommendations	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
8 July 2009	Uses of the Countryside and Visitors Centre – Scoping Document	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
28 July 2009	Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) training - London	
29 July 2009	Crime and Disorder Scrutiny - Discussion	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service

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29 July 2009	Councillor Calls for Action (CCfA) – Discussion of Process	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
29 July 2009	Quarterly monitoring – Performance Outturn Report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
29 July 2009	Policy for the Award of Contracts to the Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations by Redditch Borough Council – pre-scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head of Service
19 August 2009	Options for use of the Former Covered Market area – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
19 August 2009	Role of the Mayor Task and Finish Group – Monitoring the Implementation of Recommendations	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
19 August 2009	Quarterly Budget Report – first quarter 2009/10.	Relevant Lead Head of Service
19 August 2009	Quarterly Performance Report – first quarter 2009/10.	Relevant Lead Head of Service
2 September 2009	Fees and Charges Task and Finish Group – Update on Response to Recommendations – Planning Charges.	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
2 September 2009	Portfolio Holder for Planning, Economic Development and Transport – Annual Report	
2 September 2009	Town Centre Strategy – Pre-Scrutiny	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service

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23 September 2009	National Angling Museum Task and Finish Group – Part One report	Relevant Lead Head(s) of Service
23 September 2009	Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment and Health – Annual Report	
14 October 2009	Housing Mutual Exchange Task and Finish Group – Monitoring the Implementation of the Group's Recommendation	Relevant Lead Head of Service
14 October 2009	Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management – Annual Report	
4 November 2009	Dial-A-Ride Task and Finish Group – Final Report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
4 November 2009	Quarterly Budget Report – second quarter 2009/10.	Relevant Lead Head of Service
4 November 2009	Quarterly Performance Report – second quarter 2009/10.	Relevant Lead Head of Service
25 November 2009	Neighbourhood Groups Task and Finish Group – Final Report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
3 February 2010	Update on fly tipping and the progress of the 'Worth It' campaign.	Relevant Lead Head of Service
3 February 2010	Quarterly Budget Report – third quarter 2009/10.	Relevant Lead Head of Service

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3 February 2010	Quarterly Performance Report – third quarter 2009/10.	Relevant Lead Head of Service
24 February 2010	Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism – Annual Report	
17 March 2010	Review of Ditches - update report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
17 March 2010	Fees and Charges Task and Finish Group – update on implementation of the Charging Policy	Relevant Lead Head of Service
17 March 2010	Portfolio Holder for Community Safety – Annual Report	
7 April 2010	Portfolio Holder for Community Leadership and Partnership – Annual Report	
23 June 2010	Performance Outturn Report	Relevant Lead Head of Service
2 March 2011	Council Flat Communal Cleaning Task and Finish Group – update on implementation of recommendations.	Relevant Lead Head of Service
June 2011	Third Sector Task and Finish Group – Stage Two Update on responses to the Group's recommendations	Relevant Lead Head of Service
OTHER ITEMS – DATE NOT FIXED		

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	Overview and Scrutiny Member Training on Pre-Scrutiny.	Relevant Lead Head of Service
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