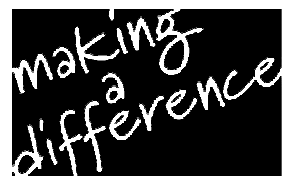


# Executive Committee

Tuesday 31st May 2011

Member Development  
Session  
6.30pm

followed by Committee  
7.30pm  
Committee Room 2  
Town Hall  
Redditch



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

# Access to Information - Your Rights

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

Your main rights are set out below:-

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

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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  
Ivor Westmore  
Committee Support Services**

**Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, B98 8AH  
Tel: 01527 64252 (Extn. 3269) Fax: (01527) 65216  
e.mail: [ivor.westmore@bromsgroveandredditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:ivor.westmore@bromsgroveandredditchbc.gov.uk) Minicom: 595528**

# Welcome to today's meeting.

## Guidance for the Public

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### ***Agenda Papers***

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

### ***Chair***

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

### ***Running Order***

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

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

### ***Decisions***

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

### ***Members of the Public***

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

### ***Special Arrangements***

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

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

### ***Further Information***

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

### ***Fire/ Emergency instructions***

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

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

**Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.**

**Do Not use lifts.**

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

**The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.**

# Declaration of Interests: Guidance for Councillors

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DO I HAVE A "PERSONAL INTEREST" ?

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

**OR**

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

you have a personal interest.

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

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

IS IT A "PREJUDICIAL INTEREST" ?

In general only if:-

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

**and**

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

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

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



# Executive

31st May 2011

7.00 pm

## Committee

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

### Agenda

#### Membership:

Membership of the Executive Committee to be agreed at the Council's Annual Meeting on Monday 23rd May 2011.

<b>1. Apologies</b>	To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend this meeting.
<b>2. Declarations of Interest</b>	To invite Councillors to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda.
<b>3. Leader's Announcements</b>	<ol style="list-style-type: none"><li>To give notice of any items for future meetings or for the Forward Plan, including any scheduled for this meeting, but now carried forward or deleted; and</li><li>any other relevant announcements.</li></ol> <p>(Oral report)</p>
<b>4. Minutes</b> (Pages 1 - 8) Chief Executive	To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 12th April 2011.  (Minutes attached)
<b>5. Road Gritting Short, Sharp Review - Final Report</b> (Pages 9 - 44)	To consider the final report of the Road Gritting Short, Sharp Review Task and Finish Group.  (Report attached)  <b>(All Wards)</b>

<p><b>6. Redditch Council Plan 2011-14</b></p> <p>(Pages 45 - 90)</p> <p>Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships</p>	<p>The Council Plan sets out the vision for Redditch Borough Council including its strategic priorities. It details the key deliverables that will contribute to achieving each of the agreed priorities.</p> <p>The comments and recommendation of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the Council Plan are attached at Item 10 on this agenda.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(All Wards)</b></p>
<p><b>7. Review of Lease - 21 and 21a Salters Lane</b></p> <p>(Pages 91 - 94)</p> <p>Head of Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To consider a review of the lease and associated rent of 21 and 21a Salters Lane.</p> <p>[The report and appendix contain exempt information as defined in S.100 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). In view of this it is anticipated that discussion of these matters will take place after the exclusion of the public.]</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(Batchley &amp; Brockhill Ward);</b></p>
<p><b>8. Review of Lease - Unit 1, Matchborough Centre</b></p> <p>(Pages 95 - 108)</p> <p>Head of Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To consider a review of rent for Unit 1, Matchborough Centre.</p> <p>[The report and appendix contain exempt information as defined in S.100 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as they contain information relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information). In view of this it is anticipated that discussion of these matters will take place after the exclusion of the public.]</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(Matchborough Ward);</b></p>

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<p><b>9. Park House (150 Evesham Road)</b></p> <p>(Pages 109 - 114)</p> <p>Head of Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To consider making the site of Park House (150 Evesham Road) surplus to requirements.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(Central Ward);</b></p>
<p><b>10. Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b></p> <p>(Pages 115 - 130)</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 13th April 2011.</p> <p>There are recommendations to consider.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p>
<p><b>11. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc.</b></p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.</p>
<p><b>12. Advisory Panels - update report</b></p> <p>(Pages 131 - 134)</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels and similar bodies, which report via the Executive Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>
<p><b>13. Action Monitoring</b></p> <p>(Pages 135 - 138)</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider an update on the actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>

# Executive

Committee

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<b>14. Exclusion of the Public</b>	<p>Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, to consider excluding the public from the meeting in relation to any items of business on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged it may be necessary to move the following resolution:</p> <p><b>“that, under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs <i>(to be specified)</i> of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.”</b></p>
<b>15. Confidential Minutes / Referrals (if any)</b>	To consider confidential matters not dealt with earlier in the evening and not separately listed below (if any).



## Executive

### Committee

12th April 2011

## MINUTES

#### Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair) and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton, Malcolm Hall, Gay Hopkins and Jinny Pearce

#### Also Present:

Councillors Bill Hartnett, Robin King, Brenda Quinney and Derek Taylor and Mr Graham Vickery

#### Officers:

J Bayley, H Bennett, M Bough, R Cooke, C Felton, L Hadley, M Hanwell and J Pickering and S Skinner

#### Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

#### 206. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors Michael Braley, Greg Chance and Debbie Taylor.

#### 207. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

#### 208. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

The Chair advised that she had accepted the following matter as Urgent Business:

Constitution – Review 2011.

#### 209. MINUTES

##### RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 15th March 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

.....  
Chair

**210. PROMOTING REDDITCH TASK AND FINISH GROUP - FINAL REPORT**

The final report of the Promoting Redditch Task and Finish Group was presented to the Committee by members of the Group, the Chair, ex-Councillor Graham Vickery and Councillors Brenda Quinney and Derek Taylor.

The report had been produced out of a consensus amongst Members that the town might more effectively be promoted and a sense of pride inculcated into local residents and businesses. It was noted that the review and report had identified three areas upon which the Council and its partners should focus their energy, these being the development of business within the town, the development of services for business visitors and the development of leisure tourism.

It was acknowledged by the Group that, whereas a number of the recommendations contained within the report might be implemented in the short term, other recommendations were linked to longer term aspirations for the future which the Committee was urged to endorse in principle. In detailing the background to the recommendations, the Group highlighted a number of more general points including the need for the Council to act as the support in these processes rather than as the leader and the lack of any substantial funding implications arising from the proposals.

Officers reported that the Chair of the Redditch Town Centre Partnership had clarified evidence that had been included in the report from her interview with the Group. In particular, she wished members to note that the town's industrial heritage could be used to promote Redditch, particularly when targeted at a specific audience and used creatively.

The Committee thanked the Group for a good, detailed report. It was noted that the views of many people and organisations had been sought and a number of proposals developed that were both interesting and worthwhile. Officers commented upon a number of the recommendations, endorsing much of what had come out of the review and identifying those areas where there was already work ongoing to address the issues which had been highlighted. In the area of leisure and arts it was particularly noted that the changes to the management structure for Cultural and Leisure Services would increase capacity and resilience and lead to increased focus on a number of issues which had been the subject of recommendations from the Group. Likewise, the Town Centre Partnership endorsed the contents of the report and was utilising the findings of the review to shape its activities going forward.

There was an acknowledgement that certain issues were more intractable and were outside of the power of the authority to directly influence. However, the efforts that were being made to achieve goals such as a more rounded shopping experience or a wider appeal in the night-time economy were recognised.

In responding to the comments of the Committee and Officers, the Group noted that one of their objectives had been to stimulate debate on these issues and, to that extent, the undertaking had been very worthwhile. The Committee was content to endorse the recommendations before it and consequently

**RESOLVED that:**

- 1a) leisure tourism marketing be targeted at families of all cultures within Redditch and a radius of 20 miles, highlighting the attractions of the Arrow Valley Lake and Countryside Centre and the shopping opportunities;**
- 1b) business marketing should promote Redditch's strategic and rural location, being vibrant and modern using strap lines which reflect these images;**
- 2) a significant festival and events programme be developed and marketed cohesively to raise the profile of the town in the region;**
- 3) promotional material be developed in partnerships and through Redditch Matters;**
- 4) the Palace Theatre, Forge Mill Needle Museum, Bordesley Abbey Visitor Centre and a public arts programme be developed with increased management resource to provide increased audiences, more events and significant installations;**
- 5) the Redditch Town Centre Partnership should work to create a more rounded shopping experience in the Kingfisher Shopping Centre and Church Green, with event based programmes to refresh the offer and a cohesive marketing strategy incorporating recognisable branding, key qualities and identifiers;**
- 6) Redditch market be developed to provide again a substantial marketing strategy for the town centre and develop opportunities for new entrepreneurs;**

- 7) **the Council ensure that business promotion receives appropriate investment and provide an information resource fit for purpose;**
- 8) **the new North Worcestershire Economic Development Service and Strategy should recognise the importance of tourism to the local economy and ensure that adequate resources are allocated to the promotion of tourism in the area;**
- 9) **the need for the promotion of Redditch hotels as a business resource, not necessarily by the Council, should be recognised;**
- 10) **consideration be given to devising a Visitor Ambassador Scheme;**
- 11) **the Council endorse the Redditch Advertiser's proposal to introduce a Redditch Community Awards programme and work with the newspaper and other partners to deliver the scheme;**
- 12) **the Council ensure that deficiencies in road signage are addressed: location naming, systemic effectiveness and physical cleanliness;**
- 13) **the Council actively seek to establish promotion partnerships and ensure that commercial interests have a full and effective voice; and**
- 14) **the Council ensure that electronic promotion tools are constantly developed and exploited to the full. This should include introducing a virtual business centre and consistent provision of card payment facilities both online, in promotional materials and at all venues.**

**211. WORCESTERSHIRE HOUSING STRATEGY 2011 - 2016**

The Committee considered a report which set out a Countywide Housing Strategy for Worcestershire for the next five years.

It was noted that the housing market did not respect local authority boundaries and that, increasingly, strategic housing functions were carried out with numbers of partners, both other local authorities and statutory and voluntary sector agencies. This was one of the drivers behind a move from District Housing Strategies to a Countywide approach.



Members particularly drew a number of details from the Strategy which brought to attention the good work that had been undertaken over a number of years to maintain the Council's housing stock. These included the Council's achievements in meeting the Decent Homes standards and the low levels of disrepair in the Council's housing stock.

**RECOMMENDED that**

**the Countywide Housing Strategy and action plan attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.**

**212. WORCESTERSHIRE LOCAL INVESTMENT PLAN AND AFFORDABLE HOMES PROGRAMME FRAMEWORK**

Members received a report which firstly set out a Local Investment Plan (LIP) for the county that had been developed by Worcestershire local authorities and other key partners and which set out shared priorities for housing, regeneration, economic development and supporting infrastructure and also summarised a range of proposed reforms to the means by which social housing was delivered.

It was noted that one outcome of the new Affordable Housing Programme Framework might be an increase in the numbers of people seeking to secure social rented property from the Council and a consequent increase in the number of people on the Council's waiting list.

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the Worcestershire Local Investment Plan be endorsed; and**

**RESOLVED that**

- 2) the range of proposed reforms to the delivery of affordable housing and the summary of the key elements of the Homes and Communities Agency's new Affordable Housing Delivery Framework be noted.**

**213. CONSTITUTION - REVIEW 2011**

Officers updated the Committee on changes that had been proposed to the Council's Constitutional documents. The biggest single change was in the overall structure of the Constitutional documents, with a move towards a format that would be easier for Members and Officers to use. It was noted that the proposed changes had been the subject of a number of informal meetings

with key Members, with the most significant issues being reported back to the Groups as appropriate.

The main issues that were raised were as follows:

Part 2, Paragraph 6.2 – there was discussion as to whether the Chair and Vice Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee should be EITHER not from the controlling group OR from the opposition group;

Part 2, Paragraph 8.4 – there was discussion as to whether the qualifications for sitting on Regulatory and other Committees were appropriate;

Part 3, Table 2, page 2 – it was suggested that the special provisions as to the Chair be amended to make it mandatory rather than desirable that this be an “Opposition” Member. **Members agreed that this change be recommended for incorporation into the final document;**

Part 4, Paragraph 9.5 – it was highlighted by Officers that these provisions (Questions which may not be asked) were designed to avoid the debate of issues that were not relevant to the Council; and

Part 6, Paragraph 5 – it was noted that the Leader of the Opposition was not referred to in the Urgent Decisions provisions. **Members agreed that this change, with the Leader of the Opposition being consulted, be recommended for incorporation into the final document.**

From a more general perspective, there was concern that local residents had little knowledge or understanding of the Council’s Constitutional arrangements, despite the inclusion of a section in Part 2 on Citizens and the Council.

**RESOLVED that**

**subject to Members’ comments, above, and subsequent adjustments, the draft document be noted.**

**214. MEMBER DEVELOPMENT STEERING GROUP, 31ST MARCH 2011 - REFERRALS**

The Committee considered a number of recommendations that had arisen out of recent meetings of the Member Development Steering Group. Members required a degree of clarification as to the practical implications of the different options that were being made available in respect of Councillors’ ICT provision. The main issue

was around the extent to which the individual Councillor might rely on the use of their own ICT equipment and the corresponding level of technical support to which they might then be entitled.

The budget which had been set aside for Members ICT was discussed in the context of the present financial situation. The point was made that the budget set aside for this purpose represented a worst case scenario and the actual draw on the funds was expected to be considerably lower as many Members would choose to use either some or all of their own equipment. The provision of Blackberries to key Members was defended in that they would significantly improve the ability of Councillors to conduct their business at relatively little cost, thus contributing to the effective management of the Council.

In respect of the Member Development Programme, the need to make certain aspects of the training mandatory was considered. Whilst it was acknowledged that all Members could not make all training events, it was made clear that alternative arrangements could be made in such instances. Furthermore, it was argued that the taking on of the role of Councillor implied a certain amount of responsibility, including the need to ensure that one was in a position to carry out the role to the best of one's ability, including through the acceptance of training opportunities.

Members noted the proposed changes to the social networking arrangements.

#### **Member Development Programme 2011/12**

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) subject to clarification from Officers on the inclusion of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel amongst those bodies for which compulsory training was required, the programme be endorsed;**

#### **Members' ICT Facilities – Policy**

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 2) the policy, as attached to the report, be adopted and the proposals it contains be implemented for the municipal year 2011/12; and**

**Social Networking**

**RESOLVED that**

**3) this change of position be noted.**

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

There were no minutes or referrals under this item.

**216. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Committee received the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd and 23rd March 2011. There were no outstanding recommendations for consideration at the meeting.

**RESOLVED that**

**the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 2nd and 23rd March 2011 be received and noted.**

**217. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT**

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

**218. ACTION MONITORING**

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm  
and closed at 9.35pm

.....  
Chair

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

31st May 2011

**Gritting Short, Sharp Review – Final Report**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	<b>Councillor Jinny Pearce, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport, and Councillor Brandon Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment and Health.</b>
Relevant Head of Service	<b>Guy Revans, Head of Environmental Services.</b>
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

This report contains the final proposals of the Gritting Short, Sharp Review Group. The Group is proposing 13 recommendations which are designed to help improve road gritting and winter service arrangements in Redditch during periods of inclement weather in future years.

Gritting and highways maintenance are Worcestershire County Council responsibilities rather than areas within the remit of Redditch Borough Council. The Group recognises that Worcestershire County Council works hard to ameliorate the impact of inclement weather on road conditions and worked hard during December 2010 to minimise the impact of unprecedented conditions on the highways in the county. The aim of this review was to help Worcestershire County Council to continue to improve winter service arrangements by contributing a local perspective about actions that could be taken to improve conditions in Redditch in future years.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**We RECOMMEND that**

- 1) **when monitoring the implementation of their recommendations Worcestershire County Council's Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel should observe that the following recommendations proposed in their report, *Gritting: Winter Service Policy*, were not fully implemented in Redditch during the inclement weather in December 2010: recommendations 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 15; (paragraphs 4.1 – 4.1.16)**

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- 2) the co-ordination of responses to inclement weather should be delegated to the district level; (paragraphs 4.2 – 4.2.3) and
  - a) responses should involve local stakeholders planning local solutions to local problems (paragraphs 4.3 – 4.3.1);
- 3) Redditch Borough Council should urge Worcestershire County Council to adopt this local approach to co-ordinating responses to inclement weather (paragraphs 4.4 – 4.4.1);
- 4) resources, suitable for local needs, should be available to access in Redditch when needed (paragraphs 4.5 – 4.5.2);
- 5) the precautionary gritting route map needs to be agreed with district Councils to make use of local knowledge (paragraphs 4.6 – 4.6.5);
- 6) Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council should:
  - a) identify and use local private resources, including farmers' tractors, for snow clearance (paragraphs 4.8 – 4.8.2);
  - b) identify and use smaller, more suitable vehicles to clear snow on smaller urban roads (paragraphs 4.9 – 4.9.3); and
  - c) identify and develop a list of emergency additional labour forces that could be used to clear snow during inclement weather (paragraphs 4.10 – 4.10.2);
- 7) there should be a service available to deploy 24 hours a day 7 days a week locally in response to inclement weather (paragraphs 4.11 – 4.11.3);
- 8) Worcestershire County Council should meet with representatives of Redditch Borough Council to clarify the standards expected from each other in relation to snow clearance (paragraphs 4.12 – 4.12.2);
- 9) grit bins should be filled when requested. (However, we recognise that it may not be possible to fill grit bins immediately). Therefore:

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- a) members of the public who request that their grit bin be restocked should be clearly advised when this will take place (paragraphs 4.14 – 4.14.2); and
  - b) a schedule for restocking grit bins should be published for public consideration in a clearly accessible format (paragraphs 4.15 – 4.15.1);
  - c) if the snow is worse than expected one tonne tote bags should be distributed to roads where needed as an emergency measure (paragraphs 4.16 – 4.16.2);
- 10) Worcestershire County Council ensure that following information on the Council's website is presented in a more user friendly manner:
- a) general information about gritting and snow clearance (paragraphs 4.18 – 4.18.4);
  - b) gritting routes (paragraphs 4.19 – 4.19.2);
  - c) snow ploughing routes together with clarification as to whether these routes are the same as the gritting routes (paragraphs 4.20 – 4.20.1);
  - d) grit bin locations (paragraphs 4.21 – 4.21.3);
  - e) when gritting, snow ploughing and the filling of grit bins will take place (paragraphs 4.22 – 4.22.4); and
- 11) the successful approach that Worcestershire County Council has adopted to communicate road conditions to the schools should be extended to all stakeholders (paragraphs 4.23 – 4.23.2);
- 12) Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council should ensure that clear information about both the road conditions and public transport is provided when communicating with the public during inclement weather (paragraphs 4.24 – 4.24.2);
- 13) Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department should:

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- a) **be available for all relevant bodies, particularly the emergency services, to contact directly and quickly and at all times (paragraphs 4.26 – 4.26.2); and**
- b) **be more responsive to residents (paragraphs 4.27 – 4.27.2).**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Gritting Short, Sharp Review was launched in February 2011. Four members were appointed to the review including Councillors Simon Chalk, Roger Hill, Robin King and former Councillor Graham Vickery, who was originally appointed to Chair the review. Following the resignation of Mr Vickery as a member of the Council in March 2011 Councillor Robin King was appointed to Chair the review. To ensure consistency in the review Mr Vickery was co-opted onto the Group.
- 3.2 The review was precipitated by observations by both Councillors and residents that the general condition of the roads in Redditch during the period of heavy snowfall in December 2010 was very poor. Widespread disruption occurred to the local transport system to the detriment of local businesses. At the local level this was considered to be particularly problematic because, as a new town, Redditch was designed to be negotiated by vehicle. Disruptions to the road network and hazardous road conditions are therefore of particular interest to the local community.
- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Committee therefore felt it was appropriate to review the highways maintenance procedures undertaken in Redditch during December 2010. This was done to help identify where improvements could be made to ensure that future instances of heavy snowfall were adequately prepared for.
- 3.4 Highways maintenance in Worcestershire is the statutory responsibility of Worcestershire County Council. The Group set out to establish what had been done by the County Council to mitigate the affect of the heavy snowfall on the local road system in Redditch during December 2010. In particular the Group was tasked with considering the content of *Gritting: Winter Service Policy*, a scrutiny report on the subject of winter road maintenance that was published by Worcestershire County Council's Environment and Economic Scrutiny Panel in July 2010, and the response of the County Council's Cabinet in October 2010 to the report's recommendations, to gain an understanding of what was expected to have taken place. (A list of the County Council Scrutiny Panel's recommendations is provided in Appendix A to this report).



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- 3.5 The Group consulted a wide range of stakeholders in Redditch to substantiate the extent to which the agreed recommendations within *Gritting: Winter Service Policy* had been delivered. The list of stakeholders that had been invited to submit evidence to the review included: members of the public; emergency services; local schools; County Councillors; Borough Councillors; and local businesses. A public meeting was also held during March 2011 to enable members of the public to inform the Group about the condition of their local roads during the inclement weather. A number of recommendations based on the evidence collected were subsequently proposed. (A list of routes identified by residents as areas of concern is provided in Appendix B to this report).
- 3.6 As the Group identified a number of areas for improvement the list of recommendations focuses both on the implementation of the County Council's scrutiny recommendations as well as further actions that could be taken to improve winter maintenance arrangements in future years. Subject to receiving support from the Council's Executive Committee the Group is requesting that the evidence gathered and their recommendations be considered by Worcestershire County Council as part of the Council's preparations for road maintenance arrangements in the winter of 2011/12.
- 3.7 Throughout the review the Group was aware of the work that relevant staff at both Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council had undertaken to clear and grit the roads during the inclement weather. The Group appreciated this work and feel that the contributions made by all staff should be recognised.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 **Recommendation 1: We recommend that when monitoring the implementation of their recommendations Worcestershire County Council's Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel should observe that the following recommendations proposed in their report, *Gritting: Winter Service Policy*, were not fully implemented in Redditch during the inclement weather in December 2010: recommendations 2, 3, 5, 7, 10, 11 and 15.**
- 4.1.1 Worcestershire County Council published the *Gritting Winter Service Policy* final report in July 2010. This report outlined the findings of the Worcestershire Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel in a review of winter services which had been launched in response to the severe weather conditions during the winter 2009/10. In accordance with scrutiny processes at many local authorities it is anticipated that the Panel will monitor the implementation of their

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recommendations in 2011. The Gritting Short, Sharp Review Group believe that their report should be considered as part of this monitoring process.

- 4.1.2 Based on the feedback received from a variety of stakeholders the Group have concluded that nine of the Panel's recommendations were implemented in Redditch in December 2010. Specifically, based on evidence submitted by stakeholders consulted during the review the Group are satisfied that recommendations 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 12, 13, 14 and 16 were or will be implemented in Redditch. The Group would like to thank Worcestershire County Council for implementing these recommendations as this will have helped to reduce the number of problems experienced by residents and other local stakeholders during the inclement weather in December 2010 and in future years.
- 4.1.3 However, unfortunately, the Group have concluded that seven further recommendations were not or could not be implemented in Redditch in December 2010.
- 4.1.4 In relation to recommendation 2 of the Panel's report, evidence received from local residents indicated that many roads in Redditch located on steep gradients were not prioritised during the winter weather. In particular, consistent reports were received during the review about hazardous road conditions and a lack of snow clearance or gritting in the Central and Headless Cross and Oakenshaw wards, especially on Ivor Road, Parsons Road, the Mayfields and Coldfield Drive which are all based on steep gradients and currently form part of the precautionary network.
- 4.1.5 Similarly, reports were received that many of the roads leading to Car Park 7 in the Abbey ward, including Adelaide Road, Bates Hill and Church Road, which are located on the precautionary network, were not cleared and did not receive a gritting service during the winter period. This is unfortunate, as a number of doctor's surgeries and chemists are located in this area, including the Dow Surgery, St Stephen's Surgery and Elgar House Surgery. The lack of snow clearance clearly had implications for patient care as well as for core medical staff as the road conditions prevented a number of staff from reaching work.
- 4.1.6 In relation to recommendation 3, six local schools submitted evidence for the consideration of the Group during the review. The responses received from these schools were mixed. Whilst some reported that increased gritting had been observed on routes within the vicinity of the school other schools reported that this had not been the case and the school had been largely inaccessible. The Group recognises that many of these schools were closed as the snow coincided with the

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Christmas holiday period. However, other schools were required to remain closed at times when they were scheduled to be open, though the decision to close any school was never taken lightly.

- 4.1.7 Furthermore, the suggestions detailed in the County Cabinet Member's response to this recommendation, that arrangements would be explored for assistance from the Fire and Rescue Service and clear guidance for schools would be desirable, were assessed by many of the schools who provided evidence for the consideration of the Group. Two of the schools had received guidance but none of the schools reported that they were aware that assistance might be available from the Fire and Rescue service.
- 4.1.8 The Group was particularly concerned to receive reports from some schools that no assistance had been provided with snow clearance. Indeed, one school suggested that they would welcome volunteer groups to assist with on-site snow clearance but further clarification was required on the legal position of this potential action. Furthermore, many schools suggested that farmers and other local stakeholders should be invited to help clear snow at key locations such as schools. This would help to address any problems that might occur with accessing locations that had not been incorporated on to the precautionary and secondary gritting networks.
- 4.1.9 With regards to recommendation 5 in the Panel's report, which suggested that Worcestershire County Council should consult with local businesses and bus companies, the Group unfortunately did not obtain any feedback from the local bus companies. However, the Kingfisher Shopping Centre, the primary retail centre in Redditch town centre, did respond and unfortunately confirmed that the centre, where trade and staff access had been badly affected by the snowy weather, had not been consulted by Worcestershire County Council.
- 4.1.10 With regards to recommendation 7 during the course of the review the Group received many reports from residents about requests for the introduction of grit bins. On occasions, these requests had had to be repeated and emphasised by both local County Councillors and Partners and Communities Together (PACT) meetings. In particular concerns were expressed about: Clent Avenue and Jubilee Avenue; Bromfield Road, which is located between two roads that cover steep inclines; and many of the roads leading off Castleditch Lane which are again located on steep gradients.
- 4.1.11 A number of grit bins are situated close to these locations. However, residents have suggested that additional grit bins located in alternative locations could be introduced to reduce the hazardous road conditions in future years. In particular, residents have suggested that there

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should be at least one grit bin situated directly on Bromfield Road and one additional grit bin located close to the steep slope between Jubilee Avenue and Clent Avenue. Furthermore, in Feckenham evidence submitted by the Parish Council indicates that there remains a need to introduce further grit bins in the village. In particular, there is currently no grit bin situated on Turton Gardens which leads to a relatively new housing estate built 4 or 5 years ago. Whilst Turton Gardens is unadopted highway and therefore Worcestershire County Council is not obliged to maintain the road the Group believes that this represents a safety hazard for local residents and consideration should therefore be given to prioritising the installation of a grit bin at this location.

- 4.1.12 The Group had a number of concerns that recommendation 10 from the Panel, regarding Parish Councils nominating a farmer to assist with snow clearance, did not reflect the position of Redditch Borough. There are numerous rural areas within the Borough in locations such as Astwood Bank, Hunt End and Callow Hill but there is only one Parish Council which represents the village of Feckenham. The Group is therefore contending that further consideration should be given by Worcestershire County Council as to how to engage with farmers based within the Borough to ensure that the invaluable assistance that can be provided by farmers can be properly utilised in Redditch.
- 4.1.13 The Group are also concerned that recommendation 11 from the Panel, regarding consultation with the emergency services over core gritting routes, was not fully implemented in Redditch. Evidence submitted by the West Mercia Police Force indicates that Police Officers are familiar with conditions on the highways and especially difficult sections of certain roads which consistently cause hazardous driving conditions during periods of inclement weather. The Group is contending that to ensure the safety of driver the Police should be consulted directly, particularly during snowy weather conditions, and their suggestions should be taken into account by Worcestershire County Council.
- 4.1.14 With regards to recommendation 15, concerning improvements to the precautionary and secondary route gritting maps, the Group believes that further action needs to be taken. Whilst an interactive route of grit bins and the precautionary gritting route map are both displayed on Worcestershire County Council's website, the Group did not believe that these were clear. Indeed, some residents who had consulted the map appeared to be confused about whether the roads they referred to were included on the gritting route.
- 4.1.15 In particular, the gritting route map appeared to be confusing, in part because no particular roads are identified by name on the map, making it difficult to orientate. (Also see paragraphs 4.19 - 4.19.2 below).

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Furthermore, the grit bin map appears to only be accessible in a side menu of a large variety of maps on the website. Locating this map and using this system was considered to be confusing by both members of the Group and a number of residents who submitted evidence. Under these circumstances the Group believes that further changes need to be made to both clarify the content of the precautionary gritting route map and ensure the grit bins map becomes much more accessible for the public. (Also see paragraphs 4.21 - 4.21.3 below).

4.1.16 Finally, whilst it did not form a recommendation, in the report the Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel explicitly welcomed the Cabinet Members' commitment to seek additional resources to increase the number of grit bins by about a third. (Gritting: Winter Service Policy, 2010, p 10). The Group recognises that this may have happened across the county as a whole. However, little evidence emerged during the course of the review to indicate that many of these grit bins had been introduced in the Borough of Redditch.

4.2 **Recommendation 2: We recommend that the co-ordination of responses to inclement weather should be delegated to the district level.**

4.2.1 The Group recognises that at the County Council level it is important for there to be a winter services road maintenance strategy which can be implemented across the county when required, particularly as such severe weather conditions often arise with limited prior notice. However, the Group believes that one unfortunate consequence of this application of a strategy across the whole of the county can be that variations in need and road conditions across such a diverse area may not be taken into account when responding to emergency weather conditions, largely because the County Council has to respond on an extensive scale.

4.2.2 Unfortunately, based on the evidence received during the course of the review, the Group has concluded that the roads in Redditch were disproportionately affected by the inclement weather due to a heavier snow fall than in other parts of the county. However, whilst this was observed by staff and residents living and working locally they believe that this was not necessarily recognised at a wider county level.

4.2.3 Consequently, the Group believes that the co-ordination of responses to inclement weather should be delegated to the district level. In these circumstances the Group recognises that Worcestershire County Council would retain ultimate authority over the maintenance of the highways in Redditch. However, district agencies would be able to identify, assess and respond directly to conditions within their areas

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and in a more timely fashion. The Group believes that this arrangement would be mutually beneficial for representatives at both the county and district levels and ultimately would lead to improved outcomes for local residents and businesses.

**4.3 Recommendation 2a: responses should involve local stakeholders planning local solutions to local problems.**

4.3.1 At the district level the local authority, local emergency services and other local stakeholders often have more immediate access to information about conditions within that district. Furthermore, local representatives at the district level will inevitably be familiar with the local geography and areas of concern during previous emergencies. Under these circumstances the Group believes that it is necessary for responses to inclement weather to involve local stakeholders planning local solutions to local problems.

**4.4 Recommendation 3: We recommend that Redditch Borough Council should urge Worcestershire County Council to adopt this local approach to co-ordinating responses to inclement weather.**

4.4.1 The Group recognises that if Worcestershire County Council does decide to delegate the co-ordination of responses to the district level district authorities would be required to assume a leading role. The Group understands that this may appear to be a daunting task. However, the Group believes that the existing foundations of co-operation between the two authorities could be developed further to ensure that this local co-ordination of responses to inclement weather could be implemented effectively. Furthermore, based on the issues outlined in relation to recommendations 2 and 2a above, Redditch Borough Council may be considered to have a moral duty to urge Worcestershire County Council to adopt this approach.

**4.5 Recommendation 4: We recommend that resources, suitable for local needs, should be available to access in Redditch when needed.**

4.5.1 There are numerous resources which ideally need to be accessible during periods of inclement weather. Salt stocks available for replenishing grit bins and for distribution through road gritters are currently stored in Alvechurch and Lydiate Ash. Whilst the Alvechurch base is close to the borders of Redditch Borough the Group believes it is important to ensure that an appropriate level of salt stocks can be made readily available for use in Redditch where required.

4.5.2 Similarly, the Group is aware that Worcestershire County Council uses a fleet of snow ploughs to clear snow and distribute salt during snowy

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weather conditions. The Group feels that vehicles, suitable for use on urban roads, should be available to help clear snow in Redditch during inclement weather. (See paragraphs 4.9 - 4.9.3 below). In addition, the Group believes that the vehicles which are used should be suitable for use on the many steep gradients that are situated within the town, particularly in the Central and Headless Cross and Oakenshaw wards. Ideally, these vehicles should be available to deploy as and when needed, including during weekends and outside working hours, to ensure that hazardous road conditions are minimised.

4.6 **Recommendation 5: We recommend that the precautionary gritting route map needs to be agreed with district Councils to make use of local knowledge.**

4.6.1 There are a number of key roads on the Worcestershire Highway which are considered priority routes for gritting during winter service operations. These are referred to as the precautionary network. The precautionary network comprises the principal road network, main distributor roads and secondary distributor roads, commuter routes, rural roads traversed by more than 2,000 vehicles per day, major bus routes, locally important roads, emergency service locations and areas no greater than 500 metres from a school. There is also a secondary network, comprising less important local village and distributor routes, minor bus routes and school transport routes operated by the County Council. (Winter Service Policy, 2009).

4.6.2 Based on numerous reports received during the review, Redditch was especially badly affected by the heavy snowfall during December 2010 compared to other parts of the County. In particular, the local road system in Redditch was often reported to have been in a very poor condition during the inclement weather. This could simply be attributed to Redditch experiencing more snowfall.

4.6.3 However, a significant feature of the town is a high ridge which runs through the centre of the town. The Group contends that the physical environment of Redditch, in particular the steep gradients of many of the roads leading off the ridge, was a leading factor in the Borough being one of the most affected areas in the County. Indeed, the poor condition of a road located on a very steep gradient can severely restrict the mobility of vehicles from its adjoining feeder roads.

4.6.4 Whilst hills are prevalent in Malvern district, the geography in Redditch is not comparable to other parts of the county. Unfortunately, evidence received during the review from emergency services suggested that Worcestershire County Council's response during the severe winter period was generally spread equally across the County.

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- 4.6.5 Under these circumstances the Group believes that the precautionary gritting route map needs to be agreed with district Councils to make use of local knowledge. Utilising a greater local knowledge base can help ensure that those areas of greatest need, including roads with steep gradients, are identified and prioritised for maintenance to improve the condition of the roads. For example, during the review as a result of the localised consultation the Group discovered that the current lack of inclusion of William Street, in Abbey ward, on either the precautionary or secondary network, was likely to disproportionately impact on patients and staff attempting to access the Dow Surgery which is located on that road.
- 4.7 **Recommendation 6: We recommend that Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council should:**
- 4.8 a) **identify and use local private resources, including farmers' tractors, for snow clearance.**
- 4.8.1 Worcestershire County Council's *Gritting: Winter Service Policy* clearly identified the potential for farmer's vehicles to contribute to snow clearance, although references to inviting Parish Council's to nominate a suitable farmer with whom to work were not considered applicable to Redditch by the Group (please refer above to paragraph 4.1.12).
- 4.8.2 In addition to farm vehicles the Group believes that local private companies might be able and willing to provide assistance with clearing snow during inclement weather. This assistance might vary from providing vehicles suitable for clearing snow to providing assistance with communicating the condition of the roads. The Group believes that many private companies would be willing to provide assistance as this will help members of staff to access work and thereby enable businesses to continue to operate in challenging weather conditions.
- 4.9 b) **identify and use smaller, more suitable vehicles to clear snow on smaller urban roads.**
- 4.9.1 Currently a number of larger snow ploughing vehicles are utilised to clear snow from roads during inclement weather. These snow ploughs, and the farm equipment that is sometimes used to clear snow from rural areas, are suitable for use on main highways and rural roads as there is adequate space on the side of the roads to accommodate the snow which is moved to the side of the vehicle as it progresses.



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- 4.9.2 However, the Group is concerned that often these vehicles are not suitable for use on smaller urban roads. Unfortunately the Group received a number of reports that when snow ploughs were observed clearing snow on the precautionary and secondary network large piles of snow was cleared to the sides of the road, blocking cars parked on the sides of the roads as well as cars parked on driveways. Furthermore, many roads in the older parts of town, particularly in the Abbey and Central wards, are quite narrow and are difficult for large vehicles to access.
- 4.9.3 The Group believes that in smaller urban areas where there is a larger volume of cars consideration should be given to using smaller vehicles to clear the roads of snow. These vehicles might distribute some snow to the sides but it is unlikely that the volume of snow would be as great or as likely to cause disruption to parked vehicles as larger snow ploughs. Furthermore, smaller vehicles would be better placed to negotiate obstacles such as parked cars.
- 4.10 c) **identify and develop a list of emergency additional labour forces that could be used to clear snow during inclement weather.**
- 4.10.1 The snowfall in December 2010 was particularly heavy and snow clearance therefore proved to be difficult. The Group recognises that both Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council staff undertake snow clearance work. However, the Group believes that additional support, whether through manual labour clearance of snow or through use of volunteer support to operate snow clearance machinery, would help to improve road maintenance arrangements during periods of inclement weather in future years.
- 4.10.2 The additional labour forces might comprise volunteers from the local community or from other services based in the Town Hall. Consideration could also be given to working with local probation services to arrange for individuals undertaking community service to help clear snow.
- 4.11 **Recommendation 7: We recommend that there should be a service available to deploy 24 hours a day 7 days a week locally in response to inclement weather.**
- 4.11.1 The inclement weather in December 2010 began in the early hours of Saturday 18th December in Redditch. The snowfall on the Saturday was heavy and created hazardous road conditions. This impacted on

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local services, such as the Dial a Ride community transport system, which ceased to operate until Tuesday 21st December due to safety concerns.

4.11.2 The Group is aware that Worcestershire County Council operates gritting vehicles and undertakes snow clearance during working hours. Unfortunately, the Group had not received clarification as to what these working hours comprise prior to the publication of this report. However, the Group is keen to ensure that snow clearance and gritting arrangements during weekends and non-standard working hours can be implemented where required, to ensure that there is minimum disruption to local services.

4.11.3 Redditch Borough Council provides assistance with road clearance at certain locations in the Borough, particularly sheltered housing schemes. The Group is aware that Redditch Borough Council staff provide valuable assistance during the working week. However, the Group urges the Council to consider deploying emergency assistance when required during weekends to ensure that vulnerable residents, sheltered housing scheme wardens and the emergency services can access sheltered housing schemes during emergencies.

**4.12 Recommendation 8: We recommend that Worcestershire County Council should meet with representatives of Redditch Borough Council to clarify the standards expected from each other in relation to snow clearance.**

4.12.1 During the course of the review the Group interviewed the Council's lead Officers for snow clearance. Councillors were pleased to learn that Redditch Borough Council and Worcestershire County Council had worked closely together during the course of the inclement weather.

4.12.2 However, improvements can always be made, particularly to ensure that the problems identified by residents in December 2010 are not repeated in future years. There is the potential that through forward planning and a localised approach to organising winter maintenance arrangements the two Councils would need to work more closely together. In particular, it might be useful for representatives of the two Councils to meet prior to the winter to discuss mutual expectations with a view to identifying the different ways each Council could help to address problems at the local level.

**4.13 Recommendation 9: We recommend that grit bins should be filled when requested. (However, we recognise that it may not be possible to fill grit bins immediately). Therefore:**

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- 4.14 a) **Members of the public who request that their grit bin be restocked should be clearly advised when this will take place.**
- 4.14.1 In many parts of the Borough, due to the heavy snowfall, the salt stocks in grit bins were utilised relatively quickly by local residents. A number of residents who submitted evidence reported that they had contacted Worcestershire County Council to enquire about arrangements for refilling the grit bins. Unfortunately, many of the residents expressed frustration about the dearth of information available about arrangements for refilling the bins..
- 4.14.2 The Group recognises that Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department is busy and resources will be finite. This may mean that a representative of the department is unable to discuss the time when salt stocks will be replenished directly with a resident and may be unable to refill bins until resources become available. However, the Group believes that many residents' frustrations would be addressed if they received a simple notification of whether their request was successful and when the bin might be replenished.
- 4.15 b) **schedule for restocking grit bins should be published for public consideration in a clearly accessible format.**
- 4.15.1 Again, the Group believes that many of residents' frustrations could be addressed if a schedule for replenishing salt stocks was published for public consideration on Worcestershire County Council's website. This would help to clarify arrangements and would address residents' frustrations. Furthermore, the Group believes that it would be relatively easy to update an online schedule where required, for example if gritting stocks were depleted significantly.
- 4.16 c) **if the snow is worse than expected one tonne tote bags should be distributed to roads where needed as an emergency measure.**
- 4.16.1 During the course of the review a number of residents expressed frustration that they had been unable to take effective action to maintain the condition of their road when a response was being awaited from County Council to a request for either the provision of additional grit bins or for existing grit bins to be replenished. Indeed, a request submitted to the County Council to deposit grit at the end of the road which residents could then themselves distribute had been declined.

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- 4.16.2 The Group suggests that relatively cheap alternative measures could be introduced to help meet high demand for gritting salt during periods of inclement weather. As an emergency measure one tonne tote bags could be provided. This would represent a useful safety measure in the short-term for local residents who were willing and able to take action to maintain conditions on their own roads. Furthermore, this action would provide Worcestershire County Council with the time required to give due consideration to considering any requests to introduce additional grit bins.
- 4.17 **Recommendation 10: We recommend that Worcestershire County Council ensure that following information on the Council's website is presented in a more user friendly manner:**
- 4.18 a) **General information about gritting and snow clearance.**
- 4.18.1 Currently a number of pages are included on Worcestershire County Council's website which provide information about gritting and road clearance arrangements. These pages can be accessed in a section of the Council's website that is dedicated to 'Transport and Streets' and comprises web pages focusing on the following areas: general information about gritting; links to further sources of useful information; grit bin details, a link to the Worcestershire *Winter Service Policy*; and contact details. Links are also provided to maps of the precautionary and secondary gritting networks located in each district and visitors can access a map which identifies the location of grit bins within a local area.
- 4.18.2 During the course of the review the Group have considered the content of this section of Worcestershire County Council's website in some detail. Whilst the Group recognises that work may have been undertaken to update the content of these web pages unfortunately a number of residents consulted during the course of the review explained that the content of these web pages was confusing.
- 4.18.3 The Group believes that, in particular, further clarification about the Council's strategy for road maintenance arrangements could be provided on the web page providing information about the Worcestershire *Winter Service Policy*. At present this web page provides a link to a copy of the *Winter Service Policy*, though no further information is provided on the page. The Group believes that it would be useful to provide a summary of the key principles contained within this policy, in plain English,

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on the web page. This would help to clarify the content of the policy as well as the core points of the winter maintenance strategy in the county.

- 4.18.4 The Group also believes that it is important to ensure that the web pages providing general information about gritting, the precautionary and secondary route gritting map and the map of grit bins, appear in a prominent position on Worcestershire County Council's website during periods of inclement weather. This will enable residents and businesses to easily access appropriate information at a time when it is most needed.
- 4.19 **b) Gritting routes.**
- 4.19.1 The Group feels that the map currently used on Worcestershire County Council's website to illustrate the Council's precautionary and secondary gritting routes can lead to confusion. The absence of road names on this map in particular can make it difficult to distinguish between some shorter routes that are included on the gritting route and adjacent roads that are not included.
- 4.19.2 The Group therefore proposes that this information is presented in a more user friendly manner to enable website users to clearly determine whether a particular road is included on either the precautionary or the secondary gritting routes.
- 4.20 **c) snow ploughing routes together with clarification as to whether these routes are the same as the gritting routes.**
- 4.20.1 There is currently no clarification on the Worcestershire County Council website as to whether the snow ploughing routes are the same as the gritting routes. If the same routes are used, the Group suggests that this should be briefly stated on the relevant section of the website. However, if snow ploughing follows a different route, the Group proposes that this should be clearly presented on the website to illustrate how this differs from the gritting route. This information should help residents to clarify what type of winter maintenance service they can expect to receive during periods of inclement weather.
- 4.21 **c) Grit bin locations.**
- 4.21.1 Grit bins are positioned in various locations across the Borough. In many areas, particularly on roads which do not form part of either the precautionary or secondary network for gritting, grit bins are useful for residents as they provide a resource with

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which to improve road and footpath conditions. Residents can request from Worcestershire County Council that new grit bins be introduced both online and through the Worcestershire Hub. General information about the criteria used by Worcestershire County Council when assessing applications for grit bins is also provided on the website.

- 4.21.2 Visitors to the gritting web pages are advised that further information about gritting can be obtained by undertaking a search on a 'My Local Area' search function also available on the website. Whilst a map of grit bins can be accessed using this link the Group are concerned that the grit bin map is provided within a lengthy list of other map categories. As a consequence it is difficult to locate the map on the website.
- 4.21.3 The Group recognises that the many maps available in this category list will be of interest to different stakeholders. However, the Group feels that it would be appropriate to ensure that the gritting map secured a more prominent position on Worcestershire County Council's website, ideally through a direct link to the gritting pages in a similar fashion to the current link provided to the precautionary and secondary gritting route maps for each district.
- 4.22 **d) When gritting, snow ploughing and the filling of grit bins will take place.**
- 4.22.1 A number of local residents informed the Group that they had become increasingly frustrated that their requests for additional gritting resources during the period of heavy snowfall had either not received a response or had been declined.
- 4.22.2 The Group accepts that it was very difficult for Worcestershire County Council to satisfy all requests for additional salt stocks when these are finite, especially during a very sudden period of inclement weather. However, the Group feels that the County Council could help placate these frustrations by providing further information on when grit bins are expected to be replenished. The Group therefore proposes that clear and up to date information on the filling of grit bins should be provided and feature prominently on the website.
- 4.22.3 Similarly the Group is proposing that further information could be provided about when gritters and snow ploughs are scheduled to negotiate particular roads during periods of inclement weather. A simple schedule could be produced and published on the Council's website to minimise the amount of time that

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would need to be dedicated to the task. This schedule would reduce the number of enquiries about gritting and snow ploughing arrangements and would help to reassure the public that action was being taken.

- 4.22.4 The Group recognises that on occasions it might not be possible to follow schedules as a result of changing and difficult circumstances. In this context the Group believes that it would be relatively easy to provide brief updates on Worcestershire County Council's website to explain why changes need to be made to the schedule. In many cases this would help to address public concerns and the provision of information may help to reduce public frustrations when there is perceived to be a lack of action.

**4.23 Recommendation 11: We recommend that the successful approach that Worcestershire County Council has adopted to communicate road conditions to the schools should be extended to all stakeholders.**

- 4.23.1 The Group was informed by a local school that it had received very clear guidance and support from Worcestershire County Council regarding school closures and inclement weather. The County Council provided up to the minute weather reports and information about road conditions and local areas which enabled the head teacher to make informed decisions on whether or not to close the school.

- 4.23.2 The Group proposes that this round the clock service should be available to all other stakeholders within the County, including emergency services and local businesses.

**4.24 Recommendation 12: We recommend that Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council should ensure that clear information about both the road conditions and public transport is provided when communicating with the public during inclement weather.**

- 4.24.1 The Group received evidence during the course of the review that it had been difficult to obtain information on public transport services during the period of heavy snowfall. This was particularly significant as the hazardous driving conditions in Redditch had led to a greater reliance on the public transport system. However, the Group was informed that no public information was made available at Redditch bus station regarding which services had been affected by the inclement weather. The Group suggests that Worcestershire County Council make reference to bus service changes, delays and road

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blockages on its own electronic information system during periods of inclement weather.

4.24.2 The Group acknowledges that information on public transport is widely available throughout the year on Worcestershire County Council's website. However, the Group proposes that information on road conditions and public transport should be updated on a very regular basis when they are badly affected by severe weather. The Group further proposes that this information should feature more prominently on the website during periods of severe weather to make the information more easily accessible.

4.25 **Recommendation 13: We recommend that Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department should:**

4.26 a) **be available for all relevant bodies, particularly the emergency services, to contact directly and quickly and at all times.**

4.26.1 During the course of the review evidence was submitted for the consideration of the Group which suggested that the emergency services had experienced difficulties when attempting to contact the Worcestershire Highways Department. The Group were particularly concerned to learn that the Police Force Control Room had experienced occasions when the contact number for the highways gritters had been unanswered for hours.

4.26.2 The Group accepts that during the course of a period of severe weather, such as that experienced during December 2010, the County Council's Highways Department will be busy and will not be able to speak to every person and organisation that may have concerns about hazardous driving conditions. However, the Group believes that in this type of situation the needs of the emergency services should be prioritised. Under these circumstances, the Group is proposing that a representative of the County Highways department should be available for the emergency services to contact directly and promptly during periods of inclement weather.

4.27 b) **be more responsive to residents.**

4.27.1 The Group received a number of reports from members of the public that the County Highways Department had been slow to respond to their concerns during the inclement weather. The Group was informed by a number of local residents that their repeated requests to the Highways Department to either re-fill



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existing grit bins or provide additional grit bins had met without response.

- 4.27.2 The Group acknowledges that it is very difficult during periods of severe winter weather to satisfy residents' requests for additional gritting resources when these are finite. However, the County must ensure that it swiftly responds to requests from members of the public, whether or not the request can be satisfied. The Group therefore recommends that the Highways Department consider its current practice for responding to requests from members of the public.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 The Group recognises that it may not be possible to obtain all the resources required from Worcestershire County Council, partly because resources are likely to be limited and the county council will need to ensure that there is an equitable distribution of resources across the county. Under these circumstances Redditch Borough Council may need to be prepared to invest in obtaining resources that will enable efficient snow clearance arrangements as and when required.
- 5.2 The level of financial expenditure that this would entail is difficult to determine as, in part, it would be affected by the degree to which Worcestershire County Council would be able to allocate resources specifically to Redditch. It is also not always possible to anticipate what resources would be required until a period of emergency weather occurs. However, the Group's proposal, in relation to recommendation 6a, to work with external private businesses and farmers could help to minimise the amount of financial expenditure that Redditch Borough Council would need to allocate to snow clearance arrangements if the function was delegated to the district level.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 In two-tier authority areas County Councils can and often do devolve powers to the district level. These arrangements are assessed on a case by case basis and are generally introduced as and when considered necessary.
- 6.2 With regards to the co-ordination of responses to inclement weather being delegated to the district level a decision would need to be taken by Worcestershire County Council to approve this proposal. Redditch Borough Council would enter into negotiations with Worcestershire County Council to assess the implications and arrangements for devolving functions and responsibilities.

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- 6.3 Redditch Borough Council would need to consider the potential liability implications that would arise from delegation of this function from the county to the district level. As part of this process the Council would also need to consider the potential insurance liability implications.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Group is proposing that co-ordination of road maintenance arrangements should be delegated to the district level during periods of inclement weather. Redditch Borough Council may need to review existing relevant policies, including the *Draft Gritting Procedure for Redditch Borough Council* and *Extreme Weather Continuity Plan for Waste Collection Services* if this recommendation is approved as these policies currently apply to areas where Redditch Borough Council has existing responsibility.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

One of Redditch Borough Council's key priorities is for Redditch to be safe. As part of this process the Group is contending that Redditch Borough Council should support their proposals as, if they are approved and implemented, these actions should lead to considerable improvements to road safety during inclement weather.

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

Snow and ice can create hazardous driving conditions. Gritting and snow clearance can help to alleviate these problems, though gritting becomes ineffective if over 40mm of snow has fallen. The Group believes that the actions they are proposing should help to alleviate some of the problems with road safety that occur during periods of inclement weather.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Gritting and road maintenance arrangements are in general of interest to local residents and businesses. Indeed, the review was precipitated by receipt of correspondence on the subject by local Borough Councillors from their constituents who were concerned about the condition of the roads and gritting service received during December 2010. The Group are anticipating that, if approved, the actions they are proposing will lead to improvements in winter maintenance arrangements in future years which will hopefully help to reassure the public.

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- 10.2 Gritting and road clearance arrangements also more directly have implications for the delivery of front line services by Redditch Borough Council, particularly waste and recycling collection services. The Group received largely positive reports about the performance of the waste collection and recycling services during December 2010. In some instances, due to hazardous driving conditions, it was unfortunately not possible for the waste collection and recycling vehicles to provide a service in particular streets on designated collection dates. The Group believes that the actions they are proposing will help to reduce the potential for this to happen again.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

- 11.1 During the course of the review the Group was advised that the condition of roads in the vicinity of a number of sheltered housing schemes were hazardous during the course of the inclement weather. In particular, the road conditions at Bentley Close, Foxlydiate Mews, Roxboro House and Terry Spring Court during the snowy conditions in December 2010 were reportedly dangerous. The Group was advised that the emergency services, wardens and family members had struggled to access elderly and vulnerable residents living in these sheltered housing schemes.
- 11.2 The Group are aware that, whilst Worcestershire County Council is responsible for the maintenance of the roads and footpaths, Redditch Borough Council has historically provided gritting assistance at sheltered housing schemes owned by the Council. (The Group recognises that Foxlydiate mews is not managed by Redditch Borough Council). The Group feels that Redditch Borough Council should be making every effort to prioritise these sheltered housing schemes when contributing to snow clearance arrangements to ensure that wardens and emergency services can access residents.

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

There are no direct value for money, procurement or asset management implications.

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

There are no direct climate change, carbon management or biodiversity implications.

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**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 The Group accepts that their proposal, in relation to recommendation 7, for gritting and snow clearance services to occur during weekends and outside working hours would potentially have implications for staff. Any requests for staff to work outside their contracted hours at Redditch Borough Council would require consultation with staff and with local union representatives.

14.2 The Group's proposal for an emergency labour force to provide assistance with snow clearance and gritting arrangements during periods of snowy weather would also have implications for both local authorities. Again, a process of consultation with existing staff and unions would be appropriate.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Group's proposal for the co-ordination of responses to inclement weather to be delegated to the district level would have governance and performance management implications. Consideration would need to be given to the most appropriate way for monitoring the performance of local agencies and holding responsible bodies to account for actions taken to minimise the impact of inclement weather on road conditions within the Borough.

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

There are no direct community safety implications.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct implications for health inequalities.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

18.1 The review has involved Councillors reviewing services delivered by another statutory body. This has presented a number of challenges for both Redditch Borough Council and Worcestershire County Council. It may be useful for relevant representatives of both authorities to review these challenges to ensure that the two Councils can both learn from the experience and, as a consequence, strengthen their working relationship in the future.

18.2 The Group was disappointed that a small number of residents attended the public meeting that they held on 17th March 2011 to discuss the subject of road gritting (see paragraphs 19.2-19.3 below). The Group

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believes that a greater number of responses would have been received if it had been possible for them to approach residents individually to invite them to complete a survey. Unfortunately, due to the limited timescales available during a Short, Sharp Review exercise, members of the Group did not feel that they could allocate the time required to undertake this type of face-to-face consultation effectively. However, the Group believes consideration should be given to this form of consultation by Councillors in future when undertaking a similar review of interest to the public as a Task and Finish Group exercise.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

- 19.1 Community and stakeholder engagement has formed a significant part of this review. Information about the review was advertised on Redditch Borough Council's website, on the Council's Facebook site, on the Council's Twitter profile and in the local newspapers. Residents were invited to submit evidence for the Group's consideration in writing, by phone or in person during a public meeting at Redditch Town Hall on 17th March 2011.
- 19.2 The public meeting was designed to provide residents with an opportunity to report their experiences in person for the consideration of the Group. The meeting was advertised on Redditch Borough Council's website and on the Redditch Advertiser's website and an article appeared in the edition of the Redditch Advertiser published on 16th March 2011. Residents were also informed about the meeting during a morning broadcast on Wyvern FM. Many Councillors also kindly provided assistance in person and by providing information about the public meeting and review for residents' consideration.
- 19.3 Unfortunately, however, only three members of the public attended the meeting, though the evidence provided by these residents was valuable and informed the Group's final conclusions. Furthermore, 16 residents contacted the Group independently to submit evidence. The Group wishes to thank each resident for taking the time to provide information.
- 19.2 Representatives of relevant local organisations were also invited to submit evidence in writing. In response the following bodies all submitted evidence for the consideration of the Group: the West Mercia Police Force; six local Schools; the Kingfisher Shopping Centre; two NHS doctors' surgeries; Feckenham Parish Council; and the Dial a Ride Service. Two County Councillors who represent Redditch divisions also kindly attended an interview to provide evidence.

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**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	No.
Chief Executive	No.
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	No.
Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director – Leisure, Environment and Community Services	No.
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	No.
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No.
Head of Environmental Services	Yes
Head of Resources	No.
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No.
Corporate Procurement Team	No.

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards.

**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix A - List of recommendations published in the *Gritting: Winter Service Policy* scrutiny report.  
Appendix B List of locations identified by residents.

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Redditch Borough Council, 'Draft Gritting Procedure for Redditch Borough Council', (February 2011).

Redditch Borough Council, 'Extreme Weather Continuity Plan for Waste Collection Services', (February 2011).

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Redditch Borough Council, notes from meetings of the Gritting Short, Sharp Review Group, (2011).

Worcestershire County Council, 'Gritting: Winter Service Policy', Report to the Worcestershire Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel (July 2010).

Worcestershire County Council, 'Winter Service Policy', (November 2009).

Worcestershire County Council, Gritting pages on Worcestershire County Council's website,  
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/transport-and-streets/streets/gritting.aspx>

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**Appendix A**  
**Recommendations from Worcestershire County Council's Gritting:  
Winter Service Policy Review, (July 2010)**

Recommendation 1:

We recommend that the County Council discusses with NHS Worcestershire the possibility of using some public health funding to grit roads and pavements to reduce the number of accidents and the impact on health services.

Recommendation 2:

Whilst recognising that the precautionary network includes the principle road network we recommend that other roads should be prioritised for treatment if they meet the following criteria: steep gradient, above a certain height, north facing, a route to shops, medical supplies, emergency and care services and businesses.

Recommendation 3:

We believe that there is a special case for keeping routes to schools open and feel this should be a priority for the Council. We recommend the Council considers adding particular school routes to a secondary gritting route, where this would be sensible and cost effective, based on individual schools' experiences.

Recommendation 4:

We recommend that when determining gritting routes, a heavier weighting should be placed on gritting roads and pavements in areas with high numbers of disabled or vulnerable people in need of pharmacies and medical supplies/care.

Recommendation 5:

We recommend that the Council consults with businesses and bus companies on priority gritting routes.

Recommendation 6:

Hertfordshire has a Closure Notification System, where headteachers text updates on school closures directly to the Council's website. This has been very successful and the Council is looking to extend it to other high use services. We recommend that the Council considers adopting a similar system. The system will eliminate the need for teachers to telephone or email their status to the Council. It should reduce the stress on school websites, and the Customer Service Centre.

Recommendation 7:

The Panel noted that some roads (not on gritting routes) are particularly dangerous, such as where a steep downhill minor road joins a main road. Or where a road is above a certain height, north facing and known to be a problem previously during bad weather. These roads would benefit from grit bins and we recommend that these are considered when the current criteria are evaluated during the annual winter service review.

Recommendation 8:

We have found that whilst the Council is aware of known problem areas, there does not appear to be a system in place to prioritise the re-filling of grit bins. We recommend that the Council develops a “hotspot” system to prioritise the filling of grit bins (when stocks allow) with those in particularly hazardous locations being refilled most urgently.

Recommendation 9:

We also recommend that the phone number to ring to ask for a grit bin to be refilled is displayed on the grit bin, along with wording to make it clear that the grit bin is for use by the public on the highway.

Recommendation 10:

The Panel considers that twenty pre-accredited arrangements with farmers is comparatively few given the size of the county and that the number should be increased. Although the Council advertises for farmers to put themselves forward, we recommend that the Council asks Parishes to nominate a farmer in their area who might be willing to apply. We further recommend that the Council increases its efforts to advertise for farmers to help with gritting and road clearance.

Recommendation 11:

Currently we understand there is a degree of consultation with the emergency services about core gritting routes, however we believe it is important to take into account the views of the emergency services and therefore recommend that the Council consults fully with these groups.

Recommendation 12:

We recommend that the legal position should be made clear to the public and publicised at appropriate times.

Recommendation 13:

We also recommend that guidance on do's and don'ts for clearing snow, following the example of Westminster city Council, is promoted and made available on the Council's website.

Recommendation 14:

Hertfordshire, following their winter service scrutiny last year, are planning to review how they facilitate volunteer and local self help. We recommend that Worcestershire carry out a similar review.

Recommendation 15:

Currently the Council's website shows a countywide salting route map and maps of the salting routes in the main towns in each of the six districts. However, the Panel found it was still sometimes difficult to tell whether a particular road was on the gritting route, particularly for the countywide map and towns such as Tenbury or Droitwich, which don't have dedicated maps. Some of the maps appear side ways. We therefore recommend that the Council improves the clarity of precautionary and secondary gritting route maps on its website.

Recommendation 16:

The Panel consider it would be helpful to clarify which routes are gritted, why and when, to aid understanding of the policy. We recommend that clear information should be made available to the public on the winter service policy and on the flexibility for making a special case for additions to gritting routes.



**Appendix B**  
**List of Roads Residents Reported to have been affected by the**  
**Inclement Weather in December 2010**

During the course of the review Councillors have gathered evidence from residents living in the Borough. This evidence is outlined below in alphabetical order. Attempts have been made to recognise whether each road is currently included on the County Council's gritting schedule, as displayed on the Worcestershire County Council website.

***Ash Tree Road (not currently on the gritting schedule)***

Residents have reported that the road was hazardous and not passable for many vehicles during the inclement weather.

***Bentley Close (not currently on the gritting schedule)***

Residents have reported that numerous requests were made for the grit box to be replenished though few responses were received. Bentley Close was reported by a local resident to have been inaccessible. Elderly and vulnerable residents living in sheltered housing had experienced particular difficulties and wardens had experienced difficulties attempting to access sheltered housing.

***Bromfield Road (not currently included on the gritting schedule)***

Residents have reported that they have requested that a grit bin be introduced on Bromfield Road. There are currently grit bins situated on David's Close, in the old Council building off Salop Road and on Salop Road. Would the introduction of an additional grit bin on Bromfield Road meet the County Council's criteria?

Residents have reported that during the winter weather they requested that grit be provided at the end of the road for residents to distribute along the road. Residents have also reported that in response to this request they were advised by Worcestershire County Council that there was no grit available for this purpose. To what extent was this request replicated across the Borough? Does Worcestershire County Council provide residents with salt stocks in this manner?

***Bromsgrove Highway (Precautionary route)***

Residents have reported that that the Bromsgrove Highway received minimal treatment and was treacherous. How frequently was this section of the highways cleared and treated with grit?

***Bus Route – Windmill Drive (precautionary route) – Swinburne Road (secondary route) - Feckenham Road (secondary route) – Mason Road (secondary route)***

Residents have reported that no snow ploughs or gritting took place on these roads during the snowy weather. To what extent did snow ploughing and gritting take place on these roads?

Residents have also reported that Swinburne Road was blocked with abandoned vehicles and a build up of snow on the corner with Mason Road

caused problems for buses trying to make a turning at the junction. Residents have explained that they eventually cleared the roads in this section to provide the buses with safe passage. To what extent did snow ploughing and gritting take place in this area?

**Castleditch Lane (*secondary route*)**

Residents have reported that cars belonging to residents living in the closes leading off Castleditch Lane were parked on the road. This created barriers for the buses.

**Clent Avenue (*not currently included on the gritting schedule*)**

Residents have reported that no gritting lorry was observed on Clent Avenue during the inclement weather. To what extent did snow ploughing and gritting take place on this road?

Residents have reported that a grit bin, located on the corner of Clent Avenue and Jubilee Avenue with Malvern Road, was twice requested through the Worcestershire Hub in 2010. Whilst grit bins have been provided on the corner of Clent Avenue and Mansell Road, on Malvern Road and on Mason Road, residents are concerned that this does not help residents living on the steep slope connecting Clent Avenue and Jubilee Avenue. Would the introduction of a grit bin on the corner of Clent Avenue and Jubilee Avenue with Malvern Road correspond with Worcestershire County Council's criteria for introducing grit bins.

**Coldfield Drive (*precautionary route*)**

Residents have reported that the road conditions on Coldfield Drive were dangerous for drivers. There is a steep gradient on the road which leads to a large Tesco's store. Road conditions were icy and snowy and a number of cars were abandoned on the road.

**Foxlydiate Mews and Lock Close (*not currently on the gritting route*)**

Residents have reported that during the inclement weather access to the Foxlydiate Mews Care Home, owned by the Bournville Village Trust, was restricted. Foxlydiate Mews can be accessed through Lock Close. Residents have requested that Lock Close and Foxlydiate Mews be added to the snow clearance and gritting route. Would it be possible, in accordance with Worcestershire County Council's criteria, to add Lock Close to the snow clearance and gritting routes to provide access to Foxlydiate Mews and / or to introduce a grit bin in the car park of Foxlydiate Mews?

**Ivor Road (*precautionary route*)**

Residents have reported that snow ploughing and gritting were not observed on Ivor Road during the inclement weather. This impacted on residents living on both Ivor Road, Bromfield Road and David's Close. How frequently was the snow cleared from Ivor Road and gritting applied during the winter period?

**The Mayfields and Parsons Road (*both are precautionary routes*)**

Gritting was observed on The Mayfields and one section of Parson's Road as far as Tunnel Drive. However, residents have reported that gritting and snow

clearance did not occur on the remaining section of Parson's Road and gritting vehicles were observed in the evening on The Mayfields which did not appear to be distributing grit. Residents also reported that a bus became stuck between the Mayfields and Parson's Road due to the road conditions and could not be moved for three hours.

Residents have questioned whether it is possible for gritting to be applied to the section of Parson's Road between Mount Pleasant and Tunnel Drive due to the steep gradient. What was the experience of Worcestershire County Council in this respect during the winter weather?

Residents have questioned whether it would be possible to close off the exit from Mount Pleasant to Parson's Road during periods of snowy weather. (Parson's Road is a one way street).

**Moorcroft Gardens (*not currently included on the gritting schedule*)**

Residents have reported that they were unable to leave this close because there was no grit bin situated on the road. Would Moorcroft Gardens meet the County Council's criteria for introducing a grit bin?

**Moors Lane, Feckenham (*not currently included on the gritting schedule*)**

Councillors have been advised that Feckenham Parish Council has requested a grit bin on Moors Lane. However, Moors Lane is currently unadopted highway. To what extent would Worcestershire County Council support the introduction of a grit bin on this location?

**Nine Days Lane (*secondary route*)**

Residents have suggested that Nine Days Lane is regularly cleaned during periods of snowy weather because a Council employee lives in the area. How does Worcestershire County Council currently respond to these types of allegations?

**The Slough (*covered by a cross boundary arrangement with another county*)**

Residents have advised that the section of The Slough leading towards the Crabbs Cross roundabout quickly becomes icy and creates dangerous driving conditions. Accidents have occurred in this area as a consequence of these icy road conditions. Residents have suggested that consideration could be given to further measures being taken to improve the safety of the road conditions on this section of the road.

**Stonepits Lane (*secondary route*)**

The Councillors have been advised that Stonepits Lane was cleared of snow during the inclement weather and some gritting took place. However, the road conditions were poor and access to St Augustine's School was restricted because vehicles were abandoned on the road. To reduce this problem in future and to ensure the safety of pupils and residents it has been suggested that the cul-de-sacs leading off Stonepits Lane should also be gritted. (These cul-de-sacs are as follows: Brookfield Close, Chesterton Close, Claverdon

Close, Ditchford Close, Elmhurst Close and Farmcote Close). To what extent would it be possible to add these locations to the gritting schedule during periods of inclement weather?

**Studley Road (Greenlands) (*precautionary route*)**

Residents have reported that driving conditions on Studley Road were dangerous and gritting was not observed on the road. To what extent was this road cleared and gritted during the course of the inclement weather?

**Tennyson Road (*secondary route*)**

Residents have reported that a snow plough was observed attempting to enter Tennyson Road but was unable to do so because a parked car blocked access at the time of the snow plough's visit. No snow plough was observed by residents revisiting the road to clear the snow at a later date. To what extent was the snow cleared from this location?

**Turton Gardens, Feckenham (*not currently included on the gritting schedule*)**

Councillors have been advised that Feckenham Parish Council has requested a grit bin on Turton Gardens which leads to a new housing estate. However, Turton Gardens is currently unadopted highway. To what extent would Worcestershire County Council support the introduction of a grit bin on this location?

**William Street (*not currently included on the gritting schedule*)**

Residents have reported that the condition of William Street, leading to the Dow Surgery in Redditch, had been very poor. It was reported that the snow had not been cleared at any point during the inclement weather.

**Willow Way (*part of Willow Way is included on a secondary route*)**

The Councillors have been advised that roads close to Pitcheroak School, including Willow Way, were difficult to access. To what extent did snow clearance and gritting take place in this area?



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**COUNCIL PLAN 2011-14**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Carole Gandy, Leader of the Council and Councillor Michael Braley, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Hugh Bennett, Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

To agree the Council Plan for 2011-2014 including the action plan which sets out how the Council's priorities will be delivered.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

**the Council Plan 2011-2014, attached at Appendix 1 of the report, be approved.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

3.1 At the meeting of the Executive Committee on 20th October 2010 Members considered the Council Plan Part 1 report which set out the Council's vision and priorities. The vision and priorities were recommended to be reconfirmed and this was subsequently approved by Full Council.

3.2 The Council's vision is 'an enterprising community, which is safe, clean and green'. This incorporates three priorities with a fourth overarching priority to be a well-managed organisation.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

4.1 The Council Plan has been developed to reflect the strategic focus presented in the Council Plan Part 1 report and considers the national, regional and local context in which the Council operates.

4.2 The Council Plan sets out what each priority aims to achieve through a number of key deliverables and supporting actions and measures.

4.3 The supporting measures will form the basis for quarterly performance reporting to the Executive Committee during 2011/2012.

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**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Medium Term Financial Plan approved at Full Council has clear links with the delivery of the Council Plan. Agreed budget bids for specific key deliverables are detailed throughout the action plan.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications arising directly from this report.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Council Plan 2011-14 will replace the current Plan and will require Full Council approval.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

The Council's priorities are supported by a range of Council wide and service specific key deliverables and associated actions and measures as detailed in the Council Plan.

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

9.1 The Council Plan is supported by the Corporate Risk Register. Proactive risk management features as an action within the Governance key deliverable.

9.2 This report does not identify any Health and Safety Considerations.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The actions and key deliverables are set out in the Council Plan to enhance the quality of services provided to customers.

10.2 Improved customer experience is proposed as a specific key deliverable, incorporating actions from the Customer Experience Strategy which Full Council has approved.

10.3 The Council Plan, when approved, will be published on the Council's website and staff intranet.

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**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

None arising directly from this report; however the Council Plan contains actions and performance indicators in relation to equalities and diversity.

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

No direct implications although the Council Plan contains actions relating to shared services, service transformation and efficiencies.

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

13.1 The Council's priority 'Clean and Green' aims to develop attractive open spaces, enforce littering, fly tipping and other behaviour detrimental to the environment and support measures to tackle climate change.

13.2 Specific key deliverables are proposed to reduce the Council's carbon emissions, deliver improved and sustainable waste management services and deliver improved environmental quality.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

Actions to reduce staff sickness and improve the employee climate and organisational culture are detailed within the Council Plan.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Council plan is a key component of the Council's governance and performance management arrangements. Associated actions are set out under the priority 'Well Managed Organisation'.

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

The Council's priority 'Safe' incorporates key deliverables to reduce re-offending and anti-social behaviour, and to develop community cohesion.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

17.1 The Council's priority 'Enterprising Community' aspires to ensure residents are healthy and fit.

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- 17.2 A key deliverable is included to improve the general health of the residents of the Borough. Specifically, this incorporates the Abbey Stadium development, delivery of the Local Strategic Partnership Health Action Plan and targeted sports development.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

The Council Plans for both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils are now aligned in terms of format and production which has streamlined the strategic planning process.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

None directly in relation to this report, but the Budget Jury were engaged in discussions around the Council's priorities and proposed key deliverables.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	At Portfolio Holder's Briefing
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director – Leisure, Environment and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

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21. **WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards

22. **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Council Plan 2011-2014

23. **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Council Plan 2010-2013

Council Plan Part 1, Executive Committee 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010

Service Business Plans 2011

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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# Council Plan 2011-14



“Our vision is for Redditch to be an enterprising community which is safe, clean and green”

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL



making  
a  
difference

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

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## 1. The Council's Vision

**“The Council is committed to ensuring that Redditch remains a vibrant place to live, work and visit.**

**With this in mind, we have drawn up a vision of Redditch as ‘an enterprising community, which is safe, clean and green’. This plan sets out how we will work with our partners to make this vision a reality.”**

A lot of work has gone into producing this latest Council Plan, covering 2011-14. It aims to capture the essence of Redditch – the qualities and character of our Borough, recent achievements the Council and its partners have made and, importantly, the challenges that lie ahead and how we aim to tackle these.

We describe the programmes and activities we shall be pursuing over the next three years, as well as the measures we will put in place to evaluate how successful these programmes and activities are.

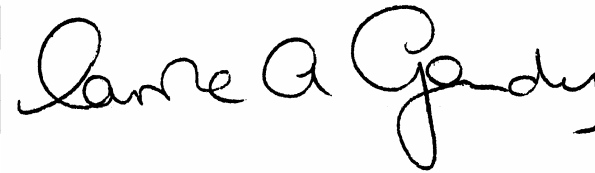
The current climate of economic uncertainty has impacted on all public services; there has been a year on year reduction in grants from central Government, as well as a loss in interest in our investments.

The Council has a clear plan for addressing the current situation and was one of the first councils in the UK to pursue a single management team and shared services through our partnership with Bromsgrove District Council. Shared Services is not just about saving money; it is about providing efficient and more cost effective services for our customers while keeping the uniqueness and political sovereignty of both Councils.

What this means for customers is that we are protecting front-line services and at the same time ensuring that those front-line services are improved.

The Council has managed to set a balanced budget in very difficult circumstances and a zero increase in Council Tax. However, the Revenue Support Grant from the Government has fallen by 27.7%. Over the next three years the Council will need to find £3,000,000, £1,800,000 of which will need to be found from shared services, transformation and alternative delivery.

I am always keen `to bang the drum` for Redditch and have said on many occasions that `Redditch is a good place`. I hope you will recognise how committed we are to making Redditch an even better place and that you will be able to support us in our efforts.



Councillor Carole Gandy  
Leader of Redditch Borough Council

## 2. Note from the Chief Executive

Welcome to the Redditch Borough Council Plan. The Plan sets out details of the Council's work between now and 2014.

The Council operates in a complex environment, having to balance public expectation of the Council's services alongside statutory obligations, as well as understanding the demographic issues we face and of course balancing the books. Local authorities are facing major funding and organisational challenges at the moment and in such uncertain times the need for proper and constructive business planning is crucial.

This is why a Council Plan is for me, as the Chief Executive for Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council, one of the key things we produce. It is certainly not a document destined to gather dust on a shelf!

As a Council, we recognise the issues that face the Borough and are working hard to tackle them. The plan is very much a `living and breathing` document that informs the work of my shared single management team and, not least, our dedicated staff and volunteers in Redditch.

The Council Plan was developed by Members and officers considering a range of information from residents including customer surveys and focus groups, as well as considering our current performance, national legislation, the County and District Community Strategies and our financial position.

As such, every one of us contributes to successfully carrying out the programme and activities outlined in this document; and to this statement I would add our many partners, either from the public sector, voluntary sector or the private sector.

In these difficult times it is more critical than ever that we all work together for the long term good of the Borough and its residents.



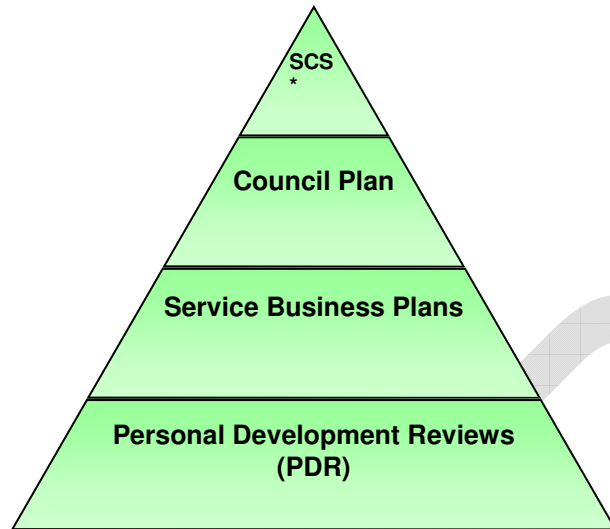
Kevin Dicks  
Chief Executive



### 3. What is the Council Plan?

The Council Plan forms one link in a chain of plans and strategies that align to each other to achieve a vision for the Borough of Redditch. The priorities set out in each plan contribute to and complement those set in the level above them in the hierarchy.

#### *The hierarchy of plans and strategies*



Note: SCS – Sustainable Community Strategy

Redditch Borough Council Plan for 2011 to 2014 is effectively the business plan for the Council and demonstrates how the Council will work towards achieving the overall vision for the Borough set out in the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) which was developed on the basis of extensive consultation with our residents.

The Council Plan identifies our contribution to this vision, and gives firm commitments on how the Council will deliver on its own vision of “An enterprising community which is safe, clean and green”. The Council has three priorities:

- ⇒ **Enterprising Community.**
- ⇒ **Safe.**
- ⇒ **Clean and Green.**

It also explains what the Council will be doing to keep its own house in order, to ensure we continue to be a Well Managed Organisation.

The Council’s Annual Report will show our direction of travel against our priorities. The Council Plan sets out actions over one to three years, demonstrating that continued improvement of the Borough is not a quick fix, but the result of focussed and consistent long-term ambition.

In developing the Council Plan, we have taken into account not only the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy, but also the aspirations of our residents and the particular features of Redditch as a former New Town.

The Council Plan predominantly addresses the short and medium term (up to three years) aims and objectives of the Borough Council, but recognises where issues are likely to be ongoing in the long term. The Plan also outlines how the Council will proactively manage its resources in order to achieve its objectives. The Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP) sets out the funding arrangements for the Council’s priorities.

The Plan seeks throughout to address the issues and views of a wide variety of stakeholders, including residents, Members of the Council and partner organisations.

## 4. Redditch- Introducing the Borough

Figure 1: Map of Redditch Borough



### **Geography**

The Borough of Redditch is situated in the West Midlands Region approximately 24 km (15 miles) south of Birmingham. It lies within the administrative boundary of Worcestershire County Council and is adjacent to Bromsgrove District to its north and west, Stratford-upon-Avon District to the east and Wychavon District to the south.

Redditch, although a New Town, has retained many important ecological and landscape features, with the native flora retained and largely unaltered from that of an ecological survey in 1966. Ponds, hedges and green spaces all help to hold together the important ecological infrastructure. Redditch has 5.7 hectares of open space per 1,000 population.

### **Population**

The Borough has a population of 78,813 with a higher percentage of young people (age 0-19 years) compared to the rest of the County. Most of the population (93%) lives within the town of Redditch which accounts for approximately half the geographical area of the Borough.

Redditch Borough has the highest percentage of ethnic minority groups of Worcestershire's six districts. Of Redditch residents, approximately 92% are of White British or White Irish origin. Of the remaining 8% of the population, the ethnic groups with the largest population sizes are Asian or Asian British Pakistani (2.3%) and White Other (1.3%) which includes those of Eastern European origin.

## ***Economy***

Redditch enjoys excellent transport links locally with very little congestion, including a strong network of dual carriageways and A-roads. The nearby M42 and M5 motorways provide access further afield and Birmingham Airport facilitates national and international travel. Public transport is provided via a train and bus network.

In terms of employment development, the West Midlands Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) would have set employment land requirements for Redditch; however the Coalition Government announced the intention to rapidly abolish RSS and it will be for local authorities to determine their own housing and employment targets. Redditch Borough Council has since consulted on a draft Core Strategy (January-March 2011) which proposes 'Creating a Borough where business can thrive'. The Strategy makes provision for 33.3 hectares of employment land which will be available for business uses. The vision for this Strategy is that Redditch will be an enterprising Borough and local skills will have been improved. To achieve the Strategy, the Borough plans for diverse employment areas, supporting existing business sectors and clusters while looking for opportunities to diversify the economy, promote a skilled workforce, aim for vibrant centres and ensure a prosperous rural economy.

There is a strong manufacturing base to Redditch's economy. The proportion of individuals employed in manufacturing industry (25%) is considerably higher than both the County and West Midlands region average. Redditch has fewer individuals employed in distribution, hotels and restaurants compared to other areas of Worcestershire.

## ***Environment***

In terms of the environmental aspects of Redditch Borough, there are six Sites of Special Scientific Interest, amounting to 54.7 hectares; these are examples the country's very best wildlife and geological sites. The Borough has 22 Special Wildlife Sites (188 hectares) and there is also more than 87ha of land designated as Local Nature Reserves, comprising 5 separate sites of semi natural ancient woodland.

There are two areas of designated parkland, including Arrow Valley Country Park which follows the course of the River Arrow and Morton Stanley Park in the east of the urban area. Redditch has three parks that currently hold the prestigious Green Flag Award; Arrow Valley Country Park, Morton Stanley Park and Overdale Park in Astwood Bank.

There are two conservation areas in Redditch Borough, one of which is located in Redditch town centre (Church Green) and the other in Feckenham village. The Church Green Conservation Area is focussed around the Church of St Stephen and an area of open amenity space surrounded by a number of statutory listed buildings. The Feckenham Conservation Area incorporates most of the historic village of Feckenham and includes the parish church, the village square, a Scheduled Ancient Monument and a number of residential buildings which date from the sixteenth century.

## ***Housing***

In 2010 (January to July 2010) the average house price in Redditch was £169,768, lower than the average for Worcestershire (£196,850), but higher than the Regional average (£161,456). This is significantly higher than in 2006 (January to March 2006) when the average house price in Redditch was £150,501, lower than both the average for Worcestershire (£184,936) and the national average (£184,925).

As a percentage of housing stock, Redditch Borough has a high amount of affordable housing (24%) in comparison to the Worcestershire-wide average (16%), the West Midlands average (21%) and the UK (19%); however, supply still does not meet demand. Generally house prices in Redditch, as well as ownership levels, are lower than neighbouring Districts.

Redditch Borough does offer a vast amount of choice in terms of housing stock, with housing that covers every size, style and type of accommodation. Housing in Redditch Borough aims to be socially inclusive, building and providing for those who require it, including social housing, intermediate ownership housing, as well as elderly and single person households and private housing of different types in accordance with the Borough Council's Housing Needs Assessment.

### ***Education***

Education in Redditch is based on a three-tier school system with pupils progressing from first, middle and then to high schools. Schools operate in a pyramid system with four pyramids – 3 in specific geographical locations and 1 that takes pupils of the Roman Catholic faith. There are over thirty schools in the Borough catering for approximately 12,000 pupils. There is also a well established further education college (North East Worcestershire - NEW College), which caters for a wide range of vocational and academic courses and has recently opened a new facility to enable residents to take university level courses in the town.

Educational performance of pupils in Redditch has been recognised as an issue over many years. Redditch has consistently fallen behind Worcestershire in the percentage of pupils achieving 5 or more GCSEs at grades A\* to C. Data from 2009 and 2010 shows that while average results are getting better in Redditch, they are still behind those of the County as a whole.

### ***Health***

In broad terms the health of people in Redditch is similar to the England average; however there are significant differences in health and well being between Redditch and Worcestershire across a broad range of measures. The reasons for this are complex, but can be broadly summarised as: inequalities in opportunity – for example poverty, employment, education and family; inequalities in lifestyle choices including smoking, physical activity, alcohol and sexual activity; and inequalities in accessing services.

Redditch has the lowest amount of residents with limiting long term illnesses compared to all other Worcestershire districts; this may be attributed to Redditch's younger population profile. Life expectancy for men living in the most deprived areas of Redditch is almost 7 years shorter than for men living in the least deprived areas. For women the corresponding difference is over 6 years.

Rates of early death from heart disease and stroke and from cancer have fallen over the past ten years and are similar to the England average.

The proportion of children in reception year who are classified as obese is similar to the England average. Levels of physical activity in schools are better than the England average; however it is estimated that levels of healthy eating and obesity in adults are worse than the England average and exercise levels for adults are the lowest in the country.

### ***Leisure***

Cultural attractions within the Borough include the Forge Mill Needle Museum, Bordesley Abbey, Arrow Valley Park which centres around the 12 hectare (30 acre) lake and adjacent Countryside Centre. The town centre offers the Palace Theatre as well as a multi-screen cinema and there is a wide range of sports

facilities across the Borough including sports centres, swimming pools, BMX track, football pitches, golf courses and a skate park. The town also has numerous play facilities within its neighbourhoods and residents can access a full range of activities covering Arts, Sports and Play development.

### ***Deprivation***

The Indices of Deprivation were produced in 2007 by the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG). The Indices are a measure of deprivation for every super output area and local authority area in England. It combines a number of indicators (Income, Employment, Health and Disability, Education, Skills and Training, Barriers to Housing and Services, Living Environment and Crime) into a single multiple deprivation score and rank for each area.

From the district level summary (where 1 is the most deprived) of the multiple deprivation score, Redditch is ranked 131<sup>st</sup> out of 354 areas nationally. This is the most deprived area in Worcestershire and compares to Wyre Forest with a ranking of 154. Therefore Redditch is in the top 40% most deprived districts. This is a slight deterioration from 2004 when the Borough was ranked 146<sup>th</sup>. Within these wards, there are two areas that are within the top 10% most deprived in England which are the areas around Winyates and Church Hill Centres. An analysis of the Index of Multiple Deprivation for these areas identifies barriers to housing, education and health as the three main concerns.



## 5. Who Are We?

We are a District-level authority within the county of Worcestershire and work closely with neighbouring Bromsgrove District Council with a shared Single Management Team.

There are 29 Elected Members of Redditch Borough Council. Feckenham Parish Council is the only Parish Council within the Borough. Since June 2002 the Borough Council has operated an Executive Committee (“Leader and Cabinet”) and Overview and Scrutiny structure. Overall control of the Council moved to the Conservatives in May 2008 for the first time since 1982.

Currently, nine Councillors sit on the Executive Committee, six of whom have a set of responsibilities referred to as a “Portfolio”. Decisions are made by the Executive Committee collectively and Portfolio holders do not have delegated authority to make decisions on behalf of the Committee.

Portfolio Holders are appointed annually by the Council and between them cover all areas of the Council’s work and responsibility. “Portfolio” indicates a specified area of responsibility allotted by formal resolution, for the purposes listed below:

- Monitor Council performance.
- Monitor the implementation of Council policy and decisions.
- Act as consultee for Members and Officers.
- Act as “Spokesperson” for the Council (but not exclusively).
- Act as “Rapporteur” to Overview and Scrutiny and as a channel for feedback from representatives of outside bodies.
- Undertake a higher level of involvement with the Local Strategic Partnership.

The six Portfolios and the functions they cover are:

- **Community Leadership and Partnership inc. Voluntary Sector** – Cllr Carole Gandy – Leader of the Council

This portfolio covers the Council’s relationships with other partners and stakeholders, both locally within the County, regionally and nationally.

- **Community Safety & Regulatory Services** – Cllr Juliet Brunner

This portfolio covers the areas of Crime & Disorder, Safer Communities and Licensing.

- **Corporate Management** – Cllr Michael Braley

This portfolio covers internal systems and support services, including Administration, Audit, Finance, Human Resources, IT Services, Asset Management and Customer Services.

- **Housing, Local Environment and Health** – Cllr Brandon Clayton

This portfolio covers the Council’s Housing Management role as Landlord, Strategic Housing responsibilities, Health-related Services, Sustainability, Climate Change and Energy Efficiency, Better Environment, Landscape, Cleansing, Waste Management and Open Space.

- **Leisure and Tourism** – Cllr Gay Hopkins

This portfolio covers Culture and Recreation, Community Training, Education, Learning and Skills, the Voluntary Sector and Children’s Centres.



- **Planning, Economic Development and Transport** – Cllr  
Jinny Pearce

This portfolio covers Planning, Economic Development and Transport.

## **Shared Services**

The Council has had a Joint Chief Executive with Bromsgrove District Council on a trial basis since August 2008, an arrangement which was formalised in September 2009.

Four services are already shared: community safety, elections, CCTV and ICT. A shared services / full transformation programme for both councils is currently being delivered.

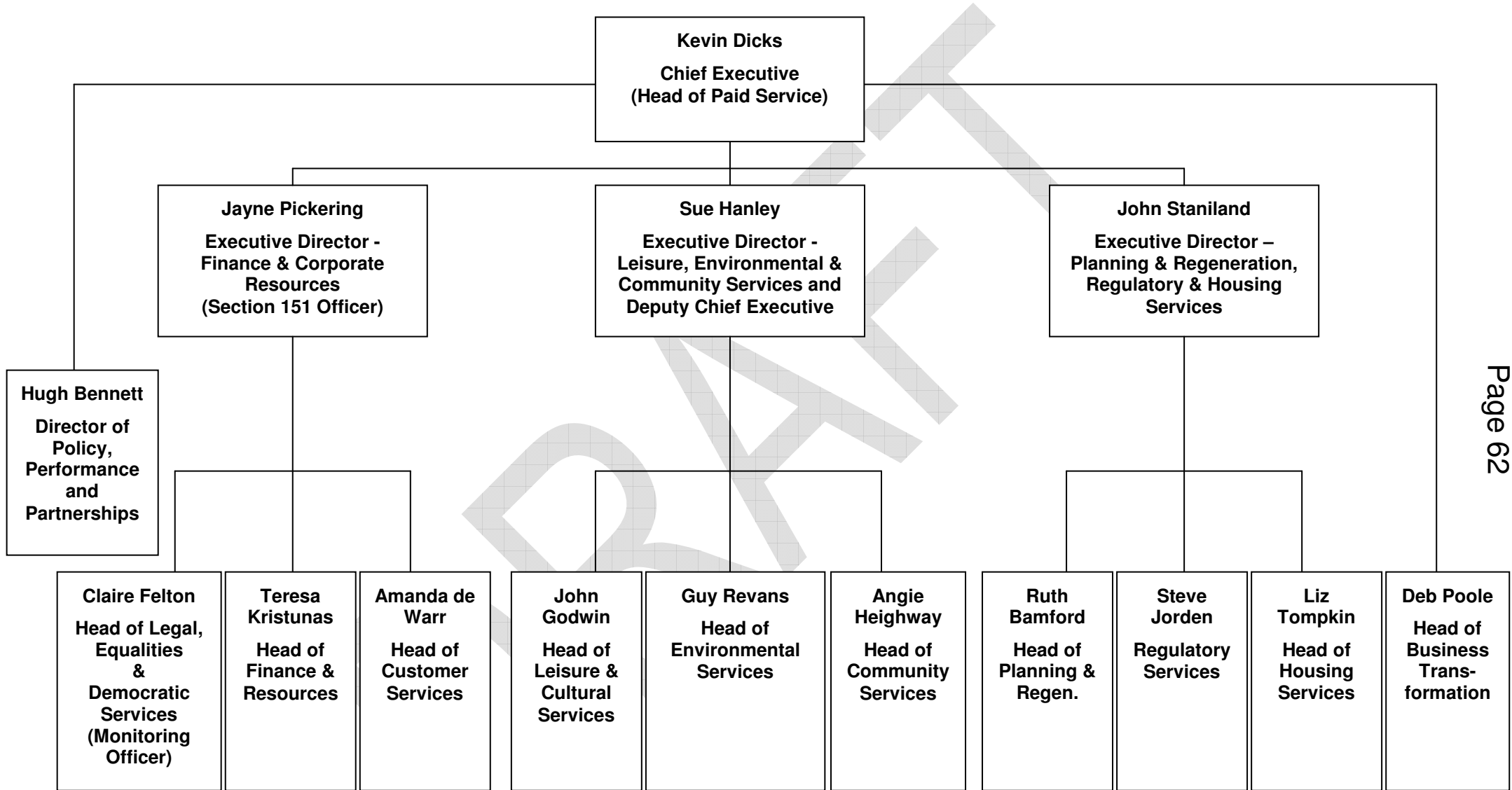
The formal appointment of a shared Chief Executive for the two councils has led to the subsequent appointment of a single management team for both councils.

As part of the WETT programme, the councils are also the host of the single county wide Regulatory Services function, while Internal Audit and Property Services have transferred to other hosts in the county.

During 2011 a single North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit will be established, covering Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest.

By pursuing Shared Services, WETT and transformation at a time when funding from Government for local authorities is being reduced we should be able to make efficiencies and savings that protect front-line service delivery.

**CORPORATE MANAGEMENT TEAM STRUCTURE**



## 6. Our Priorities 2011-2014

In 2010 the Council considered its vision, priorities and strategic focus for the forthcoming year. The Council's priorities remain unchanged:

- **Enterprising Community**
- **Safe**
- **Clean and Green**

### **Enterprising Community**

We want Redditch to be a vibrant and vital Borough where its population is well educated, has high skill levels, is healthy and fit, housing is excellent and varied and the community is served by a prosperous town centre and has access to first class leisure facilities. We also want the Council's voice to be influential and respected by residents, partners, other governmental agencies and suppliers. The Town's economy should provide sufficient high quality jobs for residents with good levels of pay and reward locating in the Borough.

### **Safe**

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

### **Clean and Green**

The Council will develop attractive open spaces, taking enforcement action against littering, fly tipping and other behaviour detrimental to the environment, where appropriate, and supporting measures to tackle climate change.

### **A Well Managed Organisation**

To underpin the delivery of the Council's priorities it is recognised that the Council needs to be a Well Managed Organisation.

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

In the current financial climate it is more critical than ever that we focus on this.

## The Council's Values

The Council has a set of values that support the Vision and Priorities and provide the framework in which decisions will be made. These values are:

- **Partnership**  
Working effectively with partners in the public, private and voluntary sectors to deliver our priorities.
- **Fairness**  
Equality of treatment in the provision of services and employment for everyone in the Borough.
- **Quality of Service**  
Providing appropriate and effective services that achieve value for money.
- **Modernisation**  
Engaging with residents and other stakeholders on how we can improve our services and the way in which we deliver them.

It is the Council's intention to review these values to ensure they continue to reflect the Council's aspirations.

## 7. What We Do

### *Our Services*

The Council is obliged to provide some services, but has a choice about whether or not it provides the others. The services provided by Redditch Borough Council include:

- Environmental Health
- Homelessness and Housing Advice
- Licensing Services
- Planning Services
- Revenue Collection
- Waste Collection
- Street cleansing
- Working in partnership with the Police and other organisations to improve community safety and tackle anti-social behaviour
- Economic Development
- Council Housing Management
- Contact Centre and Customer Service Centres to provide a single point of contact for Council Services ( telephone and face to face )
- Shopmobility disability scooters and wheelchairs to enable disabled people to access the Town Centre
- Dial-A-Ride transport service for older people and people with disabilities who have difficulty in using public transport
- Community Centres

- The Palace Theatre
- Forge Mill Needle Museum and Bordesley Abbey Visitor Centre
- Sports Centres and Swimming Pools
- Arrow Valley Park and Morton Stanley Park
- Arrow Valley Countryside Visitors Centre
- Pitcheroak Golf Course
- Crematorium and Cemeteries
- Supporting and Promoting the Arts and Youth Theatre
- Play Areas and Multi Activity Play Areas
- Playing Pitches and Associated Changing Facilities
- Reddicard Leisure Pass Scheme
- Management of four Children's Centres
- CCTV/Lifeline
- Community Services
- Landscape Maintenance/Improvements
- Market Services

Redditch Borough Council is the only District Council within Worcestershire that still maintains its own stock of rented housing to the Decent Homes Standard.

The Council also has a community leadership role. This commits us to develop, together with our partners, a Sustainable Community Strategy. This sets out the key issues faced in the Borough and a multi-agency plan to tackle them. The Government also places a responsibility on local authorities to shape their communities around the needs and aspirations of their residents.

## 8. Partnership Working

Redditch Borough Council has a responsibility and a long history of shaping the community around the needs and aspirations of the Borough's residents, in pursuance of its role of community leadership. It also needs to work effectively with others to deliver the highest quality services to local residents and those who work in the Borough. The Council recognises that it cannot do this alone and therefore works in partnership with organisations from the public, private and voluntary and community sectors to achieve its aspirations.

One way in which the Council works with other organisations is through formal partnership working. This delivers the following benefits:

- More efficient and effective use of resources, by improving communication and reducing duplication with other services;
- Improving how services are delivered, by linking with complementary services; and
- Improving the quality of life for Redditch residents through mutual support of services that benefit the Borough.

In summary, by working together, more can be achieved than by each organisation working in isolation. For this reason, Redditch Borough Council is committed to playing an active role in partnership arrangements.

Redditch Borough Council is a member of the following main partnerships:

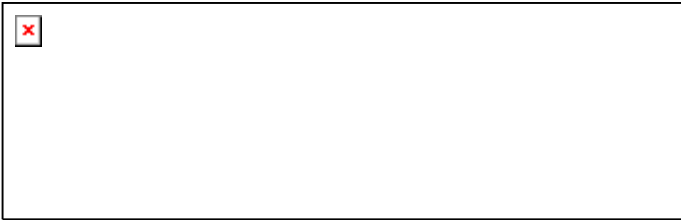
- Worcestershire Partnership.

- Redditch Partnership.
- Redditch Community Safety Partnership.
- Hereford and Worcestershire County Sports Partnership.

The Council works with a diverse range of partners and stakeholders to achieve its priorities. These include:

- Worcestershire County Council
- West Mercia Constabulary
- Worcestershire Primary Care Trust
- Hereford & Worcester Fire and Rescue
- Hereford & Worcester Chamber of Commerce
- Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN)
- Kingfisher Shopping Centre
- NEW College
- Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations
- Business Representatives
- Federation of Small Businesses

## Redditch Partnership



The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy is built around a shared vision for the Borough. It is envisaged that by 2026:

*‘Redditch will be successful and vibrant with communities that have access to good job opportunities, good education, good health and are communities that people will be proud to live and work in’.*

### Working together to help shape the future of Redditch

Redditch Partnership brings together representatives from public, private, community and voluntary agencies to work together effectively to deliver a range of local projects, services and initiatives. It aims to provide a leadership and governing role through sharing information, resources and effort to efficiently and effectively meet the needs and aspirations of local communities.

### ***The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy***

The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy, produced by Redditch Partnership, establishes the overall strategic direction and long term vision for Redditch Borough and outlines the shared commitments made by the Partners. It sets the framework within which Partners will deliver on key objectives, by sharing resources, skills, knowledge and effort to collectively deliver the best possible outcomes for the Borough.




The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy can be viewed at <http://redditch.whub.org.uk/cms/community-and-living/redditch-partnership.aspx>

The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy is intended to influence the strategy and budget plans of all members of Redditch Partnership. The Strategy has been refreshed for 2011-2014 to reflect issues raised by the 2009 Comprehensive Area Assessment and to focus the priorities down to four as follows:

<b>Priority One</b>	Health Inequalities	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Smoking</li> <li>• Alcohol</li> <li>• Obesity / healthy lifestyles</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Two</b>	Educational attainment and raising aspirations of young people.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Improving literacy and numeracy</li> <li>• Raising aspirations</li> <li>• Improving statistical levels of attainment</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Three</b>	The economy of Redditch with a focus on providing a larger and more diverse job offer.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Promotion of Redditch as a business location</li> <li>• Jobs and worklessness</li> <li>• Fostering economic ambition in young people</li> </ul>
<b>Priority Four</b>	Areas of deprivation with an initial focus on Winyates and Church Hill.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Enhanced security measures for residential areas in Winyates Centre</li> <li>• Community engagement and social regeneration</li> <li>• Physical regeneration at Church Hill</li> </ul>



## 9. How We Will Deliver Our Priorities

-  Enterprising Community
-  Safe
-  Clean and Green

For each of the Council's priority themes, a set of key outcomes have been developed. Some of these are cross-cutting throughout the organisation whilst others are specific to a service. Key performance indicators have been developed where appropriate to measure progress and enable Councillors, residents and partners to track performance against the Council Plan.

Projects and tasks to support these key deliverables are included in the relevant Service Business Plans which are monitored by Departmental Management Teams.

The Council monitors and manages performance against a range of national and local performance indicators which are published on the Redditch Borough Council website.

The Council Plan includes high level actions and indicators with others being detailed in the relevant Service Business Plans.

The table shows, for each priority, the outcomes to be achieved; the key objectives that contribute to those outcomes; and the key actions needed to achieve the objectives.

<b>PRIORITY AREA:</b>  <b>Enterprising Community (EC)</b>	<b>Key Deliverables:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>EC1: Improve the general health of the residents of the Borough</b></li> <li>• <b>EC2: Regenerate the town centre</b></li> <li>• <b>EC3: Deliver value for money housing services</b></li> <li>• <b>EC4: Deliver an appropriate housing mix</b></li> <li>• <b>EC5: Improve the economic success of the Borough</b></li> <li>• <b>EC6: Improve the quality of life for the areas of highest need</b></li> </ul>
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Key Deliverable: EC1	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Improve the general health of the residents of the Borough	✓	Mortality rate from circulatory diseases for under 75s  Number of visitors to leisure centres  Attendance at sports development sessions  Abbey Stadium project milestones met		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Completion & opening of Abbey Stadium		Apr 2012		John Godwin
• Work with the Primary Care Trust and emerging GP consortium on the development & delivery of the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) Health Action Plan		Mar 2012		Hugh Bennett
• Targeted sports development		Mar 2012		John Godwin

Key Deliverable: EC2	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Town Centre regeneration	✓	Number of vacant units Number of businesses provided with financial incentives (early evening economy)		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Liaise with Worcestershire County Council on progression of ring road proposal</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Ruth Bamford
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement town centre landscape proposals</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Ruth Bamford
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement Business Support Scheme</li> </ul>		Mar 2012	£15,000	Ruth Bamford

Key Deliverable: EC3	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Deliver value for money housing services which meet customer expectations	✓	Rent arrears as a percentage of rent roll Average time taken to re-let local authority housing Voids loss expressed as a percentage of gross rent (annual) Number of households living in temporary accommodation		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Produce Housing Revenue Account Business Plan</li> </ul>		Apr 2011		Liz Tompkin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adopt and implement the housing allocation reforms</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Liz Tompkin

Key Deliverable: EC4	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Deliver an appropriate housing mix	✓	Number of affordable homes delivered Net additional homes provided Processing of planning applications (minor, major, other)		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consultation &amp; agreement of the Core Strategy</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Ruth Bamford
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Delivery of 91 affordable housing units</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Angela Heighway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement the Older Persons' Housing and Support Strategy action plan</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Liz Tompkin
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Implement Countywide Housing Strategy Action Plan</li> </ul>		July 2011		Angie Heighway

Key Deliverable: EC5	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Improve the economic success of the Borough	✓	Percentage of business centre units vacant Percentage of Children & Young People's Plan delivered/on target at year end Number of businesses provided with grants or training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• business start up programme</li> <li>• business booster grant</li> <li>• manufacturers' grant</li> </ul>		

Key Actions	Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>North Worcestershire Economic Development Unit live</li> </ul>	June 2011	1/3 North Worcs Manager	John Staniland
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Provide grants to new and young businesses and manufacturers</li> </ul>	Mar 2012	£5,000	Ruth Bamford
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work with Worcestershire County Council (lead) on delivery of Children &amp; Young People's Plan</li> </ul>	Mar 2012		Hugh Bennett

Key Deliverable: EC6	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators
Improve the quality of life for the areas of highest need	✓	Number of young people involved in positive activities Number of adults participating in sport and exercise Number of local residents improving their skill level through the Winning Winyates project Percentage of residents who feel they belong to their immediate neighbourhood

Key Actions	Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Deliver Winyates Action Plan</li> </ul>	Mar 2012	£100,000 Areas of Highest Need money	Angie Heighway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Work towards the physical regeneration scheme for Church Hill</li> </ul>	Onsite in 2012	£500,000 value of assets contributed towards scheme	John Staniland / Ruth Bamford
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop the Winyates Areas of Highest Need social approach &amp; apply to Church Hill</li> </ul>	Mar 2012	Resources to be considered as part of 2012/13 budget cycle	Hugh Bennett / Angie Heighway

<b>PRIORITY AREA:</b>	<b>Key Deliverables:</b>
<b>Safe (S)</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>S1: To reduce re-offending</b></li> <li>• <b>S2: To reduce anti-social behaviour</b></li> <li>• <b>S3: To develop community cohesion</b></li> </ul>

Key Deliverable: S1	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
To reduce re-offending	✓	Adult re-offending rates for those under probation supervision		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Develop re-offending profile with the Redditch Community Safety Partnership		Sep 2011		Angie Heighway
• Develop action plan		Dec 2011		Angie Heighway
• Implement action plan		Feb 2012		Angie Heighway

Key Deliverable: S2	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
To reduce Anti-Social Behaviour	✓	Perceptions of anti-social behaviour (ASB)  Dealing with local concerns about ASB and crime issues by the local council and police		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Review the Anti-Social Behaviour Strategy & Policy		Sep 2011		Angie Heighway
• Develop and implement action plan		Mar 2012		Angie Heighway

Key Deliverable: S3	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Develop community cohesion	✓	Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area  Number of racial incidents recorded by the authority per 100,000 population  Percentage of racial incidents that resulted in further action		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Implement the Countywide Community Cohesion Strategy</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Angie Heighway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop &amp; promote Hate Incident reporting mechanisms</li> </ul>		Mar 2012	Community Safety Area Based Grant (amount tbc)	Angie Heighway
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop &amp; implement an intergenerational project</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Angie Heighway

<b>PRIORITY AREA:</b>  <b>Clean and Green (CG)</b>	<b>Key Deliverables:</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>CG1: To reduce CO2 emissions</b></li> <li><b>CG2: Deliver improved &amp; sustainable waste management services</b></li> <li><b>CG3: Deliver improved environmental quality</b></li> </ul>
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Key Deliverable: CG1	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators	
To reduce the Council's CO2 emissions	✓	To reduce CO2 emissions from local authority operations  Per capita reduction in CO2 emissions in the local authority area	

Key Actions	Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Install new cremator and mercury abatement equipment and implement agreed options for energy recovery</li> </ul>	Mar 2012	£600,000 of capital money allocated	Guy Revans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Installation of Solar Panels</li> </ul>	Mar 2012	£180,000	Hugh Bennett
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Annual progress report of Climate Change Strategy</li> </ul>	Dec 2011		Hugh Bennett

Key Deliverable: CG2	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Deliver improved & sustainable waste management services	✓	Residual household waste Percentage of household waste recycled		
Key Actions	Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Restrict residual waste presented at kerbside and increase the amount of waste recycled</li> </ul>	Mar 2012		Guy Revans	

Key Deliverable: CG3	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Deliver improved environmental quality	✓	Local indicator – litter Local indicator – detritus Local indicator – number of fly-tips dealt with Local indicator – number of enforcement actions		



Key Actions	Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Trial revised monitoring arrangements for street cleansing to replace NI 195</li> </ul>	Sep 2011		Guy Revans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Improve work programming for street cleansing/mechanical sweeping/grounds maintenance</li> </ul>	Mar 2012		Guy Revans
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Develop and run a 3 year publicity and communications programme for waste and street scene services</li> </ul>	Jun 2011		Guy Revans

<p><b>WELL MANAGED ORGANISATION (WM)</b></p>	<p><b>Key Outcomes:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><b>WM1: Transformation / Shared Services / Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Programme</b></li> <li><b>WM2: Corporate &amp; Financial Strategy</b></li> <li><b>WM3: Corporate &amp; Financial Management</b></li> <li><b>WM4: Corporate &amp; Financial Reporting</b></li> <li><b>WM5: Improved Customer experience</b></li> <li><b>WM6: Engagement / Equalities / Communications</b></li> <li><b>WM7: Human Resources</b></li> <li><b>WM8: Organisational Culture</b></li> <li><b>WM9: Employee Climate</b></li> <li><b>WM10: Spatial planning</b></li> <li><b>WM11: Governance</b></li> </ul>
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Key Objective: WM1	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Transformation / Shared Services / WETT	✓	Savings achieved 2011/12 – 2013/14 - £1.8m		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Shared services programme delivered		July 2012		Kevin Dicks
• Transformation (core services) programme completed		Dec 2012		Deb Poole
• WETT programme completed (Property, Regulatory Services & Internal Audit)		May 2011		Kevin Dicks

Key Objective: WM2	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Corporate & Financial Strategy	✓	Overall savings achieved 2011/12 – 2013/14 - £3m		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Council Plan 2011 – 14 approved and published		Jun 2011		Hugh Bennett
• Three Year Medium Term Financial Plan 2012 - 15 approved		Feb 2012		Teresa Kristunas
• Lessons learned Exercise (budget setting process)		Mar 2012		Hugh Bennett

Key Objective: WM3	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Corporate & Financial Management	✓	Procurement savings £50,000  Percentage of invoices for commercial goods and services that were paid by the Council within 30 days of receipt or within the agreed payment terms  Percentage of council tax collected by the Council in the year  The amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered as a percentage of all Housing Benefit overpayments		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a systems thinking dashboard and quarterly reporting</li> </ul>		Dec 2011		Deb Poole / Hugh Bennett
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilisation of procurement to deliver cashable savings</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Teresa Kristunas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Freeze on non-essential expenditure and scrutiny of job vacancies</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Teresa Kristunas

Key Objective: WM4	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Corporate & Financial Reporting	✓	External audit approval		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Financial accounts completed		30 Jun 2011		Teresa Kristunas
• External Audit		30 Sep 2011		Teresa Kristunas / Hugh Bennett
• Annual Report produced and published		31 Oct 2011		Hugh Bennett

Key Objective: WM5	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Improved Customer Experience	✓	Percentage of customers satisfied with the service received Percentage of complaints handled within the agreed timeframes		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Improve the Customer Service Centre experience		Dec 2011		Amanda De Warr
• Implement 1/3 of the Customer Experience Strategy Action Plan		Mar 2012		Amanda De Warr
• Increase the range of services offered in the Customer Service Centre		Mar 2012		Amanda De Warr

Key Objective: WM6	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Engagement / Equalities / Communications	✓	<p>Percentage of residents who believe that the Council provides value for money</p> <p>Percentage of people who believe people from different backgrounds get on well together in their local area</p> <p>Percentage of residents who have been involved in decisions that affect the local area in the past 12 months</p> <p>Percentage who agree that they can influence decisions in their local area</p>		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactive management of Communications</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Hugh Bennett
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of a joint Community Engagement Strategy</li> </ul>		Dec 2011		Hugh Bennett
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review changes to equalities legislation and assessment mechanisms</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Hugh Bennett
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Review engagement and equalities mechanisms</li> </ul>		Sep 2011		Hugh Bennett

Key Objective: WM7	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Human Resources	✓	Number of working days / shifts lost to the local authority due to sickness per fte staff member		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Job Evaluation process completed		May 2011*		Teresa Kristunas
• Harmonise Terms & Conditions		May 2011*		Teresa Kristunas
• Review HR capacity for the delivery of the shared services / transformation agenda		Mar 2011		Teresa Kristunas
• Hold monthly sickness absence management meetings		Monthly		Teresa Kristunas

\*Subject to collective agreement

Key Objective: WM8	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Organisational Culture	✓	Employee Survey results		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
• Management Development Strategy developed and implemented		Dec 2011		Teresa Kristunas
• Training and Development Programme developed and implemented		Mar 2012	£13,000	Teresa Kristunas
• Launch New Appraisal Scheme		Jan 2012		Teresa Kristunas

<b>Key Objective: WM9</b>	<b>Community Strategy Impact?</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>		
Employee Climate	✓	Employee Survey results		
<b>Key Actions</b>		<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources Additional to Base Budget</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
• Employee survey		Sep 2011		Teresa Kristunas
• Staff forums at least every three months		Triannual		Teresa Kristunas

<b>Key Objective: WM10</b>	<b>Community Strategy Impact?</b>	<b>Key Performance Indicators</b>		
Spatial Planning	✓			
<b>Key Actions</b>		<b>Timescales</b>	<b>Resources Additional to Base Budget</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
• Core Strategy publication		Jan 2012		Ruth Bamford
• Adoption of the Core Strategy		Mar 2013		Ruth Bamford

Key Objective: WM11	Community Strategy Impact?	Key Performance Indicators		
Governance	✓	Electoral turnout Audit programme productive time 63%		
Key Actions		Timescales	Resources Additional to Base Budget	Lead Officer
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Borough Election</li> </ul>		5 May 2011		Claire Felton
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>National Referendum</li> </ul>		5 May 2011		Claire Felton
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Proactive Risk Management</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Teresa Kristunas
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Complete Internal Audit programme</li> </ul>		Mar 2012		Teresa Kristunas



## 10. Risk Management

In setting out our plans for the Borough we recognise, as a well managed organisation, that there are a number of risks that may impact on the Council achieving all we have set out in this Council Plan. We will monitor these risks and take mitigating actions, where practicable, to minimise the impact on the Council, but some risks are unavoidable.

The key risks are related to:

- Economic changes creating additional pressures on services and resources.
- The ability to deliver services when resources are restricted or systems fail.
- That service improvements do not result in positive changes in user perception.
- The delivery of resilience and efficiencies through partnership working.
- That advances in technology are not utilised to deliver efficiencies and improvements for the customer.
- Managing performance to ensure that the right things are delivered, in the right way, for the right people.

The Council's Risk Management Policy requires effective management of all risks. The Policy relates to all risks both at strategic and service level. The Council has established a Risk Management Working Group to monitor progress on the action plans developed to manage all existing and emerging high level risks.

## 11. Community Engagement (including Equalities)

At the Council, we have a strong commitment to engaging with our communities and to making sure that we communicate with them on issues that are important to the Borough. We work to ensure that all voices have a chance to be heard.

The Council recognises the importance of Equality and Diversity; as a Council we have established the Community Forum which works with community members and a range of voluntary organisations and statutory bodies to help inform and shape the work which is done within the authority.

In Partnership with the Community Forum Redditch Borough Council published its first Single Equalities Scheme in February 2010, this is a working document which the Community Forum will support.

As part of the shared services restructure, the Council will have a Policy Officer (Equalities), shared with Bromsgrove District Council, to help us take this agenda forward.

The opinions of residents are key to our decision making processes, with public consultation being fed through to management and political leadership. We have held road shows across the town and consulted with residents and visitors at the Morton Stanley Festival.

We also hold an annual Budget Jury, where a group of residents consider the issues that are affecting the Borough, the work that the Council does and what priorities should be for the following year. They return a few months later to look at proposals for spending and savings, mirroring the process that the elected Members go through, with their opinions being an important point of reference when the Councillors make the actual decisions about the budget

We will be developing a joint Community Engagement Strategy and Toolkit for Bromsgrove and Redditch during 2011, which will inform how we engage with communities and provide guidance for officers across all departments.

## 12. Budget and Value for Money

The Council has set a balanced budget with a zero increase in Council Tax for 2011/12. This year's budget deliberations have been particularly difficult due to the Budget Settlement from Central Government. The Council's Revenue Support Grant from Central Government will fall by 27.7% over the next two years.

These are challenging times for the Council; however, the Council is well placed to respond to this reduction. The Council is more advanced than most councils on its shared services agenda, with a Single Management Team across both Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council.

A number of services are already been shared, for example, Community Safety, Elections, Payroll, ICT and through the WETT programme we have countywide Regulatory Services, Internal Audit and Property.

The Council's approach to delivering the required level of savings is seven fold:-

1. To bring forward the remaining shared services programme with the bulk of services being shared by the 31 March 2012;
2. Undertake more fundamental transformation work using a technique called systems thinking;
3. Pay restraint, for example, there will be no pay rise for staff in 2011/12 and through the harmonisation of terms of conditions across both councils we are proposing to reduce car mileage rates and end essential car user allowances;
4. Continue to focus on good procurement in order to drive out the maximum value from all contracts;

5. Continue to challenge and review all budgets down to a line by line by line level, including careful consideration of the need for various reserves and carry forwards;
6. Use of reserves; and
7. Additional income, where this is possible, for example, the New Homes Bonus.

The table overleaf sets out the planned savings as per the Medium Term Financial Plan.

## SAVINGS 2011/12 - 2013/14

Department	Description	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000
CORPORATE	Savings realised from the Shared Service and Transformation Plans	-778	-778	-778
CORPORATE	Savings to be realised from Future Shared Service, Transformation and Alternative ways of delivering services	0	-1557	-992
COUNCIL WIDE	General reductions in budgets - no impact on service delivery	-428	-411	-403
COUNCIL WIDE	Additional income generated from services - increase in target	-125	-125	-125
COUNCIL WIDE	Improved negotiations with suppliers on contract price	-50	-50	-50
COUNCIL WIDE	Savings realised from the proposed withdrawal of essential car user payments	-55	-55	-55
COUNCIL WIDE	Savings realised from the reduction in the staff car mileage rate to 40p per mile	-60	-60	-60
LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	Reduction by £15,000 of the budget allocated to provide external support to Scrutiny task groups /reviews	-15	-15	-15
COUNCIL WIDE	To not make a payment of £250 to employees earning under £21,000	-43	-43	-43
COUNCIL WIDE	Estimation of the income generated from the proposed New Homes Bonus Scheme	-150	-350	-550
COUNCIL WIDE	Transfer from prior year reserves no longer required by the Council	-98		
<b>TOTAL PROPOSED SAVINGS</b>		<b>-1,802</b>	<b>-3,444</b>	<b>-3,071</b>

## 13. Glossary

Term	Definition
Corporate Management Team (CMT)	The Council's single management team made up of the Chief Executive, Executive Directors and Director, and the Heads of Service.
Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS)	A long-term vision for the Borough as a whole. The Strategy co-ordinates the actions of public, private and community organisations in meeting the needs and priorities of local communities. Under the Local Government Act 2000, all local authorities are required to work in partnership with the community, business, voluntary sector and other public sector partners to develop a long-term strategy to promote the social, economic and environmental well-being of their local communities.
Local Strategic Partnership (LSP)	A family of partnerships and organisations that is working to a common aim - to improve the quality of life in the Borough and deliver the Sustainable Community Strategy.
Medium Term Financial Plan (MTFP)	A three year budget for the Council's expenditure and income, linked to the Council's objectives and priorities.
Objectives	The broad goals for the Council, within which priorities are set.
Performance Development Review	A formal meeting between a member of staff and their line manager to review past work and agree future work, setting standards and targets.
Performance Indicators	Yardsticks used to assess our achievements.
Performance Management Framework	Sets out the processes by which Elected Members, Officers and residents can monitor how the Council is performing.
Priorities	The four areas identified by Elected Members and Officers where we wish to make significant improvement in how we perform.
Service Business Plans	One year plans that set out what each department intends to deliver over the coming year.
Shared Services	Joint teams with Redditch Borough Council, which deliver services to residents across both council areas more effectively.
Transformation	A fundamental look at our processes and how we can change them to deliver more efficient and effective services to our customers.
Values	The fundamental principles that guide the way we work.
Vision	The ideal of how we would like the Borough and the Council to be in the future.
Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier (WETT)	A county-wide project which looks at services across Worcestershire and how, if at all, these can be shared or work better in partnership, particularly across the tiers of Local Government. Worcestershire Regulatory Services is an example of a WETT project, hosted by Bromsgrove and Redditch.



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**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

31<sup>st</sup> May 2011

**DISPOSAL OF SITE OF FORMER PARK HOUSE (150 EVESHAM STREET)**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	<b>Cllr Braley, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management</b>
Relevant Head of Service	<b>Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance &amp; Resources</b>
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

Members are requested to declare the site of the former Park House (150 Evesham Street) surplus to requirements and to make it available for disposal.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

**the site of the former Park House (150 Evesham Street) be declared surplus to requirements and available for disposal.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

Although Park House itself was demolished several years ago the site was never declared surplus and available for disposal. As such the site has not been included in the Asset Disposal Programme.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The site is on the corner of Evesham Street and Ludlow Road as indicated on the plan attached at Appendix A. The total site is approximately 1,030 sq. meters (0.25 acres) and slopes steeply down from the Evesham Street frontage. Vehicular access is possible from Ludlow Road.
- 4.2. Since Park House was demolished the site has remained vacant and no alternative use for the site has been identified.
- 4.3. The Council's Development Group has considered the site and Planning officers would in principal support a residential development.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Disposal of the site would general a capital receipt that could be used to support the Council's Capital Programme.

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**31<sup>st</sup> May 2011**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no legal implications.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

No policy implications.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

This site if declared surplus would be included in the Council's Asset Disposal Programme.

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

There are no significant risks associated with the disposal of this site.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct customer implications.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no equality and diversity implications.

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

It is good Asset Management practice to identify asset surplus to requirements and arrange for their disposal. The capital receipt generated by the disposal can use to meet other Council objectives/priorities.

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

There are no climate change, carbon or biodiversity implications.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no relevant HR implications.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no governance/performance management implications.

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**31<sup>st</sup> May 2011**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF  
CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

There are no relevant community safety implications.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no relevant health inequalities implications.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

None.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

None at this stage.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director – Leisure, Environment and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Finance & Resources	Author
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	n/a

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

Central Ward.

**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix A - Plan of site.

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Files held by Property Services.

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

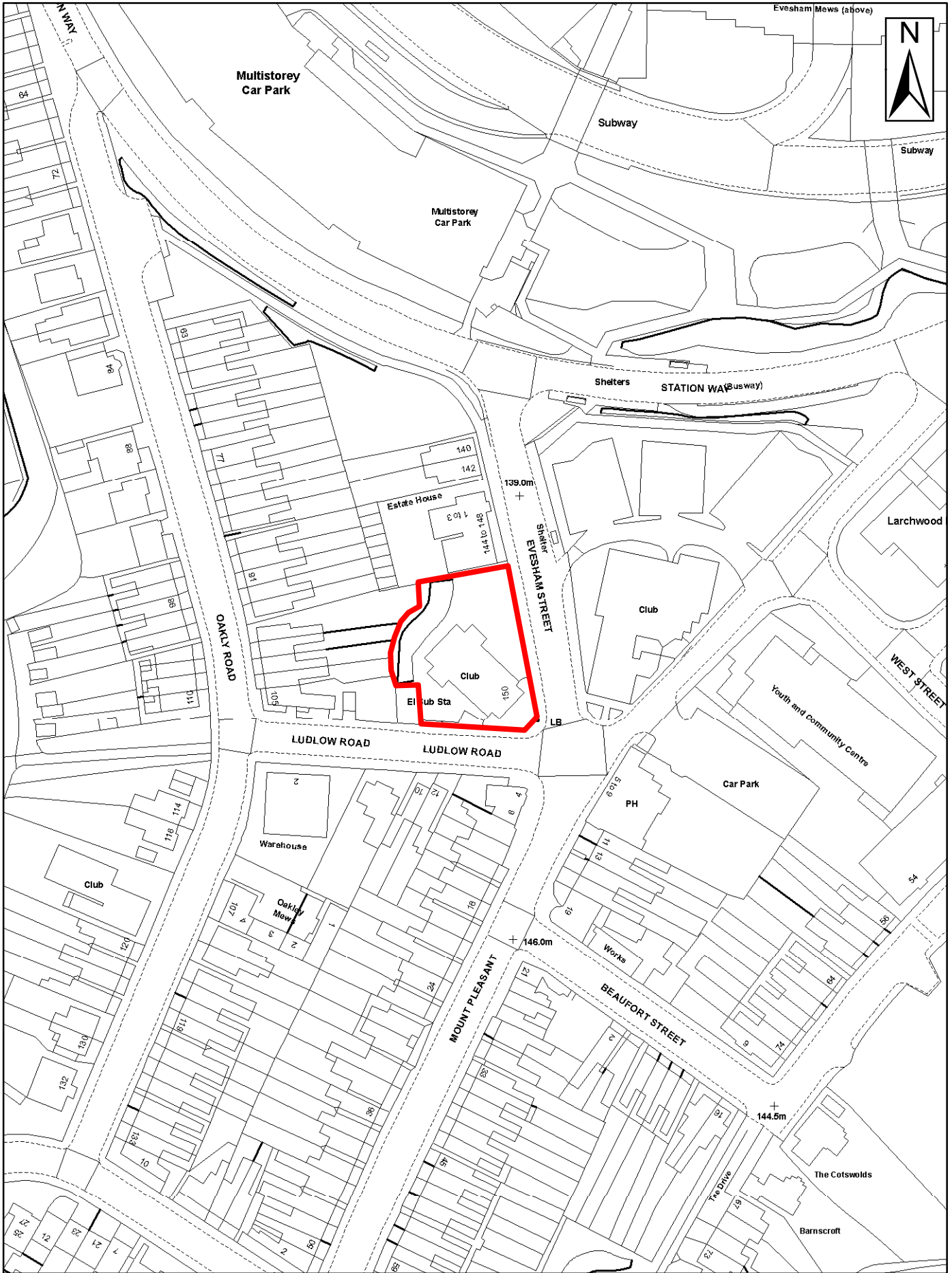
31<sup>st</sup> May 2011

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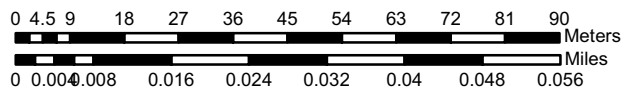
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Scale:  
1:1,250



County Hall,  
Spetchley Road,  
Worcester  
WR5 2NP

Land off Evesham St Redditch

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# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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13th April 2011

## MINUTES

### Present:

Councillor Diane Thomas (Chair), and Councillors Peter Anderson, Robin King, Brenda Quinney and Mark Shurmer

### Also Present:

Councillors Simon Chalk and Roger Hill  
Michael Collins (Vice Chair of the Standards Committee).  
Peter Sugg, Gail Kemp (both Worcestershire County Council)  
Graham Vickery (part)

### Officers:

H Bennett, S Hanley, S Morgan, G Revans, J Willis and M Kay

### Committee Services Officer:

J Bayley and M Craggs

## 220. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillors Anita Clayton, Andrew Fry and Bill Hartnett. There were no named substitutes.

Apologies were also received on behalf of Councillor Juliet Brunner who was due to deliver her Portfolio Holder Annual Report for Community Safety and Regulatory Services.

## 221. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

## 222. MINUTES

### RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 23rd March 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

.....  
Chair

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13th April 2011

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## 223. ACTIONS LIST

Members considered the latest version of the Committee's Actions List.

The Committee was informed that the date of the next Joint Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Network meeting, at which the Joint Worcestershire Hub and Joint Worcestershire Scrutiny Framework were to be raised for discussion, had yet to be confirmed.

All of the other actions had been completed.

### **RESOLVED that**

**the Committee's Actions List be noted.**

## 224. CALL-IN AND SCRUTINY OF THE FORWARD PLAN

There were no call-ins and no items were identified on the Council's Forward Plan as suitable for further scrutiny.

## 225. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

There were no draft scoping documents for consideration.

## 226. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee received update reports in relation to the following reviews.

a) Road Gritting – Chair, Councillor Robin King

The final report of the Road Gritting Short, Sharp Review was considered under a later item.

b) Work Experience Opportunities – Chair, Councillor Peter Anderson

The Chair informed Members that the Group had made good recent progress and was expecting to soon start work on its final report.

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

13th April 2011

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**RESOLVED that**

**the reports be noted.**

## **227. PETITION**

The Committee considered a petition regarding the removal of a pedestrian barrier from Yardley Close in Winyates approximately two years ago. The removal of the barrier had been undertaken to provide a disabled resident who used a wheel chair with access to the doctor's surgery at the Winyates Centre.

The Chair invited members of the public to speak to the petition. The Committee were advised that the removal of the pedestrian barrier had enabled motorcycles and skateboarders to gain unimpeded access to Yardley Close. This had reportedly resulted in regular noise pollution which was especially disconcerting for the elderly residents who lived on the close. The petitioners also explained that fencing had been damaged due to anti-social behaviour. The petitioners advised the Committee that the disabled resident would not object to the barriers being re-erected if the Winyates Centre was accessible at the opposite end of Yardley Close.

The Committee noted the concerns of the petitioners. It was proposed that a meeting involving the petitioners, the disabled resident, local police, and relevant Council Officers take place to resolve the issue satisfactorily.

**RECOMMENDED that**

**Officers meet with the petitioners, the disabled resident from Yardley Close and representatives from the Police to discuss potential compromise solutions; and**

**RESOLVED that**

**the petition be noted.**

## **228. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORT - COMMUNITY SAFETY AND REGULATORY SERVICES**

Apologies were tendered on behalf of Councillor Brunner due to illness. Members expressed disappointment that the Portfolio Holder would be unable to deliver her Annual Report during the current municipal year. It was suggested that in future the

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Committee should not arrange to receive a Portfolio Holder's Annual Report for the final meeting of any municipal year. This would ensure that an annual report could be re-scheduled in the event of a Portfolio Holder being forced to submit his/her apologies.

The Committee instead received the annual report from relevant Officers. Firstly, a brief presentation was delivered that showcased the work of the Redditch Community Safety Partnership during 2010/11. In particular, this presentation depicted: the work of Redditch Roadway Arts, including pictures of the artwork that had been displayed on local bus shelters and pedestrian subways; the work of the partnership on the secure access system at Winyates district centre as part of the area of highest needs project; the Redditch Home Security guide; and the accreditation recently achieved by the CCTV service.

Members were also provided with responses to the Committee's list of questions as detailed below:

- 1) What is being done to address drugs misuse and its implications for community safety in Redditch?

A recent report from the Worcestershire DAAT (Drug and Alcohol Action Team) stated that individuals from Redditch were more likely to leave adult drug treatment either drug free or having cut down their drug usage compared to other districts in Worcestershire. Available data also indicated that there had been a fall in drugs offences during the year.

The Worcestershire DAAT had recently re-commissioned all of its drugs and alcohol services for the county in an attempt to further reduce drug and alcohol abuse. New integrated alcohol and drug treatment programmes were to be delivered in Redditch under a "Pathways to Recovery" service from 1st April 2011. This service was to combine a range of alcohol and drug services and would provide a holistic approach to substance misuse with a strong focus on abstinence and recovery. The Employment, Training, Education, and Volunteering Service would help individuals overcome any barriers to work and employment following their treatment from drugs misuse.

Members were advised that a misleading report on the subject of a recent short-term police exercise, Operation Vellum, had appeared in the local press. This operation was in fact designed to target a small number of individuals involved in

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alcohol related anti-social behaviour in the Church Green area and did not indicate an increase in drugs misuse in Redditch.

- 2) How is the Council working with the Police to mitigate the affects of police budget cuts and an expected reduction in police force numbers on community safety?

Detailed information had yet to be received on how the police budget cuts would impact on police force numbers. The Council was working hard to ensure that the affect of reduced resources for partner agencies on community safety was minimised. Indeed, many Council services were already working closely with the police around a number of crime prevention and community safety projects.

Members were referred to a number of projects being undertaken by the Redditch Community Safety Team to help reduce crime and disorder. This included the Redditch Roadway Arts programme of renovating and repainting bus shelters and underpasses. Measures like this helped the Police to focus resources on areas of greatest need. Also, the Environmental Services team was working with the Police to reduce the possibility of criminal activity by cutting back on vegetation to improve visibility in public areas.

Members were supportive of the strong working relationship that had developed between the Police and the Council to reduce crime and disorder. In particular, the Committee welcomed the lack of graffiti that existed in Redditch compared to other areas.

- 3) How is Redditch's CCTV system to be protected from funding cuts? What are your plans for CCTV in Redditch going forward?

Members were informed that Redditch's CCTV system had been allocated mainstream funding within the Council's Medium Term Financial Plan. Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council had already accrued savings through sharing services for CCTV. The Councils were also exploring further areas where savings could be made. This included undertaking a review of the current CCTV maintenance contract.

The draft 'Protection of Freedoms Bill, which aimed to ensure that CCTV was being used effectively and appropriately, was currently out for public consultation. The Council would

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develop a list of actions to ensure it was compliant with the Bill following its publication.

4) Do you have plans to review the licences of alcohol retail outlets in the centre? If so, to what extent?

An alcohol licence could be brought under review if evidence was forthcoming that any of the terms of the license had been breached. A review could be requested by any responsible statutory authority; an interested party; or a councillor. It would be at the discretion of the Licensing Sub-Committee to make a final decision.

Officers were constantly liaising with the Police and other responsible authorities to identify potentially problematic premises. Preventative action, including holding discussions with the relevant licence holder and premises supervisor, would take place as and when necessary. However, Members heard that very few premises in Redditch had had their licence reviewed.

Members were further informed that the Police could strongly recommend that a premise alter its closing hours if there had been a number of alcohol related disturbances in the local area. Attempts were also being made to reduce the number of intoxicated people in a given premise to prevent disturbances from occurring in the neighbouring area.

Members praised the work of Officers and the Police in keeping Redditch safe from alcohol induced crime and disorder and suggested that this should be further communicated to help boost the night-time economy.

5) What challenges do you foresee in your service area in the future?

Officers provided a summary of current and future challenges that needed to be met under each main service area:

A business strategy for the Lifeline service was to be developed to ensure that that service was self-sustaining. This would involve a robust marketing plan to help attract new customers and generate extra income. The new service would also benefit from advances in available technology.

The funding for Supporting People was currently under review at the county level. The decision had also been made to



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undertake a tendering process for the Call Alarm services. Redditch Borough Council had decided to tender for the business of incorporating Telecare into support packages at the initial stage. As part of this process the option of working in conjunction with Worcestershire Telecare to potentially provide a county-wide service was to be explored.

A policy and vision was to be developed for offering the lone worker monitoring service to outside organisations. The service worked well for existing staff and had the potential to become a revenue generating service.

Proposed legislative changes regarding the powers used to deal with anti-social behaviour were currently open for consultation. It was expected that any new powers to deal with anti-social behaviour would be introduced in spring 2012. In the meantime, the Council would continue to help enforce existing national policies.

The Council was identifying how other partners' budget and resource reductions would impact on community safety. Work would need to be carried out in partnership with relevant partner bodies to establish links with the new Police and Crime Commissioner to help attract increased future funding. The Redditch Community Safety Partnership had recently received an increased budget for 2011/12 as funds had been allocated in accordance with need rather than the size of the local population.

- 6) To what extent does the night-time economy in Redditch impact on levels of crime and disorder? What is being proposed to address this?

It was agreed that this answer had already been provided under a previous question.

The Chair thanked Officers on behalf of the Committee for delivering the Portfolio Holder's Annual Report.

## **RESOLVED that:**

- 1) **the Committee would not arrange to receive any Portfolio Holder Annual Report for at the final meeting of each municipal year in future; and**
- 2) **the Portfolio Holder's Annual Report be noted.**

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## 229. CHILDREN AND YOUNG PEOPLE'S PLAN - PRE-SCRUTINY

The Committee received the draft Children's and Young People's Plan 2011-14 for pre-scrutiny and an accompanying presentation. It was explained that the plan had been produced by the Worcestershire Children's Trust as the single plan for all children and young people in Worcestershire aged up to 19 years, and some groups of vulnerable young people up to 25 years.

Members discussed the plan and expressed concerns that the proportion of funding that was likely to be allocated to Redditch based activities (£189,000) was insufficient. Members also commented that there was a focus on academic achievement at the expense of other forms of achievement at the national level. It was suggested that this focus did not help to address the proportion of young people who are not in employment, education, nor training (NEET) in any given area.

It was suggested that parental support was as important to a child's success as the support provided by mentors and school governors and there was a need to ensure that parents were engaged to support their child's education. As such more needed to be done to help raise the aspirations and ambitions for many young people.

Worcestershire County Council Officers noted the comments made by the Committee and undertook to ensure that the Committee's comments were noted as part of Worcestershire County Council's consultation process for the plan.

The Chair thanked Officers for presenting the report.

### **RECOMMENDED that**

**subject to the Committee's comments being noted, the Worcestershire Children and Young People's Plan be approved.**

## 230. ROAD GRITTING SHORT SHARP REVIEW - FINAL REPORT

The Committee received the Gritting Short, Sharp Review Group's final report for consideration.

Members were informed that the Committee had been unable to engage with the responsible Portfolio Holder and relevant officers at Worcestershire County Council during the course of the review. The Group were, however, aiming to submit the final report for the

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consideration of the County Council, subject to the approval of the Executive Committee.

Members praised the report for its thoroughness and agreed that more could be done to preserve the condition of the roads in Redditch during future periods of inclement weather. Members commented that arrangements suitable for gritting and clearing snow in a hilly area should be applied in Redditch as many of the town's roads were located on steep gradients. It was commented also that more action needed to be taken to mitigate the affect of inclement weather on concentrated residential areas of elderly and vulnerable people.

Instances of anti-social behaviour that had taken place on local roads during the winter were discussed. This included cars being parked at the top of hazardous roads which restricted road access for other vehicles. The report recommended that smaller snow ploughs should be utilised to clear snow on the narrower roads in the Borough, to help reduce this problem in future years.

Members were advised that Officers at Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council had worked closely during the winter in 2010/11 to help ensure that the finite resources to maintain the condition of the roads were used most appropriately. This collaboration had been appreciated at both levels and had helped to prevent further difficulties.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **when monitoring the implementation of their recommendations Worcestershire County Council's Environment and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Panel should observe that the following recommendations proposed in their report, *Gritting: Winter Service Policy*, were not fully implemented in Redditch during the inclement weather in December 2010: recommendations 2, 3, 5, 6, 7, 10, 11 and 15;**
- 2) **the co-ordination of responses to inclement weather should be delegated to the district level; and**
  - a) **responses should involve local stakeholders planning local solutions to local problems;**
- 3) **Redditch Borough Council should urge Worcestershire County Council to adopt this local approach to co-ordinating responses to inclement weather;**

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- 4) resources, suitable for local needs, should be available to access in Redditch when needed;
- 5) the precautionary gritting route map needs to be agreed with district Councils to make use of local knowledge;
- 6) Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council should:
  - a) identify and use local private resources, including farmers' tractors, for snow clearance;
  - b) identify and use smaller, more suitable vehicles to clear snow on smaller urban roads; and
  - c) identify and develop a list of emergency additional labour forces that could be used to clear snow during inclement weather;
- 7) there should be a service available to deploy 24 hours a day 7 days a week locally in response to inclement weather;
- 8) Worcestershire County Council should meet with representatives of Redditch Borough Council to clarify the standards expected from each other in relation to snow clearance;
- 9) grit bins should be filled when requested. (However, we recognise that it may not be possible to fill grit bins immediately). Therefore:
  - a) members of the public who request that their grit bin be restocked should be clearly advised when this will take place;
  - b) a schedule for restocking grit bins should be published for public consideration in a clearly accessible format; and
  - c) if the snow is worse than expected one tonne tote bags should be distributed to roads where needed as an emergency measure;

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- 10) **Worcestershire County Council ensure that following information on the Council's website is presented in a more user friendly manner:**
  - a) **general information about gritting and snow clearance;**
  - b) **gritting routes;**
  - c) **snow ploughing routes together with clarification as to whether these routes are the same as the gritting routes;**
  - d) **grit bin locations; and**
  - e) **when gritting, snow ploughing and the filling of grit bins will take place;**
- 11) **the successful approach that Worcestershire County Council has adopted to communicate road conditions to the schools should be extended to all stakeholders;**
- 12) **Worcestershire County Council and Redditch Borough Council should ensure that clear information about both the road conditions and public transport is provided when communicating with the public during inclement weather;**
- 13) **Worcestershire County Council's Highways Department should:**
  - a) **be available for all relevant bodies, particularly the emergency services, to contact directly and quickly and at all times; and**
  - b) **be more responsive to residents.**

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted**

## **231. REDDITCH COUNCIL PLAN 2011-14 - PRE-SCRUTINY**

The Committee considered the draft Redditch Council Plan 2011-14 for pre-scrutiny.

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Members were informed that the plan was essentially the Council's business plan for the following three years and explained how the Council would achieve the overall vision for the Borough as set out within the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy.

Concerns were expressed that the implementation of the plan might provide difficult to monitor as it did not appear to contain many specific quantitative targets.

The Committee suggested that consideration should be given to the presentation of the plan to make it clearer for the public and that plain English should be used wherever possible. It was further proposed that a more digestible summary of the plan could be included on the Council website. Members were informed that the key points contained in the draft plan had already been publicised in previous versions of *Redditch Matters* to help explain to local residents why the plan had been produced and what the Council was aiming to achieve.

Members suggested that in cases where they were considering lengthy strategic documents like the Council Plan consideration should be given to providing Members with a longer lead in time to analyse and potentially suggest changes to the report.

Finally it was suggested that Budget Jury members should be asked about how the public would prefer to be informed about service performance by the Council.

## **RECOMMENDED that**

**subject to the Committee's comments being noted, the Redditch Council Plan 2011/14 be approved.**

### **232. QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER 3 - SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2010**

The Committee received the quarterly budget monitoring report for September – December 2010 for comment.

Members were advised that for the period from April – December 2010, the the Council's revenue budget showed an underspend of £815,000 compared to an estimated target of £350,000. The main reasons for this were: higher than anticipated savings generated through vacant posts; lower than anticipated borrowing costs on investments; and the Council's success in reclaiming £279,000 of previously paid VAT.

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Members were advised that it was unlikely that the Council could expect to achieve this level of underspend in future years. In particular, it was anticipated that inflation would rise in the following years and this would impact on the financial position of the Council.

**RESOLVED that****the report be noted.****233. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT -  
QUARTER 3 - SEPTEMBER TO DECEMBER 2010**

The Committee received the quarterly performance monitoring report for September – December 2010 for comment.

Data was provided in the report for 41 performance indicators. Performance in relation to 19 of these indicators had improved when compared to the same quarter in the previous year and performance with regards to one of the indicators had remained static. Unfortunately, performance had declined in relation to 21 of the indicators compared to the same period the previous year.

The decline in performance for 21 of the indicators could be explained relatively easily in some instances. In particular, this quarter had coincided with the inclement weather, which had inevitably impacted on the delivery of public services.

However, there were a number of areas of performance which were considered to be concerning. Firstly, BV012, the number of working days or shifts lost to the local authority due to sickness absence per full time equivalent staff had increased from 6.71 days to 7.84 days. To address this problem Officers were due to meet to review the levels of sickness absence.

Secondly, BV079b(i), the amount of housing benefit overpayments recovered as a percentage of all housing benefit overpayments had decreased from 77.35 per cent to 73.82 per cent. Whilst this decrease was concerning it was anticipated that the council would achieve the 80 per cent target by the end of the year.

Thirdly, NI192, the percentage of household waste sent for reuse, recycling and composting had dropped from 28.68 per cent to 27.6 per cent. This was considered to be concerning, particularly as the Council had achieved a 31.26 per cent rate on this indicator in 2008/09 suggesting that there had been a decline over a two year period. The Council would attempt to address this trend and had

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ensured that improving recycling rates was a key target in the 2011/12 Business Plan for the service area.

The committee suggested that a further, useful measure, concerning the amount saved through landfill charges, could be incorporated into the quarterly performance monitoring reports. Provision of this information would be dependent upon obtaining relevant details from Worcestershire County Council. However, this measure would enable Members to monitor the extent to which the Council was contributing to landfill.

Members expressed concerns about performance in relation to NI 041, perceptions of drunk or rowdy behaviour as a problem. Members suggested that these perceptions did not correspond with the situation outlined in the annual report for the community safety portfolio. Under these circumstances Members suggested that further action needed to be taken to communicate effectively the constructive work of the Community Safety Partnership to address the potential for anti-social behaviour and crime.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) **performance in relation to landfill costs should be monitored as part of the Council's quarterly performance monitoring process; and**
- 2) **the report be noted.**

## **234. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE 2010/11 - REVIEW OF THE YEAR**

The Chair expressed the view that 2010/11 had been a successful year for the Committee. This had been evidenced by the fact that the majority of the Committee's recommendations had been approved by the Executive Committee. The Chair suggested that the Committee could further improve in future years if the choice of issues for consideration, particularly for pre-scrutiny, was more selective. This would help to minimise a recurrent problem during the year whereby the meeting agenda had often been relatively lengthy.

Members commented that the Committee had completed a number of excellent reviews during the course of the year. In particular, the delivery of a lot of policy review work through short, sharp scrutiny exercise was regarded as a positive development and members



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agreed that it would be useful to continue to utilise this mechanism in future years.

Concerns were expressed about the extent to which all non-executive Councillors had participated in the scrutiny process during the year. Whilst a significant number of Councillors had acted as members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel and the various reviews that had been established during the year a few Councillors had not actively engaged in the scrutiny process. Under these circumstances, it was suggested that consideration should be given as to how all non-executive councillors could be encouraged to contribute to the scrutiny process in future.

The Chair concluded by thanking Members for their contribution and Officers for their support during the course of the year.

**RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

**235. REFERRALS**

There were no referrals.

**236. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members were informed that the update report on fly tipping and progress with the *Worth It* campaign, which the Committee had agreed to defer, would be received at a meeting on 5th July 2011.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Committee's Work Programme be noted**

The Meeting commenced at 6.00 pm  
and closed at 8.20 pm



**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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**ADVISORY PANELS, WORKING GROUPS, ETC - UPDATE REPORT**

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

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

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

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

**subject to Members' comments, the report be noted.**

**3. UPDATES****A. ADVISORY PANELS**

	<b><u>Meeting :</u></b>	<b><u>Lead Members / Officers :</u></b> (Executive Members shown <u>underlined</u> )	<b><u>Position :</u></b> (Oral updates to be provided at the meeting by Lead Members or Officers, if no written update is available.)
1.	Climate Change Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> / Vice-Chair: Cllr Anderson  Hugh Bennett	Next meeting – 7th June 2011.
2.	Economic Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Pearce</u> / Vice-Chair: Cllr Braley  John Staniland / Georgina Harris	Next meeting – 22nd June 2011.

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3.	Housing Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Quinney Liz Tompkin	Next meeting – 16th June 2011.
4.	Leisure Contracts Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Hopkins</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Anderson John Godwin / Kevin Cook	Last meeting – 16th August 2010.
5.	Planning Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Pearce</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr M Chalk John Staniland / Ruth Bamford	Last meeting – 20th April 2011.

**B. OTHER MEETINGS**

6.	Constitutional Review Working Party	Chair <u>Cllr Gandy</u> / Vice Chair Cllr Braley Steve Skinner	Last meeting – 4th April 2011
7.	Grants Panel	Chair / To be appointed at first meeting Vice Chair Cllr Braley Angie Heighway	Last meeting – 16th May 2011.
8.	Member Development Steering Group	Chair <u>Brunner</u> / Vice- Chair Cllr Braley Steve Skinner / Trish Buckley	Last meeting – 6.30pm Thursday 31st March 2011 – CR3
9.	Procurement Steering Group	Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u> / Vice- Chair Cllr Hall Jayne Pickering / Teresa Kristunas	Last meeting – 18th January 2010.

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10.	Church Hill District Centre – Members' Panel	Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> Teresa Kristunas	Meeting on 10th May 2011 postponed – to be rearranged towards the end of May.
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**22. APPENDICES**

None.

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE**

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**ACTION MONITORING**

<b>Portfolio Holder(s) / Responsible Officer</b>	<b>Action requested</b>	<b>Status</b>
<b>13th January 2009</b>		
<b>Cllr Gandy / Executive Committee</b>	<b>Third Sector Task and Finish Group</b> The Executive to consider the further work to be undertaken (detailed in recommendation 5) and come back with suggestions for further work in due course.	Awaiting further consideration by relevant Members.
<b>27th January 2010</b>		
<b>Cllr Gandy / A Heighway</b>	<b>Single Equalities Scheme</b> Members requested that a report/action plan be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee or Council detailing what the Council, as Community Leader, expected to receive in terms of education provision for the Borough and its children and young people.	
<b>8th September 2010</b>		
<b>M Braley L Tompkin / T Kristunas</b>	<b>Irrecoverable Debts</b> Officers undertook to respond to Councillor Braley as to whether the damage inflicted upon void properties constituted criminal damage.	Where, for instance, a void property gets broken into this would be classed as criminal damage and the police would be involved. Most void recharges are for damage caused by the

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		tenant and their living conditions and so are not classed as criminal damage.
<b>10th January 2011</b>		
<b>M Braley / J Pickering / B Talbot</b>	<b>Job Evaluation And Terms And Conditions</b>  Officers were instructed to report further to the Committee to seek Member decision if a collective agreement could not be reached through negotiation.	Awaiting the conclusion of the consultation process and subsequent negotiations.
<b>12th January 2011</b>		
<b>G Hopkins / J Godwin / K Cook</b>	<b>Learndirect – Relocation Update</b>  Officers undertook to carry out a general satisfaction survey of new and existing users of the service, the results of which would be reported back to Members in due course.	Survey to be undertaken following a period of use of the new premises.
<b>15th March 2011</b>		
<b>C Gandy / H Bennett</b>	<b>Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy 2011 – 2014</b>  Concern was expressed that the comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee had not been made available to the Committee. Officers confirmed that they would be made available at the next full Council meeting at which the recommendations of the Executive Committee were to be considered.	Relevant extract of the minutes included on the agenda for Council.
	<b>2011/12 Grant Programme Funding</b>  The Committee noted that the Student Council had, over a number of years	Officers advised the Student



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	developed a grant giving role and that currently it had substantial financial balances. In the circumstances the Committee felt it appropriate to reallocate the Council's annual donation of £520 to its own minor grants budget until such time that the Student Council require the donation. Officers were to advise the Student Council prior to consideration by Council.	Council accordingly.
	<b>River Revetment Works – Old Forge Drive And Park Way</b>  Officers were asked to work with the Dolphin Road allotment holders and the Environment Agency to identify alternative solutions at Site 3.	Officers have held a meeting with the Environment Agency and other RBC officers and a 'trigger' plan has been produced.
<b>12th April 2011</b>		
<b>M Braley / S Skinner</b>	<b>Constitution – Review 2011</b>  Officers to incorporate the changes recommended at the meeting of the Executive Committee into the draft to be submitted to Council.	Updated draft to be submitted to the Annual Meeting on 23rd May.
<b><u>Note:</u></b>	<i>No further debate should be held on the above matters or substantive decisions taken, without further report OR unless urgency requirements are met.</i>	Report period: 13/01/09 to 12/04/11

