

# Executive Committee

Wed 22 Jul  
2009  
7.00 pm

Committee Room 2  
Town Hall  
Redditch



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# 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**

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# 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 the Ringway Car Park.**

# 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 Committee

22 July 2009

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

## Agenda

### Membership:

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

<p><b>1. Apologies</b></p>	<p>To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend this meeting.</p>
<p><b>2. Declarations of Interest</b></p>	<p>To invite Councillors to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda.</p>
<p><b>3. Leader's Announcements</b></p>	<p>1. To give notice of any items for future meetings or for the Forward Plan, including any scheduled for this meeting, but now carried forward or deleted; and</p> <p>2 any other relevant announcements.</p> <p>(Oral report)</p>
<p><b>4. Minutes</b> Chief Executive</p>	<p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 1 July 2009.</p> <p>(Minutes to follow)</p>
<p><b>5. Council Flat Communal Cleaning Review - Final Report</b>  Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>To consider the Council Flat Communal Cleaning Task and Finish Group's final report and recommendations.</p> <p>(Report under separate cover)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>6. Constitution - Adoption of New Executive Arrangements</b>  (Pages 1 - 6)  Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services</p>	<p>To note the legislative requirements and adoption of an Action Plan to deliver a Revised Constitutional Model.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Direct Ward Relevance)</b></p>

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<p><b>7. Off-Street Car Parking Policy</b></p> <p>(Pages 7 - 54)</p> <p>Director of Housing, Leisure &amp; Customer Services and Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services</p>	<p>To seek approval for Off-Street Parking Charges for Town Hall and Trescott Road car parks. (Minute 133, Council on 6 April 2009 refers.)</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(Various Wards)</b></p>
<p><b>8. Corporate Identity - Revisions</b></p> <p>(Pages 55 - 100)</p> <p>Head of Human Resources and Communications</p>	<p>To obtain Member's support for Council-wide adoption of the Corporate Identity Report.</p> <p>(Report and Appendix 1 attached, Appendix 2 under separate cover)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>9. Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13</b></p> <p>(Pages 101 - 126)</p> <p>Head of Financial Revenues and Benefit Services</p>	<p>To review the Council's Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan 2010/11 to 2012/13.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>10. Sustainable Communities Act 2007 - Implications</b></p> <p>(Pages 127 - 152)</p> <p>Head of Strategy and Partnerships</p>	<p>To advise Members of the implications of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 and to consider whether to opt into the process within the Act.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>11. Duty to Involve - Implications</b></p> <p>(Pages 153 - 162)</p> <p>Head of Strategy and Partnerships</p>	<p>To advise Members of the implications of the Duty to Involve and to consider the arrangements required for ensuring effective involvement of local people in planning for and delivering services.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p><b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>

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<p><b>12. Environmental Services - Forestry Management</b> (Pages 163 - 172) Head of Environment</p>	<p>To advise Members on the future maintenance of the Woodlands in the Borough.  (Report attached)  <b>(No Specific Ward Relevance)</b></p>
<p><b>13. Arrow Valley Countryside Centre - Review - External Support</b> (Pages 173 - 178) Head of Leisure and Arts and Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p>	<p>To seek authority to commission external support for the review of Arrow Valley Countryside Centre.  (Report and Overview and Scrutiny Referral notes attached)  <b>(Winyates Ward)</b></p>
<p><b>14. Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b> (Pages 179 - 190) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 17 June 2009.  There are recommendations to consider.  (Minutes attached)</p>
<p><b>15. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels, Neighbourhood Groups etc.</b> Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels, Neighbourhood Groups, etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.</p>
<p><b>16. Advisory Panels - update report</b> (Pages 191 - 194) 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.  (Report attached)</p>
<p><b>17. Action Monitoring</b> (Pages 195 - 198) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider an update on the actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee.  (Report attached)</p>

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<b>18. Exclusion of the Public</b>	<p>It may be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, to consider excluding the public from the meeting in relation to the following items of business on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged. It may be necessary, therefore, to move the following resolution:</p> <p><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>19. 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**

No specific Ward Relevance

22 July 2009

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### **CONSTITUTION - ADOPTION OF NEW EXECUTIVE ARRANGEMENTS**

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(Report of Head of Legal, Democratic & Property Services)

#### **1. Summary of Proposals**

To consider a new form of governance for the Council's Executive arrangements, to be implemented after its elections in May/June 2011. The Council must consult the public and other interested persons before drawing up proposals for a change in governance, and resolve by 31 December 2010 which of the 2 governance models it proposes to adopt.

#### **2. Recommendations**

The Committee is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- 1) **the legislative position regarding the governance models for executive arrangements from 2010 be noted;**
- 2) **a further report be received to consider the outcome from the consultation at 3) below and to draw up the Council's proposals for a change in governance; and**

to **RECOMMEND** that

- 3) **authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services to consult electors and other interested parties in respect of the two potential governance models; and**
- 4) **a report be received at a specially convened meeting of the Council before the end of December 2010 to determine proposals for a change in the Council's governance model and make the necessary formal Resolution for this to take effect from the 3rd day after the 2011 local elections.**

# Executive

## Committee

22 July 2009

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

#### Financial

- 3.1 The costs of consultation can be minimised by putting it on the Council's website and / or by including it in "Redditch Matters". If the proposals include the elected Mayor and Cabinet Executive model, there will need to be a referendum. If this is the case, a further report will be needed setting out the means and potential costs of holding a referendum.

#### Legal

- 3.2 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 inserts new provisions into the Local Government Act 2000 which make changes to the form of executive arrangements which the authority can have. The legal implications of these changes are set out in the report. Dependent on the form of Executive arrangements which is eventually selected, the Council's Constitution will need to be changed to reflect the arrangements chosen.

#### Policy

- 3.3 There are no direct policy implications although the change in executive arrangements will result in a change in the way in which appointments to the Executive Committee are made.

#### Risk

- 3.4 If the Council fails to make the change in governance arrangements in accordance with the timetable or if it appears to the Secretary of State that the Council will fail to comply with the legislative requirements, the Secretary of State can make an order specifying that the Leader and Cabinet Executive arrangements will apply. In the transitional period between the 31 December 2010 and 3 days after the May 2011 elections, the current executive arrangements would continue to apply.

#### Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.5 No impact.

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### Report

#### 4. Background

- 4.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 followed the previous White Paper (Strong and Prosperous Communities) and requires a “strong leader” in governance terms.
- 4.2 This person will be either the Leader of the Council appointed by the Council or a directly elected Mayor. All of the executive functions of the Council will technically vest in the new-style Leader or Mayor, who will decide how those powers are to be discharged. He or she will appoint the Executive Committee directly and allocate responsibility for the discharge of executive functions - whether by him or herself, the Executive Committee collectively, individual members of the Executive (i.e. Portfolio Holders), or officers. Non-executive functions (e.g. Planning, Overview and Scrutiny, Licensing and Standards) remain unaffected.

Note: This new office and function of ‘Mayor’ would be entirely separate from the existing position of Mayor who is currently the Civic leader of the Borough.

- 4.3 In common with other District Councils, the Council must:
- a) decide by the end of December 2010 which governance model to adopt for executive arrangements, and
  - b) implement the new model 3 days after the 2011 elections.

#### 5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The current leader and cabinet (Executive) model is no longer an option. All authorities with existing leader and cabinet models will therefore have to adopt a new governance model. County Councils and Unitary authorities have already had to change their governance arrangements.
- 5.2 There are only **2 options**:
- a) An **elected Mayor and Cabinet executive** (as currently adopted by a small number of authorities):
    - i) A Mayor is elected directly by the electorate for a 4 year period
    - ii) Proposals to adopt this model are subject to referendum
    - iii) At least 2 councillors must be appointed to the Cabinet by the Mayor

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or

b) A **“new style” Leader and Cabinet executive**

- i) A Leader is appointed by Council for a 4 year period
- ii) At least 2 councillors must be appointed to the Cabinet by the Leader
- iii) Councils can choose whether to adopt procedures to allow the removal of the Leader during the 4 years

- 5.3 If the Council does not make a governance decision by the end of December 2010, it will by default have to draw up and adopt the new-style Leader and Cabinet model to take effect after the 2011 elections. If necessary, the Secretary of State can order this.
- 5.4 The vast majority of local authorities have to date favoured the leader and cabinet model. The Government may offer more incentives for directly elected mayors (e.g. the recent White Paper suggested that an elected mayor would be expected to chair the LSP).
- 5.5 A new-style Leader will have a strengthened role and become directly responsible for the discharge of executive functions as he or she wishes to arrange it. The Leader must also appoint a deputy.
- 5.6 Under the new-style Leader model, a Council appoints the Leader who then appoints the Executive and allocates responsibilities. Executive Members will no longer be appointed by or removed by Councils and Councils will no longer fix the size of Executive (the maximum of 10 members remains) nor areas of responsibility.
- 5.7 For stability (particularly aimed at Councils with elections by thirds), all Leaders will have a fixed term of office for 4 years - subject to any provision made for early removal. Whether a Leader can be removed once appointed is a secondary choice for those Councils adopting the new Leader and Cabinet model.
- 5.8 These would be significant technical variations from the current Leader model, but not the leap that the original executive arrangements were. These are high-level models and it is open to Councils to make or retain their own detailed arrangements under them e.g. for annual reports from the Leader and individual Executive Committee members, question time etc.
- 5.9 Councils continue operating existing models until the end of the transitional period (which for District Councils is just after the elections in May 2011).
- 5.10 The processes are subject to guidance and detailed regulations but so far there is nothing from Government on the detail. However, the Council must:

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- a) take reasonable steps to consult the electorate and other interested persons in the district before drawing up proposals for its governance model
  - b) in drawing up proposals, consider the extent to which they would be likely to assist in securing continuous improvements in the exercise of its functions, having regard to economy, efficiency and effectiveness
  - c) make the proposals open to public inspection, and place an appropriate notice in newspapers.
- 5.11 The Council must come to a formal resolution on its governance structure at a special meeting before the end of December 2010. In order to allow sufficient time for proper consultation and formulation of proposals, it is proposed that a special meeting of the Council is convened on 14 June 2010 to do this.

## 6. Other Implications

Asset Management	-	None identified
Community Safety		None identified.
Human Resources	-	Staff time will be involved in carrying out consultation with electors and other interested parties
Social Exclusion	-	None identified.
Sustainability	-	None identified.

## 7. Lessons Learnt

None.

## 8. Background Papers

Local Government Act 2000  
Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007  
White Paper - Strong and Prosperous Communities

## 9. Consultation

There has been no consultation other than with relevant Officers of the Council. However, consultation on the two models will have to be carried out with electors and other interested parties.

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**10. Author of Report**

The author of this report is Sue Mullins (Head of Legal, Democratic & Property Services and Monitoring Officer) who can be contacted on extension 3210 (sue.mullins@redditchbc.gov.uk) for more information.

**11. Appendices**

None.

## **Executive Committee**

All Ward Relevance

22 July 2009

### **OFF-STREET CAR PARKING POLICY**

(Joint Report of the Director of Housing, Leisure and Customer Services and Head of Legal, Democratic and Property Services)

#### **1. Summary of Proposals**

To propose the adoption of a policy for charging for off-street parking at the private car parks owned by the Council at Trescott Road and the Town Hall and associated parking charges and to seek delegated authority for the drafting, finalisation, publication and implementation of an Off Street Parking Order to enable charges to be made in these car parks.

#### **2. Recommendations**

**The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that**

- 1) the Council adopt a policy of charging for off-street parking on its car parks at the Town Hall and Trescott Road, as shown in Appendix 2) on the days, times and terms set out in the draft Order attached at Appendix 1;**
- 2) authority be delegated to the Director of Housing, Leisure and Customer Services and the Head of Legal Democratic and Property Services to take all necessary steps to publish, consult upon, make and implement an Off Street Parking Order in terms similar to the draft "Redditch Borough Council (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2009" ("the Order") attached at Appendix 1; and**

**subject to the necessary Order being made**

- 3) authority be delegated to the Director of Housing, Leisure and Customer Services to issue any passes or season tickets in accordance with the Order; and**
- 4) authority be delegated to the Director of Housing, Leisure and Customer Services to suspend the operation of the Order in relation to the Town Hall car park for such days and times as may be appropriate to enable use of the Town Hall car park by Civic Suite hirers; and**

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- 5) **the car parking charges as set out in the draft Order be added to the Council's Schedule of Fees and Charges**

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

Financial

- 3.1 If the Order is made, it will enable the Council to generate funds at the rates shown in the schedule of charges attached to the Order. It is proposed that public parking at the car parks may on occasions be suspended, either wholly or in part to enable the Council to continue to offer private parking to persons who hire the Council's Civic Suite facilities. The financial implications of this will have to be reviewed in due course as the income from Civic Suite hire on relevant days could be more or less than the income raised by parking charges.
- 3.2 There is likely to be an element of revenue generated from breach by the public of the parking regulations brought into force by the Order. Any such breaches will be enforced by the Penalty Charge Notice and other enforcement procedures by the Council's parking enforcement service.
- 3.3 At its meeting on 6 April 2009, full Council approved the introduction of charges to the two car parks for the purpose of income generation, as part of the Budget Strategy. In addition, the necessary Capital Expenditure for the installation of the necessary machinery, signage etc. was also approved.
- 3.4 The legal costs of the procedure will be met from existing resources.

Legal

- 3.5 Section 32 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 enables Local Authorities to provide off street parking places and the means of access to and egress from them for the purpose of relieving or preventing congestion of traffic.
- 3.6 An Order for the off road parking is only required if the Local Authority proposes to raise charges and regulate the use of the car park in question and access or egress is onto a road.
- 3.7 The procedure for making the Order is contained in the Local Authorities' Traffic Orders (Procedure) (England and Wales) Regulations 1996 ( "the Regulations"). The Regulations require that a consultation process is conducted with the County Council as the Highway Authority, the Commissioner for the Local Police, the Freight Transport and Road Haulage Association and such other organisations as the Council see fit. If an objection is received it may have to be resolved by the Secretary of State.



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- 3.8 The Regulations require publication of a “notice of proposals” in a local newspaper in a prescribed form. The notice must give an address for objections in writing. If an objection raises certain statutory criteria (i.e. adverse effect on public services) it may cause a public inquiry to be necessary.
- 3.9 Once an Order is made, that fact must be advertised. The Order can become final 6 weeks after the final advert if no procedural objections have been received.

### Policy

- 3.10 The Council currently has no parking policy in respect of its off-street parking.

### Risk

- 3.11 The Council currently allows access to the public on a free of charge basis to the car parks in question. The degree of risk in terms of the Council’s occupier’s liability does not increase merely because a charge is raised. There may be a greater risk of injury because of the presence of machinery (i.e. ticket machines) but there may also be a reduction in the numbers of persons using the car parks because there will be a charge for what was formerly a free facility.

### Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.12 There are no sustainability, environmental or climate change issues beyond those of the existing use of the space as car parks.

### Report

#### 4. Background

The existing Council-owned car parks at Trescott Road and the Town Hall are exclusively available for staff and members of the Council, and visitors to the Town Hall, during working hours. In the evenings and at weekends the barriers to both car parks have been left open which has enabled the public to utilise the car parks. It is now proposed to raise a charge to members of the public for parking in the car parks in the evenings and at weekends. The existing usage as staff/Member car parks during working hours is to continue.

#### 5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The practice of allowing the public to use the car parks in the evenings and at weekends has been on an ad hoc basis up to now. There has been no policy and no formal resolution or Order to permit

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the practice. An Order is required if the Council proposes to raise a charge for parking.

5.2 If the Council wishes to retain the right to reserve the whole or part of the car parks in the evenings and at week ends for the exclusive use of persons hiring Council function facilities, then there needs to be a process for such decisions to be made. Officers suggest that this decision-making power should be delegated to an Officer to enable appropriately rapid decision-making.

5.3 If the Council does not wish to reserve the whole or part of the car parks in the evenings and at week ends for the exclusive use of persons hiring Council function facilities, there may be an impact on the revenue which the Council receives from hiring of the Civic Suite.

## 6. Other Implications

Asset Management - Machinery, signage and markings will be installed on the Council's land. The revenue costs of operating, enforcing and administering the policy will be met within existing resources.

Community Safety - None beyond those arising from existing usage.

Human Resources - Staff engaged in the enforcement of on-street parking will carry out enforcement for the proposed off-street parking. For Members or staff working at the Town hall during the periods when it is proposed parking charges will apply, a temporary pass will need to be obtained in advance.

Social Exclusion - The proposed charges may not be affordable for some residents of or visitors to the town.

## 7. Lessons Learnt

None

## 8. Background Papers

Draft "Redditch Borough Council (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2009"

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Minute of Council Meeting on the 6 April 2009 referring to Budget Strategy, Income Generation and Capital Expenditure.

9. **Consultation**

There has been consultation with relevant Borough Council Officers. Before adopting the Order, the Council will need to carry out appropriate consultation.

10. **Author of Report**

The author of this report is Andy Teepe (Senior Solicitor) who can be contacted on extension 3264 (e-mail: [andy.teepe@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:andy.teepe@redditchbc.gov.uk)) for more information.

11. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Draft "Redditch Borough Council (Off Street Parking Places) Order 2009" including relevant schedules.

Appendix 2 - P2070/16 Trescott Road Car Park Pay and Display Details.  
P2070/17 Town Hall Car Park Pay and Display Details.

Appendix 3 Off Street Parking Policy (2009)



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Committee

**Appendix 1**

22 July 2009

**THE REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**  
**(OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES)**  
**ORDER 2009**

**BOROUGH COUNCIL OF REDDITCH**  
**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL (OFF-STREET PARKING PLACES)**  
**ORDER 2009**

The Council of the Borough of Redditch in the County of Worcestershire (“the Council”) in exercise of its powers under Sections 32, 35(1) and (3) and Section 35A(3) and Part IV of Schedule 9 of the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 (“the 1984 Act”) the Traffic Management Act 2004 (“the 2004 Act”) and all Regulations and Order made in exercise of the powers conferred by 2004 Act and of all other enabling powers, with the consent of the Worcestershire County Council in accordance with Section 39(3) of the 1984 Act and after consulting with the Chief Officer of Police in accordance with Part III of Schedule 9 to the 1984 Act, hereby make the following Order.

**PART I**  
**GENERAL**

1. **Commencement and Citation**

This Order shall come into operation on the \*\*\*\* day of \*\*\*\*\* 2009 and may be cited as the Redditch Borough Council (Off-Street Parking Places) Order 2009.

2. **Variation**

This Order is made without prejudice to the validity of anything done or to any liability incurred in respect of any act or omission before the coming into operation of this Order.

3. **Interpretation**

3.1 Any reference in this Order to a numbered Article or to a numbered Schedule is a reference to the Article or to the Schedule bearing that number in this Order, unless otherwise stated.

3.2 In this Order, except where the context otherwise requires, the following expressions have the meanings respectively assigned to them:

“Bank Holiday” means Easter Monday, the last Monday in May, the last Monday in August, 26 December, if it is not a Sunday, and 27 December, when 25 or 26 December is a Sunday;

“Charge Certificate” means the statement that the Penalty Charge has been increased by fifty percent in accordance with Regulation 21 of the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007;

“Charging Days” means those days other than Christmas Day and Easter Sunday which are specified in the Schedule for each Parking Place respectively;

“Charging Hours” means the period specified in column 5 of the Schedule, Part 2;

“Civil Enforcement Officer” means a person authorised by or on behalf of the Council to supervise the Parking Places and enforce the restrictions imposed by this Order pursuant to Section 63A of the 1984 Act;

“Council” means Redditch Borough Council of The Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch Worcestershire B98 8AH

“Council Offices” means such offices of the Council which accept payments of Penalty Charge Notices;

“Disabled Persons’ Badge” means a badge issued by any Local Authority in accordance with the provisions of the Local Authorities’ Traffic Orders (Exemptions for Disabled Persons (England) Regulations 2000 (as amended) or a badge having effect under those regulations as if it were a disabled person’s badge;

“Driver” in relation to a vehicle waiting in a Parking Place means the person driving the vehicle immediately prior to parking it in the Parking Place;

“Goods Vehicle” means a vehicle which is constructed or adapted for use for the carriage of goods or burden of any description, the overall height of which does not exceed 1.85 metres and the unladen weight of which does not exceed 2540 kilogrammes and is not drawing a trailer;

“Motor Cycle” refers to a solo Motor Cycle only and excludes any Motor Cycle which has a side-car or trailer, or which has more than two wheels;

“Owner” means the person in whose name the vehicle was at that time registered under the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994;

“Notice to Owner” means the notice served by the Council pursuant to Regulation 19 of the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007;

“Parking Bay” means an area of a Parking Place which is provided for the leaving of a vehicle of a class specified and indicated by markings on the surface of the Parking Place or signed or otherwise indicated by signs in the Parking Place;

“Parking Place” means an area of land specified by name in the Schedules and provided by the Council pursuant to Section 32(1) of the 1984 Act for the purpose of vehicle parking and not closed (in part or in whole) by a notice erected thereon by authority of the Council;



“Passenger Vehicle” means a vehicle constructed or adapted solely for the carriage of passengers and their effects;

“Pay and Display ticket” means a ticket issued by a ticket machine located in the Parking Place in which the vehicle has been left or issued by a person nominated by the Council on payment of a charge and valid for a parking period as detailed in column 3 of the Schedule, Part 2;

“Penalty Charge” means the charge set by the Council pursuant to the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (Guidelines on Levels of Charges) (England) Order 2007 which is to be paid to the Council following the issue of a Penalty Charge Notice and within 28 days of the issue of that Notice;

“Penalty Charge Notice” means a notice issued by or served by a Civil Enforcement Officer pursuant to the provisions of Section 78 of the 2004 Act and the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007;

“Public Holiday” means Christmas Day, Good Friday and any other day designated by the Government as a public holiday;

“Relevant Position” means:

- (a) In the case of a vehicle fitted with a front windscreen and/or front side windows, the badge, pass or ticket is affixed to the windscreen or Driver’s window with the obverse side facing forwards and so that the same is readable from the outside of the vehicle;
- (b) In the case of a vehicle not fitted with a front windscreen the badge, pass or ticket is exhibited in a conspicuous and readable position on the vehicle;

“Season Ticket” means a ticket purchased from or issued by the Council, subject to certain conditions, valid for the period specified on the ticket for use in the Parking Places indicated on the ticket;

“Staff/Member/Visitor Pass” means a ticket issued by the Council subject to certain conditions, valid for the period specified on the ticket for use in the Parking Places indicated on the ticket;

“Ticket Machine” means an apparatus of a type and design approved by the Secretary of State for Transport for the purpose of this order, being apparatus designed to indicate the time by a clock and to issue parking tickets which show that a payment has been made of an amount or for a period specified thereon and which specify the date and, either the time of such payment, or the time at which the vehicle must leaving the Parking Place;

“Vehicle” means Goods Vehicle, Motor Cycle or Passenger Vehicle.

4. Any reference in this Order to any enactment shall be construed as a reference to that enactment as amended, applied, consolidated, re-enacted by or as having effect by virtue of any subsequent enactment.
5. The Interpretation Act 1978 shall apply for the interpretation of this Order.

**PART II**  
**DESIGNATION AND USE OF PARKING PLACES**

6. **Designation**

Each Parking Place may be used, subject to the provisions of this Order, as a place to leave vehicles of such classes, in such positions, on such days, during such hours, for such period and on payment of such charges as are specified in relation thereto in the Schedule.

7. **Class and position of vehicle**

Where in the Schedule a Parking Place is described as available for vehicles of a specified class or vehicles to be left in a specified location, no person shall permit a vehicle to wait in that Parking Place or in any Parking Bay within the Parking Place.

7.1 unless it is of the specified class;

7.2 unless it is wholly within a marked Parking Bay; or

7.3 in a position other than that specified.

8. **Maximum period of stay**

Where in the Schedule a Parking Place is described as available on specified days, during specified hours or for a maximum period of stay, no person shall permit a vehicle to wait in that Parking Place on any day, during such hours or for any period other or longer than those specified.

9. **Period of no return**

Where in the Schedule, Part 1 a Parking Place is described as having a period within which a vehicle may not return, no person shall permit a vehicle to wait in that Parking Place on any day, during such hours within which the vehicle is excluded from waiting in the Parking Place.

10. **Season Ticket**

Nothing in Articles 6 and 7 shall preclude a vehicle displaying a valid Season Ticket in the Relevant Position from being parked without payment of the daily charge in the relevant Parking Places specified in the Schedule, Part 1 for up to a maximum period as specified in the Schedule, Part 1.

11. **Disabled Person's Parking Bays**

No person shall cause or permit a vehicle to park in a Parking Bay marked for Disabled Persons unless the vehicle displays a Disabled Person's Badge in the Relevant Position and immediately before or immediately after the act of parking the vehicle has been or is about to be used by the person(s) in respect of whom the Disabled Person's Badge has been issued.

12. **Motor Cycle Parking Bays**

No person shall cause or permit a vehicle to park in a Parking Bay marked for Motor Cycles unless the vehicle is a Motor Cycle.

13. **Power to close or suspend Parking Places**

Nothing in this Order shall prevent the Council by notice, sign or barrier displayed in the Parking Place:

13.1. 1 from closing the Parking Place or any part thereof for any period; and/or

13.1.2 from setting aside the Parking Place or any part or parts thereof on all days or on certain days or during certain parts of days for use only by particular vehicles or organisations.

13.2 Nothing in this Order shall prevent the Council from granting permission for short term use of the Parking Place free of charge or otherwise grant short term licences in accordance with the Council's Scheme of Delegations to Officers forming part of the Council's Constitution.

14. Any person suspending the use of a Parking Place or any part thereof in accordance with the provisions of Article 13 shall thereupon place or cause to be placed in or adjacent to that Parking Place or that part thereof a notice or traffic sign indicating that the use of that Parking Place or that part thereof is suspended and that waiting by vehicles is prohibited.
15. No person shall cause or permit a vehicle to be left in a Parking Place or any part thereof during such periods that the use of that Parking Place or that part thereof is suspended or during such period as there is in or adjacent thereto a notice or traffic sign placed by or on behalf of the Council in pursuance of the preceding Article.

**PART III**  
**CHARGES FOR PARKING**

16. **Payment**  
The Driver of a vehicle using a Parking Place shall upon leaving the vehicle in the Parking Place pay the appropriate charge (if any) in accordance with the scale of charges specified in the Schedule, Part 2.
17. **Pay on exit Parking Places**  
The drive of a vehicle using a pay on exit Parking Place shall, upon arriving at the Parking Place, take a ticket from the Ticket Machine to establish time of entry and shall on exit, pay the attendant on duty, or a person nominated by the Council at the entry point, a parking fee at the level of charge and for the period required in accordance with the scale of charges specified in the Schedule, Part 2.
18. **Pay and Display Parking Places**  
The Driver of a vehicle using a Pay and Display Parking Place shall upon leaving the vehicle in the Parking Place, and on payment of a charge, purchase a Pay and Display ticket at the level of charge and for

the period required in accordance with the scale of charges specified in the Schedule, Part 2.

19. **Means of payment**

The charge referred to in the preceding Article shall be payable by the insertion of an appropriate coin, coins or banknotes, or other approved method of payment together making up the amount of the charge into the Ticket Machine situated in that Parking Place or by payment to a person nominated by the Council.

20. **Display of ticket**

The Driver of the vehicle shall:

20.1 display the Pay and Display ticket issued on payment of the charge in the Relevant Position on the vehicle in respect of which it was issued; and

20.2 ensure that a Pay and Display ticket is purchased and displayed to cover the entire period that the vehicle is parked in the Parking Place.

21. **Validity of Pay and Display tickets**

A Pay and Display ticket is not transferable from one vehicle to another.

22. A Pay and Display ticket is valid only in the Parking Place in which it was issued. This is defined by the reference code of the parking ticket machine located in that Parking Place printed on the Pay and Display ticket.

23. **Expiry of parking period**

The expiry of the period for which the charge specified for that Parking Place in the Schedule, Part 2 has been paid shall be indicated when there is exhibited on the vehicle a Pay and Display ticket and the time shown on the clock of the issuing Ticket Machine is later than the time at which the period for which a charge has been paid expired.

24. **No ticket displayed**

If at any time while a vehicle is left in a Parking Place no Pay and Display ticket is displayed on that vehicle in the Relevant Position and in accordance with the provisions of Article 20, it shall be deemed that the charge has not been paid.

25. If at the time when a vehicle is left during the Charging Hours in a Parking Place on the nearest Ticket Machine in that Parking Place there is a notice placed by any person duly authorised by the Council, indicating that the Ticket Machine is out of order, then a Pay and Display ticket shall be obtained from another machine (where provided).

26. Where no valid Pay and Display ticket can be obtained and displayed vehicles may be left in a Parking Place but may not be left for longer than the maximum period waiting in that Parking Place as specified in the Schedule, Part 1.

27. **Season Tickets/Passes**

Season Tickets are available at the appropriate fee, for a vehicle of a specific class and for the Parking Places as specified in the Schedule subject to conditions determined from time to time by the Council as follows:

27.1 **Full Season Ticket**

The Owner of a vehicle may on application to the Council on payment of the appropriate fee specified in the Schedule, Part 3 purchase a Full Season Ticket for a period not exceeding twelve months for use by that vehicle at those Parking Places as specified in the Schedule, Part 3.

27.2 **Restricted Season Ticket**

The Owner of a vehicle may on application to the Council on payment of the appropriate fee specified in the Schedule, Part 3



purchase a Restricted Season Ticket for a period not exceeding twelve months for use by that vehicle at those Parking Places as specified in the Schedule, Part 3.

27.3 **Resident Season Ticket**

The owner of a vehicle who meets the Council's criteria from time to time as being a resident living within the vicinity of the Parking Place concerned may on application to the Council on payment of the appropriate fee specified in the Schedule, Part 3 purchase a Resident Season Ticket for that Parking Place.

27.4 **Senior Citizen Season Ticket**

27.4.1 The Owner of a vehicle may on application to the Council and on payment of the appropriate fee specified in the Schedule, Part 3 purchase a Senior Citizen Season Ticket for use by that vehicle at those Parking Places designated in the Schedule, Part 3.

27.4.2 A Senior Citizen Season Ticket may only be purchased by persons who have attained the age of either:

27.4.2.1 60 years of age if the person is not in substantive employment (paid employment of 16 hours or more per week); or

27.4.2.2 63 years of age if the person is in substantive employment, but not in full time employment; and

In both cases who are not in possession of a Senior Citizen Bus Pass or such other concessionary travel scheme as may be operated from time to time by the Council;

27.4.3 No person shall be entitled to have more than one Senior Citizen Season Ticket at any time.

27.5 A Senior Citizen Season Ticket shall only be valid when:

27.5.1 Parking in a Parking Place or part of a Parking Place listed in the Schedule, Part 3 or otherwise allocated by the Council for use in connection with a Senior Citizen Season Ticket;

27.5.2 It is exhibited on the vehicle to which it relates in the Relevant Position;

27.5.3 It has not been used for parking on any other occasion on the same day in any of the Parking Places specified in this Order;

27.5.4 Used for a single continuous period not exceeding four hours with no return within two hours of departure.

27.5.5 Such vehicle is being used by or for the carriage of the purchaser of the Senior Citizen Season Ticket; and

27.5.6 Payment for the Season Ticket has been made in full.

28. The Driver shall abide by the terms stipulated by the Council for the use of the Season Ticket.

29. A Season Ticket is only valid in the Parking Place in respect of which it was issued and up to the date of expiry shown on the Season Ticket.

30. A Season Ticket remains the property of the Council and must be surrendered on request. In such instances where a refund fee is appropriate this will be provided in accordance with the Council's policies.

31. **Staff/Member Visitor Pass**

31.1 The Council may issue a Staff/Member/Visitor Pass, as it considers reasonably appropriate and may limit availability to

any specified category of person and shall be subject to such terms and conditions, as it deems fit in respect of the Parking Places.

31.2 A Staff/Member/Visitor Pass shall only be valid when it is being used in full accordance with the terms, conditions and limitations applying to it at the time of issue.

31.3 Any Staff/Member/Visitor Pass issued may be revoked if it is being used in a manner contrary to the provisions of this Order or to its terms and conditions of issue.

32. **Display of Season Ticket Passes**

The Driver of the vehicle shall display the Season Ticket or Pass in the Relevant Position on the vehicle in respect of which it was issued at all times during which the vehicle is left in the Parking Place during the hours of operation.

33. **Replacement Season Tickets**

Damaged or lost Season Tickets or resident permits will be replaced on application to the Council and on payment of an administration fee of £10.00. The damaged or lost Season Ticket will then become immediately invalid.

34. **Surrender of Season Ticket**

A holder of an annual Season Ticket on surrendering the Season Ticket shall be entitled to a refund based upon the number of complete months remaining unexpired from the beginning of the calendar month following the date on which the Council receives the surrendered Season Ticket. The refund will be one twelfth of the annual rate for each unexpired calendar month less a £10.00 administration fee.

35. **Restriction on removal**

When a Pay and Display ticket or Season Ticket/Pass or permit has been exhibited on a vehicle in the Relevant Position no person shall

remove the Pay and Display ticket or Season Ticket/Pass or permit from the vehicle until the vehicle is removed from the Parking Place.

**PART IV**  
**EXEMPTIONS FROM DAILY CHARGES**

36. No charge shall be payable in respect of:
- 36.1 A vehicle which displays in the Relevant Position a valid Disabled Person's Badge provided that the vehicle immediately before or after the act of parking has been used or is about to be used by the person(s) in respect of whom the badge is issued and the vehicle is parked in accordance with the conditions of use of the Parking Place.
  - 36.2 A Motor Cycle which is left in a Parking Bay specified for such vehicles (if any);
  - 36.3 A vehicle left displaying in a Relevant Position a Season Ticket valid for the Parking Place;
  - 36.4 A vehicle left displaying in a Relevant Position a Pass or permit issued by the Council valid for that time and for that Parking Place.
37. **Absence of ticket machine**
- Subject to Article 26 if at the time when a vehicle is left in a Parking Place shown during the Charging Hours there is no Ticket Machine at the Parking Place, or all the Ticket Machines at that Parking Place carry notices placed upon them by a person duly authorised by the Council indicating that they are out of order, the Driver of that vehicle shall be exempt from purchasing a ticket from a Ticket Machine.

**PART V**  
**RELOCATION AND REMOVAL OF VEHICLES**

38. **Relocation of a Vehicle**

Where any vehicle is standing in a Parking Place in contravention of the provisions of this Order, or is left in such a manner so as to cause danger or obstruction a Civil Enforcement Officer or a person authorised by the Council may alter or cause to be altered the position of the vehicle.

39. **Removal of a vehicle**

Where a Civil Enforcement Officer or a person authorised by the Council is of the opinion that any of the provisions contained in this Order have been contravened or not complied with in respect of a vehicle left in a Parking Place he/she may, using such measures as are appropriate, remove or cause to be removed the vehicle from the Parking Place.

40. **Emergencies**

A Civil Enforcement Officer, a person authorised by the Council or a Police Constable in uniform may, using such measures as are appropriate, move or cause to be moved in the case of an emergency to any place he/she thinks fit, any vehicle left in a Parking Place.

41. **Safe keeping**

Any person removing a vehicle from a Parking Place under the preceding Articles shall make such arrangements as may be reasonably necessary to provide for the safe keeping of the vehicle.

**PART VI  
OTHER PROVISIONS**

42. **Stop engine and apply brakes**

The Driver of a vehicle using a Parking Place shall stop the engine as soon as the vehicle is in the Parking Bay and shall not start the engine except when about to change the position of the vehicle in or to depart from the Parking Place.

43. **Manner of parking of trailers**

The Driver of a vehicle drawing a trailer shall not permit the vehicle or the trailer to wait in a Parking Place unless they have been disconnected, and for the purposes of this Order the vehicle and the trailer shall be deemed to be separate vehicles and the Driver of the leading vehicle shall be deemed to be the Driver of both of the vehicles.

44. **Repair of vehicles in Parking Places**

No person shall, while a vehicle is in a Parking Place, permit the carrying out of any work of maintenance or repair thereto except such as may be necessary to enable the vehicle to be moved from the Parking Place.

45. **Vehicle Tax and Insurance**

No person shall permit any vehicle to wait in a Parking Place:

45.1 unless the vehicle displays a current licence issued in accordance with the provisions of the Vehicle Excise and Registration Act 1994; and

45.2 unless there is in relation to the use of the vehicle by the Driver such a policy of insurance as complies with requirements of the Road Traffic Act 1988.

46. **Entry and Exit**

Where signs are erected or surface markings are laid for the purpose of indicating the entrances to or exits from the Parking Place; or indicating that a vehicle proceed in a specified direction, no person should drive or cause to be driven any vehicle:

46.1 so that it enters the Parking Place otherwise than by an entrance, or leaves the Parking Place otherwise than by an exit;

46.2 in a direction other than that specified, as the case may be;

46.3 in a manner or at a speed so as to cause danger to other users of the Parking Place.

47. **Use of vehicles and Parking Places**

**Use of Parking Place with prior written permission**

47.1 Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions of this Order, the provisions of this Article shall apply to the Parking Places even where the Parking Place is occupied by a vehicle of a type that is permitted to wait in that Parking Place.

47.2 No person shall without the prior written permission of a duly authorised Officer of the Council use any part of a Parking Place or any vehicle or vehicles (whether belonging to that person or not) left in a Parking Place:

47.2.1 for sleeping or camping purposes:

47.2.2 for the purpose of carrying out himself or permitting to be carried out any servicing, repairing or washing of any vehicle or part thereof other than is reasonably necessary to enable that vehicle to depart from the Parking Place.

47.2.3 for preparing or cooking food or washing crockery, cutlery, clothing or any other articles or things whatsoever;

47.2.4 in connection with the sale, or advertising for sale of a vehicle or of any other article or in connection with the selling or offering for hire of his skills or services;

47.2.5 for the purpose of advertising or promoting any cause, event or other matter whatsoever or for the distribution of leaflets or other material; or

47.2.6 for the erection of any tent, booth, stand, building or other structure.

48. **Damage to or Defilement of a Parking Place**

48.1 Without prejudice to the generality of the foregoing provisions of this Order, the provisions of this Article shall apply to the Parking

Places even where the Parking Place is occupied by a vehicle of a type that is permitted to wait in that Parking Place.

48.2 In a Parking Place no person shall:

48.2.1 light or cause or permit to be lit any fire;

48.2.2 soil or defile, remove, displace or damage any wall or fence in or enclosing the Parking Place or any building, barrier, post, notice, sign, railing, ticket machine, or any other erection therein;

48.2.3 damage or destroy or cause to be damaged or destroyed any part of the fabric or structure of the Parking Place; or

48.2.4 throw down, drop or otherwise deposit in any Parking Place any item or article of rubbish or waste material so as to contribute to or tend to lead to the defilement of that Parking Place by litter.

49. **Prohibited Use of Parking Place/Anti-Social Behaviour**

49.1 No person shall do anything to interfere with the use and enjoyment of any Parking Place by other users of the Parking Place and in particular no person shall obstruct or misuse any of the ramps, stairs, doors or lifts in a multi-storey Parking Place.

49.2 No person shall in a Parking Place wantonly shout or otherwise make any loud noise to the disturbance or annoyance of users of the Parking Place or residents of premises in the neighbourhood.

49.3 No person shall in a Parking Place use any threatening, abusive or insulting language, gesture or conduct so as to put any person in fear of their safety or wellbeing or so as to occasion or is likely to occasion a breach of the peace.

49.4 No person in a Parking Place shall sound any horn or other similar instrument or use or permit the same to be used on a vehicle at any time except to make another Driver or person aware of their presence where an accident is imminent.



- 49.5 No person shall, except with the permission of any person duly authorised by the Council, drive any vehicle in a Parking Place other than for the purpose of leaving that vehicle in a Parking Bay in accordance with the provisions of this Order or for the purpose of departing from the Parking Place.
- 49.6 No person shall in a Parking Place commit any parking contravention attracting a higher level Penalty Charge as set out in the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (Guidelines on levels of Charges) (England) Order 2007 or any parking contravention attracting a lower level Penalty Charge as from time to time specified by the Department for Transport on their website.

## **PART VII LIABILITIES/PENALTIES**

50. **Liability**

The Council accepts no liability for the loss or damage to vehicles or other property left in any of the Council's Parking Places to which this Order applies.

51. **Wilful damage**

Any person who with intent to defraud interferes with the Ticket Machine or operates or attempts to operate it by the insertion of objects other than undamaged and unaltered coins of legal tender and of the appropriate denomination, or other approved method of payment, shall be liable to prosecution.

## **PART VIII CONTRAVENTION AND PENALTY CHARGE**

52. **Contravention**

If a vehicle is left in a Parking Place referred to in the Schedule without complying with the requirements of this Order, a contravention shall

have occurred and a Penalty Charge shall be payable. A Penalty Charge Notice showing the information required by the 2004 Act may then be issued by a Civil Enforcement Officer in accordance with the requirements of the 2004 Act.

53. **Notice of Penalty Charge**

53.1 In the case of a vehicle in respect of which the Penalty Charge may have been incurred, it shall be the duty of a Civil Enforcement Officer to attach to the vehicle in a conspicuous position or hand to the driver a Penalty Charge Notice which shall include such particulars as are required by the 2004 Act and the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007.

53.2 In the case in respect of which the Penalty Charge may have been incurred, a Penalty Charge Notice may be issued by post by the Council if the Driver of the vehicle drives away before the Civil Enforcement Officer has issued a Penalty Charge Notice or the Civil Enforcement Officer has been prevented from issuing a Penalty Charge Notice. Such a Penalty Charge Notice shall include such particulars as are required by the 2004 Act and the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contraventions (England) General Regulations 2007.

54. **Restrictions on removal of notices**

A Penalty Charge Notice fixed to a vehicle in accordance with the preceding Article shall not be removed or interfered with except by or under the authority of:

54.1 The Owner, or person in charge of, of the vehicle;

54.2 The Council for the place in which the vehicle in question was found.

55. **Payment of Penalty Charge**

The Owner of a vehicle in respect of which the Penalty Charge has been incurred shall pay the Penalty Charge to the Council by cheque or postal order which shall be delivered or sent by post so as to reach the Council not later than the last day of the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which the Penalty Charge Notice was served or in cash in person at the Council Offices not later than as aforesaid or by credit card or debit card or electronically through the Council's web site.

56. If the Penalty Charge is paid not later than the last day of the period of 14 days beginning with the date on which the Penalty Charge Notice was served, the amount of the Penalty Charge will be reduced by fifty percent in accordance with the Civil Enforcement of Parking Contravention (Guidelines on Levels of Charges (England) Order 2007.

57. If the Owner fails to pay the Penalty Charge by the last day of the period of 28 days beginning with the date on which the Penalty Charge Notice was served, a Notice to Owner may be served; and if the charge is then not paid within a further 28 days it may be increased by 50% upon the issue of a Charge Certificate.

58. Payment shall be received not later than 1600 on the 28<sup>th</sup> day following the day on which such Penalty Charge was incurred or the 14<sup>th</sup> day following the day on which the Penalty Charge was incurred if the reduced charge is paid. **PROVIDED THAT** if the said 28<sup>th</sup> or 14<sup>th</sup> day falls upon a day on which the Council's Offices or other nominated place are closed, the period within which payment of the said Penalty Charge shall be made to the Council shall be extended until 1600 on the next full day on which the Council's Offices or other nominated place are open.

59. **Indications as Evidence**

The particulars given in the Penalty Charge Notice attached to a vehicle in accordance with this Article shall be treated as evidence in any proceedings relating to failure to pay such Penalty Charge.

**PART IX**  
**DISPOSAL OF VEHICLES**

60. **Disposal of vehicles abandoned in Parking Places**

The Council may sell or otherwise dispose of a vehicle which has been, or could at any time be, removed from a Parking Place pursuant to Articles 38 or 39, if the vehicle appears to have been abandoned, provided that this power of disposal shall not be exercisable unless the Council has taken such of the following steps as are applicable to the vehicle in question, and there has elapsed a period of six weeks beginning with the taking of the first of those steps.

61. Where the vehicle carries a registration mark the Council shall ascertain from the appropriate body the name and address of the person who is the owner of the vehicle unless the Council is satisfied that the true Owner of the vehicle has identified himself to it.

62. The Council shall, where it is by virtue of Articles 60, 61 and 62, aware of the name and address of a person who it appears may be the Owner of the vehicle, send a notice to that person at that address stating that it is the intention of the Council to sell or otherwise dispose of the vehicle ("the Notice") on or after a specified date (which shall not be less than two weeks from the date of the Notice and in any event not earlier than six weeks from the date of the first step taken by the Council under this Part of this Order) unless it is in the meantime removed by or on behalf of that person from such place as is specified by the Council in the said Notice or from such place as may be subsequently notified in writing by the Council to that person.

63. If any person to whom a Notice is sent in accordance with Article 62 informs the Council of the name and address of some other person who he/she alleges may be the Owner of the vehicle, a Notice stating the particulars mentioned in the last preceding Article shall be sent to

that other person and to any further person who the Council may in consequence of the sending of the Notice to the said other person be led to believe may be the Owner of the vehicle.

- 64., Where a vehicle does not carry a registration mark the first step to be taken by the Council shall be to apply in writing to the Chief Officer of Police in whose area the Parking Place is situated enquiring whom that Officer considers is the Owner of the vehicle and the address of that person.
65. The Council shall then make such further enquiries as to ownership as it thinks fit.
66. Upon the sale of a vehicle by the Council, the Council shall apply the proceeds of sale in or towards the satisfaction of any costs incurred by it in connection with the disposal thereof and of any charge or payment to which it is entitled.
67. In the event that any such costs incurred by the Council in connection with the disposal of the vehicle are not satisfied by virtue of the last preceding Article, the Council may recoup those costs from the person who was the owner of the vehicle immediately before it was removed from the Parking Place, provided that that the person was sent by the Council a Notice under Article 62.
68. Any sums received by the Council on a sale of a vehicle shall, after deducting any sum applied thereabouts by virtue of Article 63, be payable within a period of one year from receipt hereof to any person to whom, but for such sale, the vehicle would have belonged and insofar as any such sums are not claimed within the said period they shall be paid into the General Fund of the Council.

69. Where under the foregoing provisions of this Order a Notice is required to be or may be sent to a person the Notice shall be sent by recorded delivery post.

THE COMMON SEAL of )  
**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL** )  
was affixed on )  
in the presence of )

Chairman.....

Authorised Signatory.....





**THE REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL (OFF STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2009**

**THE SCHEDULE, PART 1 - PARKING PLACES, POSITIONS AND CLASSES OF VEHICLES, DAYS AND HOURS OF OPERATION OF PARKING PLACES, PERIOD OF PARKING AND SCALE OF CHARGES**

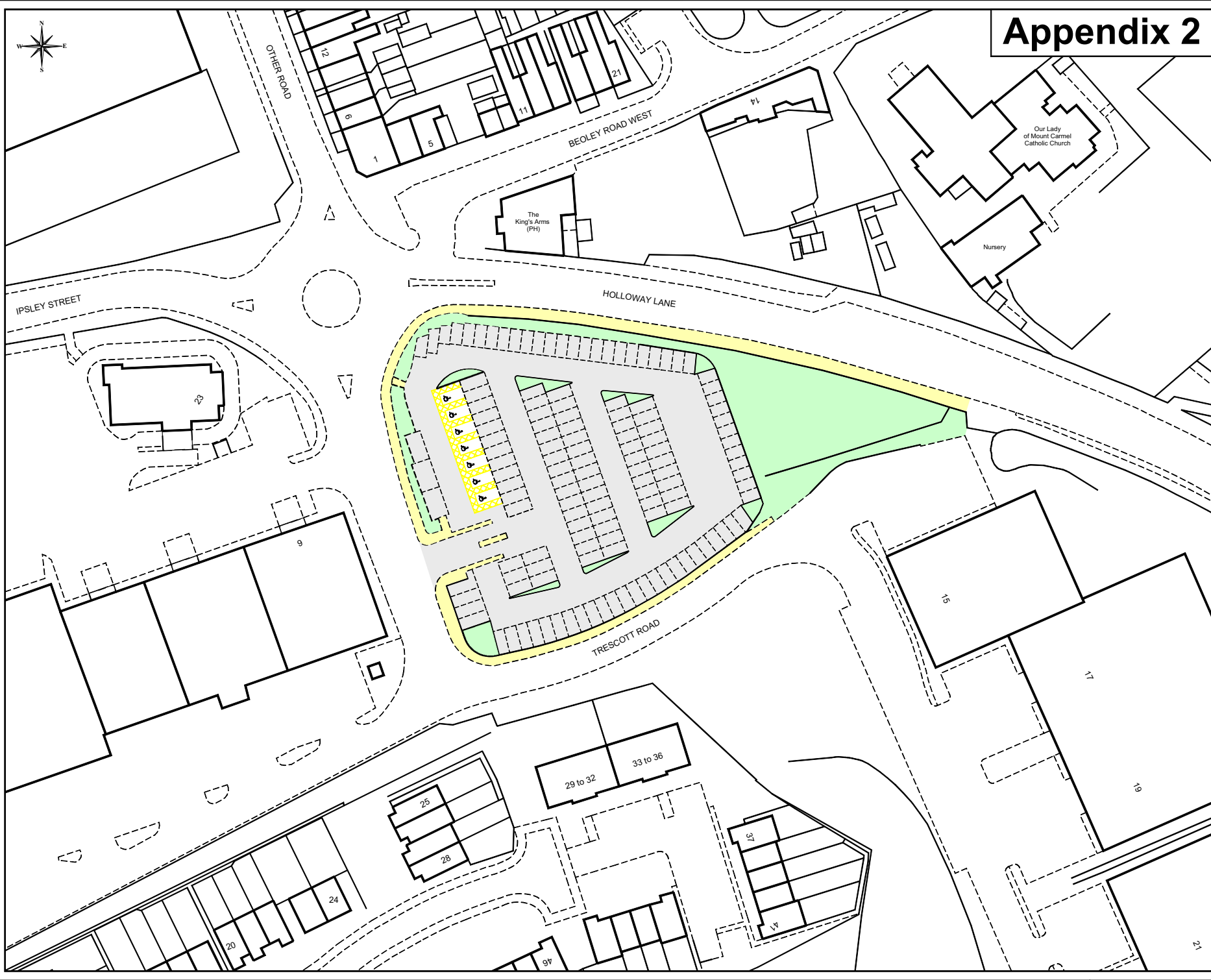
COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5	COLUMN 6	COLUMN 7
<u>Name of Parking Place in Borough of Redditch</u>	<u>Position in which Vehicles may park</u>	<u>Classes of Vehicles</u>	<u>Days of Operation of Parking Places</u>	<u>Hours of Operation of Parking Places</u>	<u>Maximum Period for which Vehicles may park</u>	<u>Scale of Charges</u>
<b>Town Hall Surface Vehicle Park</b>	wholly within a Parking Bay	Passenger Vehicles and Motor Cycles with sidecar attached, none of which shall exceed any of the following (including fixtures, fittings, attachments, trailers and loads): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5.0 metres in length</li> <li>• 2.0 metres in width</li> <li>• 2.0 metres in height</li> <li>• 3.5 tonnes laden weight</li> </ul>	Saturdays and Sundays	08:00 to 18:00	a period not exceeding 3 hours with a cut off time of 18:00 hours on the same day	as specified in The Schedule, Part 2
<b>Trescott Road Surface Vehicle Park</b>	wholly within a Parking Bay	Passenger Vehicles and Motor Cycles with sidecar attached, none of which shall exceed any of the following (including fixtures, fittings, attachments, trailers and loads): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• 5.0 metres in length</li> <li>• 2.0 metres in width</li> <li>• 2.0 metres in height</li> <li>• 3.5 tonnes laden weight</li> </ul>	Saturdays and Sundays	08:00 to 18:00	a period not exceeding 10 hours with a cut off time of 18:00 hours on the same day	as specified in The Schedule, Part 2

**THE REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL (OFF STREET PARKING PLACES) ORDER 2009**

**THE SCHEDULE, PART 2 - VEHICLE PARK TYPE AND VEHICLE PARKS, FEES, PERMITTED HOURS  
DAYS OF OPERATION OF CHARGES AND HOURS OF OPERATION**

COLUMN 1	COLUMN 2	COLUMN 3	COLUMN 4	COLUMN 5
<u>Vehicle Park Type and Vehicle Park</u>	<u>Car Park Fee (£/p) (including VAT as appropriate)</u>	<u>Permitted Hours of Stay</u>	<u>Days of Operation of Charges</u>	<u>Hours of Operation</u>
Town Hall Surface Vehicle Park	80p	Up to 1 hour	Saturdays and Sundays	Between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00
	£1.60	Up to 2 hours		
	£2.40	Up to 3 hours		
Trescott Road Surface Vehicle Park	50p	Up to 1 hour	Saturdays and Sundays	Between the hours of 08:00 and 18:00
	£1.00	Up to 2 hours		
	£1.50	Up to 3 hours		
	£3.00	Over 3 hours		

# Appendix 2



Notes:

Date	Rev	Details

Project:  
**Civil Parking Enforcement**

Drawing:  
**Trescott Road Car Park  
Pay & Display Details**

Drawn:	PTL	Scale:	1/500
Surveyed:	GS	Date:	Apr 2009

Drawing No: **P2070/16**

**Asset Maintenance**  
Town Hall  
Walter Strantz Square  
Redditch  
Worcs B98 8AH

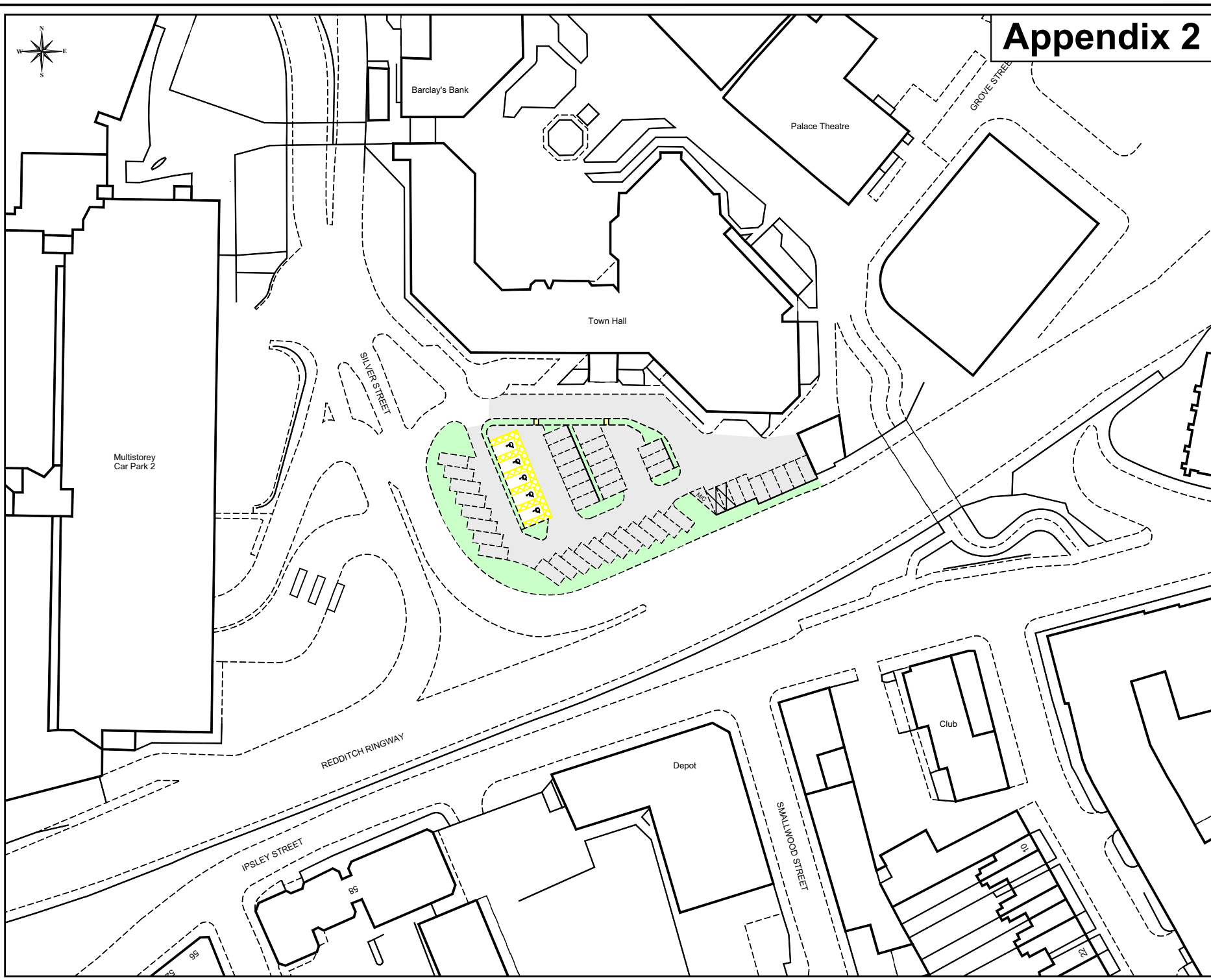


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# Appendix 2

Notes:



Date	Rev	Details

Project:  
**Civil Parking Enforcement**

Drawing:  
**Town Hall Car Park  
Pay & Display Details**

Drawn:	PTL	Scale:	1/500
Surveyed:	GS	Date:	Apr 2009

Drawing No: **P2070/17**

**Asset Maintenance**  
Town Hall  
Walter Strantz Square  
Redditch  
Worcs B98 8AH



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**Redditch Borough Council**

**OFF - STREET PARKING POLICY**

**June 2009**

## **SCOPE OF THE POLICY**

The Policy is described in detail under the following headings:

### **1. PROVISION AND MANAGEMENT OF CAR PARKS**

- 1.1 Strategy
- 1.2 Aims
- 1.3 Service delivery
- 1.4 Provision and location

### **2. OPERATION OF CAR PARKS**

- 2.1 How the Services are provided
- 2.2 Equality and access
- 2.3 Charging
- 2.4 Special parking arrangements
- 2.5 Blue Badge holder parking
- 2.6 Customer care
- 2.7 Opening hours, accessibility and enforcement
- 2.8 Cash collection
- 2.9 Security/CCTV

### **3. MAINTENANCE OF CAR PARKS**



- 3.1 Structural and surfacing
- 3.2 Environment
- 3.3 Lighting and other equipment
- 3.4 Vandalism

## **1. PROVISION AND MANAGEMENT OF CAR PARKS**

### **1.1.1 Strategy**

Until June 2009, all surface car parks within the ownership of the Borough Council have been free to all users. This situation is mainly due to the fact that the Council have never operated a Parking Management and Enforcement Service. With the introduction of Civil Parking Enforcement in March of this year, this has changed. An Order under the Road Traffic Regulation Act 1984 will be made by this Council, to enable the Council to operate and regulate Pay and Display car parks.

### **1.2 Aims**

The Council's aim in adopting this Policy is to ensure that the car parks are used correctly by residents and visitors to the Borough, whilst at the same time ensuring that such facilities maximise potential revenue income for the Council.

### **1.3 Service delivery**

As of 31 March 2009, Redditch Borough Council became responsible for Civil Parking Enforcement within the Borough, acting as Agent for Worcestershire County Council. Wychavon District Council operates the service on behalf of Redditch, under a Service Level Agreement.

### **1.4 Provision and location**

Car parks are sited at various locations within the Borough. They are provided primarily for motorists who are resident in, or visitors to, the Borough, for personal, business and recreational purposes. They are not intended for use by medium or large commercial vehicles. It is anticipated that the sites will be brought into a Pay and Display mode in various stages, according to Council requirements.

The first stage (anticipated to be operational in Autumn 2009) includes two car parks. These are the Town Hall and Trescott Road car parks, both of which are Council staff car parks, and they will therefore only be operational at weekends.

## **2. OPERATION OF CAR PARKS**

### **2.1.1 How the Services are provided**

The Council's off-street car parks are managed primarily by Wychavon District Council, in conjunction with the Redditch Borough Council's Designated Officer. Civil Enforcement Officers undertake regular enforcement patrols, and will assist motorists where appropriate.

### **2.2 Equality and access**

The Council aims to provide car parks which are accessible to all. The requisite number of defined disabled parking spaces will be provided within each car park. These will assist users with mobility impairments.

### **2.3.1 Charging**

Fees will be levied in the car parks at a level set by the Council each year. The pricing structure will be set with the aim of both encouraging users and maximising potential revenue income, whilst taking into consideration fee levels set by other car park providers. The fees will be collected by means of Pay and Display operating systems.

### **2.3.2 Special parking arrangements (Town Hall car park)**

The Town Hall car park may be closed at the discretion of the appropriate Officers, to allow certain events/functions to be held within the Town Hall Civic Suite.

If Council Officers are required to work weekends, a pass will be issued for the Town Hall car park, for that day only. Such passes shall be issued to Officers on the preceding Friday only. Council Officers will be required to display the relevant pass to be permitted to park, free of charge.

### **2.5 Blue Badge holder parking**

Suitably designated disabled spaces will be provided in the Council's car parks, convenient to suitable access points, for the use of motorists with mobility impairment, and who are Blue Badge holders. The use of the spaces will be monitored by the Civil Enforcement Officers. The provision of these bays will be reviewed annually, and increased, depending on demand and usage in each car park, in accordance with the national guideline level of space provision.

Vehicles displaying the approved Blue Badge, will be permitted to park in all the pay and display car parks, free of charge.

## **2.6 Customer Care**

The care of customers will primarily be the responsibility of the Civil Enforcement Officers. They will provide assistance to the public, as applicable, in terms of access/egress/movement and circulation within the car parks, and ensure that all regulations are complied with. To ensure the efficiency of the Service, the Council's Designated Officer will, in conjunction with Wychavon District Council, determine the frequency of visits to each car park by the Civil Enforcement Officers.

The Council will endeavour to apprise motorists of car park location, by providing such information through the Council's web site and other information aides.

## **2.7 Opening hours, accessibility and enforcement**

The Council's car parks will be open at all times (except Town Hall and Trescott Road car parks, which will be open only at weekends). A Penalty Charge Notice will be issued for contravention of any of the following codes and conditions:

- 81 Parked in a restricted area in a car park;
- 82 Parked after the expiry of time paid for in a pay and display car park;
- 83 Parked in a pay and display car park without clearly displaying a valid pay and display ticket;
- 86 Parked beyond the bay markings;
- 87 Parked in a disabled persons' parking space without clearly displaying a valid disabled persons' badge;
- 91 Parked in an area not designated for that class of vehicle;
- 92 Parked causing an obstruction;

93 Parked in car park when closed.

## 2.8 Cash collection

Cash from pay and display machines will be collected by Redditch Borough Council's existing cash security company. This will only apply to Trescott Road car park in the first instance, as cash from the Town Hall car park, will be collected in accordance with arrangements made with the Council's Head of Financial, Revenues and Benefits Service.

## 2.9 Security/CCTV

The Council will aim to provide secure car parks. This will include adequate lighting and CCTV, where Capital funds permit. The Town Hall car park already benefits from CCTV.

## 3. **MAINTENANCE OF CAR PARKS**

### 3.1.1 Structural and surfacing

The car parks will be maintained to a safe and satisfactory standard by the Borough Council. The surface and structure will be inspected on a regular basis. Any necessary remedial works will be undertaken in order to prolong the life of the car parks, in the interests of economy and safety. To meet the requirements of both Health and Safety and insurance obligations, any faults that are considered to be a danger to users will be rectified without any undue delay.

### 3.1.2 Environment

The car parks will be kept in a clean and tidy condition. Shrub beds will be maintained and litter picked up regularly.

### 3.1.3 Lighting and other equipment

The lights will be inspected regularly and maintained in a good and safe working order.

### **3.1.4 Vandalism**

Incidences of criminal damage or vandalism identified by Civil Enforcement Officers or by CCTV (where available), will be reported to West Mercia Police. Should multiple or repeated incidents occur in car parks, these will be considered with the Community Safety Team, to identify any trends, and the best approach to resolving such issues.



## Executive Committee

No Direct Ward Relevance

22 July 2009

### ADOPTION OF THE REVISED CORPORATE IDENTITY

(Report of the Head of Human Resources and Communications)

#### 1. Summary of Proposals

Redditch Borough Council's Corporate Identity is about who we are and how we present ourselves through our written, visual and verbal communication.

This proposal is to seek formal adoption of the Corporate Identity, which has now been revised and updated.

#### 2. Recommendations

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

**the Council's revised Corporate Identity, as detailed in the guidelines (attached at Appendix 1) and the summary of the guidelines (attached at Appendix 2), be formally adopted and implemented across the Council.**

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

##### Financial

- 3.1 There will be a small cost involved in printing a limited number of full-colour copies of the guidelines. This is funded. Where possible, copies of the guidelines and summary will be distributed by email and made available on the Intranet. Some existing software templates to produce letterheads/documents for specific service areas including for planning, elections and others, need updating with the correct logo. Also, a number of uniforms worn by staff will need replacing with the correct logo, in due course.

##### Legal

- 3.2 The only legal consideration concerns the laws of copyright. The Redditch Borough Council logo and our co-branding logos are not subject to copyright. This has been investigated previously but was considered prohibitively expensive to achieve. We also have to take into account the risk or likelihood of `passing off` which is minimal, especially when compared to commercial organisations.

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22 July 2009

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## Policy

- 3.3 The Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA) has stated that Corporate Identity is one of the six key elements in a Council's communications 'armoury'; alongside effective media relations, internal communications, an A to Z of services, a civic newspaper and a website.

## Risk

- 3.4 The risk of not adopting the revised Corporate Identity is that the Redditch Borough Council brand is weakened, and the Council fails to gain credit for the range of services it operates and manages. This in turn could lead to a reduction in customer satisfaction.

## Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.5 To reduce the amount of printing and paperwork, the revised Corporate Identity will be disseminated electronically where possible, as mentioned.

## Report

### **4. Background**

- 4.1 The Redditch Borough Council Corporate Identity was last refreshed in 2006 when the strapline 'Making a Difference' was added to the existing Council logo. It was applied across the corporate identity.
- 4.2 But in reviewing the identity over the past few months, it has become clear that a number of revisions and a general tightening up in the use of the identity is necessary to:
- a) introduce new applications of the logo, including a version of the logo that could be used when the Council sponsors or supports an external activity/project, and a new template for PowerPoint presentations;
  - b) provide a consistent style and approach for the signing off of emails (known as email footers). Footers include contact details and should also include the Council's vision statement as 'shorthand' for what the Council stands for. Footers are important as a huge amount of Council communication is now sent via email;
  - c) re-visit the use of co-branding and how this sits with the Council brand. A number of Council venues and services have their own brand (co-branding) which is not uncommon across local authorities, but does need to be carefully



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22 July 2009

managed to ensure users understand the Council owns/manages that venue or service. Some co-branding is no longer required and other co-branding has been re-designed or is about to be re-designed;

- d) introduce style and Plain English guides to work in conjunction with the revised Corporate Identity. Committee Services has been using its own style guide and we would like to merge this with a wider style guide to be used by all. A Plain English guide will ensure we communicate clearly and appropriately. Writing for the Web guidelines are also being introduced and will accompany the new Council web design to be unveiled in September.

## 5. Key Issues

- 5.1 In revising the Corporate Identity, we have also been looking at the existing Council letterhead, compliments slip and business cards. Currently, we use stationery with the old Council logo and these needs to be phased out. Therefore a new compliments slip and business card have been designed using the correct logo, and are now available from the Print Team. Some staff uniforms will need replacing as they wear out, as mentioned.
- 5.2 Meanwhile, from April 2010 we will be able to use a new letterhead template being created by Worcestershire County Council known as a PIG. This can be adapted to the RBC style. The principal benefit of the PIG is that it is loaded onto computers and contact details can be tailored to individual services. It means that money can be saved by ordering large quantities of a pre printed generic letterhead that can simply be overlaid with individual contact details, as opposed to the current requirement of around 25 printed letterheads.
- 5.3 Members are already supplied with Council stationery to use in their own communications work when dealing with Council business. In the interests of good practice, Members are encouraged to follow the revised Corporate Identity, subject to the capabilities of their personal IT equipment and individual needs.
- 5.4 In time, the Council's logo and branding should be reviewed. Members will appreciate that the introduction of a new logo is costly, especially in terms of application across a wide range of materials, and does require considerable effort and consultation to get right and be applied correctly and consistently.

## 6. Other Implications

Asset Management - None.

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Community Safety - None.

Human Resources - None.

Social Exclusion - The revised Corporate Identity is careful to take into account the needs of our customers and partners who have special communication needs – language translations, large print and Braille.

## 7. Lessons Learnt

None.

## 8. Background Papers

Corporate Identity Guidelines.  
Summary of the Corporate Guidelines.

## 9. Consultation

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

### 9.1 Other consultees are:

- a) members of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee at their meeting on 27 May 2009, who were advised of the revised Corporate Identity and its main implications;
- b) the Committee Section, who produce their own guidelines for council and committee report and agenda writing; and
- c) the Community Forum to check that the guidelines could effectively meet wider community use, especially with respect to people whose first language is not English or those with a visual, hearing or learning impairment.

## 10. Author of Report

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

# Report Name

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## 11. Appendices

Appendix 1 - Redditch Borough Council: Our Corporate Identity including Style Guide and Guide to Plain English.

Appendix 2 - Redditch Borough Council: Our Corporate Identity Summary version.









# Redditch Borough Council

## Our Corporate Identity

including Style Guide  
and Guide to Plain English

Effective from September 2009



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

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## 1. Our Corporate Identity

### 1.1 What is a corporate identity?

Identity is about having unique characteristics by which a person or thing is recognised. For a corporate body such as Redditch Borough Council these are shown through our logo, stationery, leaflets and publications, the language we use when communicating, forms, buildings, uniforms and vehicles. An identity needs to be memorable and distinctive. Customers and our partners should immediately know they are dealing with Redditch Borough Council when using our services or receiving communication from us. The best corporate identities accurately reflect the vision and values of the organisation.



### 1.2 Aim of our corporate identity

To promote all Redditch Borough Council's activities as part of one organisation with the same vision and values; through the adoption of a Corporate Identity across the Council. The logo is a powerful part of the 'brand' of Redditch Borough Council.

The old Redditch Borough Council logo is no longer current and must not be used except in exceptional circumstances when its use must be approved by the Communications Team on behalf of the CMT. Examples of exceptional use are on identity badges where there is insufficient space for the correct logo, and at the Crematorium for reasons of sensitivity.

### 1.3 Objectives of our corporate identity

- That our customers recognise Council-provided services through a strong Corporate Identity
- To make it easy for customers to identify what services the Council offers through clear and consistent branding, and distinguish these from services provided by others including those delivered exclusively by the County Council (so helping to reduce public confusion)
- To provide high quality professionally produced information about our services which conforms to the Corporate Identity

## 1. Our Corporate Identity

### 1.4 About logos and branding

As mentioned, the logo is a key part of our branding so needs to be used correctly. Therefore;

- All RBC services teams will use the RBC logo and corporate identity guidelines on all publicity / vehicles
- Strategies / projects with partnership funding or other primary external input can use their own logos alongside the RBC logo on all forms of communication
- Specified Council venues and partnerships where RBC takes the lead, are permitted to use their own logos (co-branding) alongside the RBC logo, on all forms of communication
- Copies of all authorised co-branding is registered with the Communications Team and appears later on in this document.

### 1.5 Our logos and how they are positioned

- The RBC logo must appear on the front of all publications at the bottom or top right of the page. The preferred position is bottom right. See 1.10 below and detailed guidance on use with other logos on page 21.

### 1.6 Our strapline and its use

- Only the strapline `making a difference` may be used throughout RBC branding

### 1.7 Describing our services

- All names used to categorise activities, e.g. Leisure Services, must be registered with the Communications Team and used consistently in official communications. Only the terms `Directorate`, `Service` or `Team` may be used, except in special cases such as Sure Start Children's Centres

### 1.8 Staff Uniforms

- Every effort must be made to use the corporate green (Pantone 355)
- Only the RBC logo may appear on badges or uniforms
- Where approved co-branding appears on uniforms or badges, the RBC logo or the words Redditch Borough Council MUST be included
- All uniforms must be approved by Communications Team on behalf of the CMT before an order is placed.
- Some existing uniforms will need to adopt the correct style as they are replaced.

## 1. Our Corporate Identity

### 1.9 Signage / vehicle livery

- These must be produced in line with the corporate branding
- Where approved co-branding is used, the RBC logo must also appear.
- For vehicles the only acceptable livery is the logo plus the main Council telephone number ( for vehicles only). No other wording or graphics should appear.

### 1.10 Print

- The RBC Style Guide (see page 24) and Guide to Plain English (see page 32) should be followed.
- Individual and team door signs, in a corporate style, are available from the Communications Team.
- The RBC logo must appear on the front cover, bottom right of all leaflets, brochures and folders. Exceptions to this are some forms, questionnaires and letterheads which may carry the logo top right when it is more practical than appearing at the bottom
- Where other co-branding is permitted, documents must also include the RBC logo on the front cover in the bottom right. See page 21.

### 1.11 Displays / exhibitions / presentations

- The RBC logo must appear within any display / exhibition / presentation. If this is not possible, the words Redditch Borough Council only should appear.

### 1.12 Committee reports

- The standard template for committee covers and reports must be used. This is available from either your Directorate Support or from Committee Services.

### 1.13 General advertisements and recruitment advertisements

- Standard job advertisements placed for RBC paid employees will be designed in line with the corporate recruitment style both in terms of text and design. See page 15.
- Adverts for posts in services / teams with approved co-branding must include the RBC logo.

## 1. Our Corporate Identity

### 1.14 Identity badges

- Official staff ID badges with a photograph must be carried at all times by Officers on Council business
- Official Council ID badges with a photograph must be carried at all times by Members within the Town Hall
- Official visitor ID badges must be carried at all times by the public entering staff only areas of the Town Hall

### 1.15 Communicating with the visually impaired, blind and ethnic minorities

- The RBC logo must appear on all Council 'products'
- Use black type on a white background whenever possible
- Avoid placing type over photographs or background colour as it makes the wording difficult to read
- The Ethnic Access Link (EAL) statement should preferably go on the front of all leaflets for external audiences. On the back is acceptable if the design of the cover does not allow for the statement. You must then send a copy of the document to EAL at 13b Lowesmoor, Worcester WR1 2RS, so they can interpret the document if required.
- The following is recommended wording for people with visual impairment or blind to go on the front or back of all leaflets for external audiences and must appear in at least 14 point type: Copies of Council publications can be made available in large print, Braille or audio cassette. Call (01527) 64252 ext 3002.

### 1.16 Party political publicity and our identity

The RBC logo may be used on information which is describing exclusively the approved policy or work of the Council. If the information includes party political material, the logo must not be used.

The logo must not be used on information which represents the particular views of individual political parties or factional interests or on information which in any way does not represent the policy or interests of the Council as a whole.

The logo may be used by Members in conjunction with their work on behalf of the council, in relation to their appointed positions and as Ward Councillors, but not in any party political work.

The logo should be used on information published by the Council in accordance with these guidelines.

## 1. Our Corporate Identity

### 1.17 Coding of leaflets and publications

Leaflets and other publications should be coded on the reverse bottom right. The month and date should be added in 6 or 7 point typesize e.g. 909 for September 2009.

### 1.18 Monitoring correct application of the Corporate Identity

The Corporate Identity policy will be enforced and if necessary publicity not conforming to the policy can be withdrawn and reprinted at the originating Directorate's expense.

The Communications Team will take responsibility for monitoring the Council's corporate identity on behalf of the CMT. The team will:

- Offer advice and assistance to help officers maintain the corporate identity
- Monitor and review all Council communications as part of the Communications and Engagement Strategy

Print and Design staff, within the Communications Team, will check proofs of all items printed either by them or through the print brokerage to ensure they meet with the policy guidelines.

All teams must ensure all their communication is in line with the policy. They should:

- send copies of all printed literature to the Communications Team
- have registered their service names and any co-branding with the Communications Team - please contact ext 3002 room 4.4 Town Hall

It is the responsibility of all officers to ensure the Council retains its Corporate Identity.

### 1.19 Reviewing the Corporate Identity

This policy should be reviewed annually from its date of adoption.

### 1.20 Further guidance on the Corporate Identity

A short summary and CD are available with this guide. Contact the Communications Team on (01527) 64252 ext 3059 / ext 3002 or email [commsteam@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:commsteam@redditchbc.gov.uk) for details.

If you are unsure of how to produce information in line with the Corporate Identity contact the Communications Team.

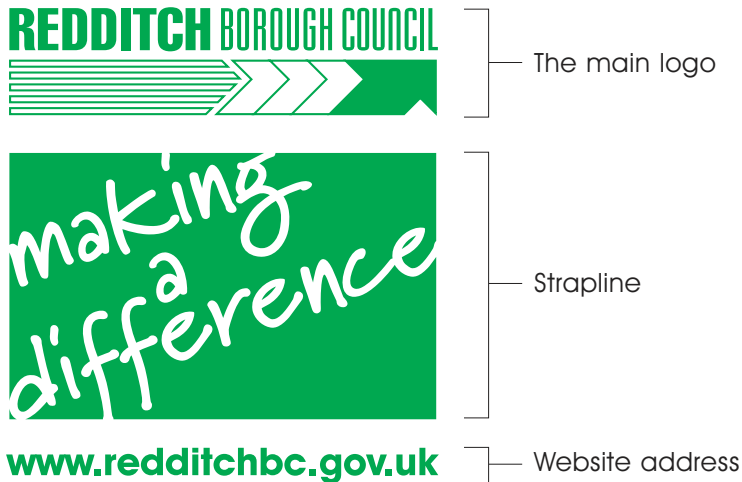
## 2. Basic elements

### 2.1 Introduction

The Redditch Borough Council corporate logo consists of three main elements

- the main logo
- strapline (making a difference)
- website address

These elements should only be used in the form indicated as they follow a precise and carefully considered relationship. Together they are a statement about what the Council does and where customers and stakeholders can find us online.



The Corporate Identity is a brand which includes our logo. This helps customers and stakeholders identify our work and builds the idea of the Council as one organisation offering a range of services.

2. Basic elements

## 2.2 Corporate Logo - colour and other versions

Below are the approved versions in which the logo should always be used. The identity must always be clearly visible and never redrawn. All variations are available on the available CD or the Intranet.



Master logo - colour version.  
Available specified in spot and CMYK.



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



Master logo - black version



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

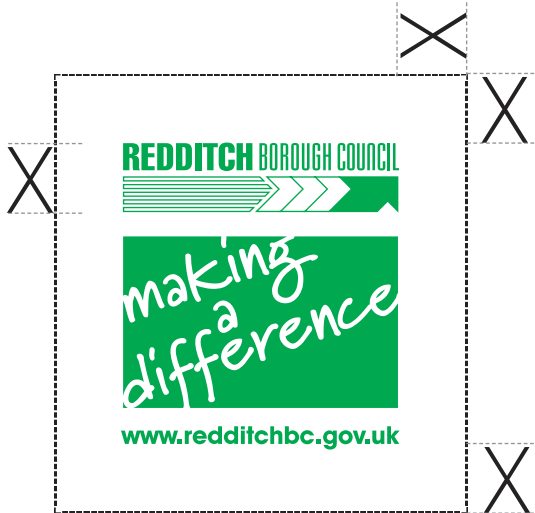


Master logo - reversed out or white version

2. Basic elements

2.3 Exclusion zone and positioning

The logo is protected by a restricted exclusion area as defined below. This is defined as the depth of the word Redditch plus the graphic lines underneath. This measurement is to be used to determine the exclusion area around the logo.



Positioning

Wherever the logo appears, the exclusion zone formula must be applied to the logo.





2. Basic elements

2.4 Limitations of use

When positioning the logo, the basic guidelines must be followed. The bottom right hand side of a page is the preferred position, with the exclusion zone employed to protect the visual impact of the logo.



Size specification

The minimum size specification is to protect the clarity of the logo and to ensure that it is always clearly recognised and legible; therefore the corporate logo should not be produced any smaller than 25mm in width on leaflets or brochures.

In some circumstances, when appearing on some business cards, small adverts less than 80mm in width and some promotional products, it may be reduced to 18mm in width.

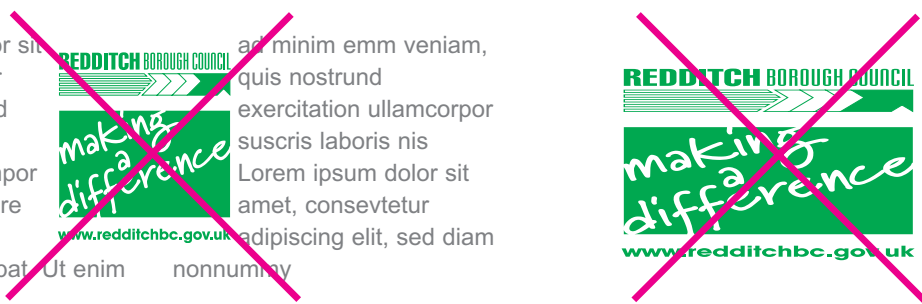


Incorrect usage of logo

The logo must never be surrounded by box rules or text or distorted in any way.



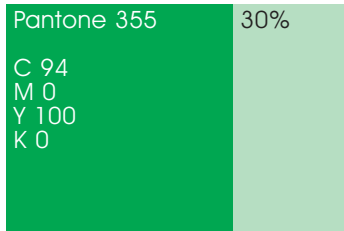
Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consevtetur adipiscing elit, sed diam nonnummy euisimod rom tempor incidunt ut et labore et dolore magna aliquam erat volupat  
 Ut enim nonnummy ad minim emm veniam, quis nostrund exercitation ullamcorpor suscrist laboris nis Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet, consevtetur adipiscing elit, sed diam



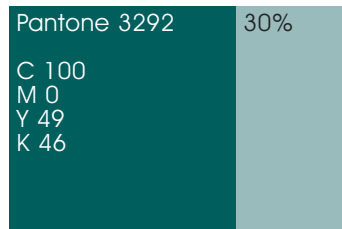
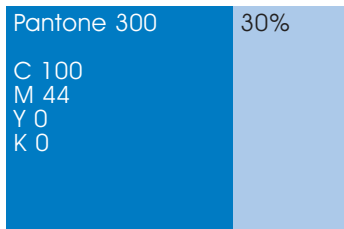
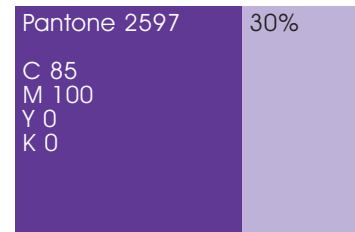
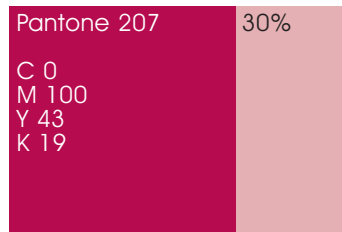
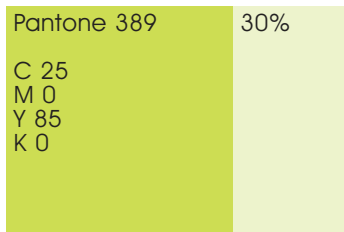
2. Basic elements

## 2.5 Colour palette

Wherever possible the logo should be reproduced 100 per cent in the corporate green Pantone 355. However, in certain circumstances, due to printing costs or restrictions, it may be produced in black and white.



There is also a selection of complementary colours available to enhance the Corporate Identity.



Please refer to a Pantone colour swatch for accurate colour matching.

## 2. Basic elements

## 2.6 Font usage

The main authorised typeface is Arial, a selection from which is shown here. It is ideal for internal documents, stationery and forms. All weights and associated styles, including italics, may be used from this family.

Avant Garde is the preferred typeface for professionally designed literature (see below), but is not available on most PCs. However, designers do have access to Avant Garde.

## Size specifications

12 point is the recommended minimum font size for letters and 10 point on 12 point leading for publications.

---

Arial (available on all PCs)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890!@£\$%^&\*()\_+

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ*  
*abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890 !@£\$%^&\*()\_+*

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890 !@£\$%^&\*()\_+**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890**  
**!@£\$%^&\*()\_+**

---

Avant Garde (usually on professional design systems e.g. Applemac)

ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ  
 abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890!@£\$%^&\*()\_+

*ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ*  
*abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890 !@£\$%^&\*()\_+*

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz1234567890 !@£\$%^&\*()\_+**

**ABCDEFGHIJKLMNOPQRSTUVWXYZ**  
**abcdefghijklmnopqrstuvwxyz 1234567890!@£\$%^&\*()\_+**

2. Basic elements

2.7 Good practice tips

The average line length should be no more than 70 characters.  
The minimum font size is 10 point for all documentation.

No hyphens should appear within headlines or the main body of text.

All headings and body text should be left justified.

When producing forms and agendas leave enough space for the recipient to reply. Use dotted fine lines to indicate areas in which a response is required.

Instead of underlining type to emphasise words, a bolder / thicker typeface should be used. Arial Black is recommended

Avoid using all capitals in headlines and sub headings.

~~**NEW INITIATIVE PLANNED**~~

**New initiative planned** ✓

### 3. Applications

## 3.1 Using partner logos with our logo

The Redditch Borough Council corporate logo has been developed to work on all Council publications. Positioning and size should follow these guidelines.

Logo size on A4 size – 35mm wide

Logo size on A5 size – 30mm wide

Logo size on DL size ( A4 folded to a third) – 25mm wide

The diagram illustrates the correct placement of logos on three different paper sizes: DL, A5, and A4. Each size is shown within a rectangular frame. On the left side of each frame, there is a grey box labeled 'This area is reserved for partner logos'. On the right side, the Redditch Borough Council logo is positioned above the 'making a difference' slogan. The slogan is written in a stylized, handwritten font. Below the slogan, the website address 'www.redditchbc.gov.uk' is displayed. In the A5 and A4 frames, there is also a block of text in three languages: English, Urdu, and Polish, providing contact information for the Ethnic Access Link.

**DL**

This area is reserved for partner logos

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL  
making a difference  
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

**A5**

This area is reserved for partner logos

Ethnic Access Link statement  
آپ انگریزی میں مدد چاہتے ہیں۔ نسلیاتی رسائی سے رابطہ کریں ٹیلیفون: 01905 25121 [Ethnic Access]  
ইংরেজি ভাষার বিষয়ে সাহায্য চান – এথনিক অ্যাকসেস [Ethnic Access] এর সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন, টেলিফোনঃ 01905 25121  
'Potrzebujesz pomocy z Angielskim – skontaktuj się z Ethnic Access Tel: 01905 25121'

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL  
making a difference  
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

**A4**

This area is reserved for partner logos

Ethnic Access Link statement  
آپ انگریزی میں مدد چاہتے ہیں۔ نسلیاتی رسائی سے رابطہ کریں ٹیلیفون: 01905 25121 [Ethnic Access]  
ইংরেজি ভাষার বিষয়ে সাহায্য চান – এথনিক অ্যাকসেস [Ethnic Access] এর সঙ্গে যোগাযোগ করুন, টেলিফোনঃ 01905 25121  
'Potrzebujesz pomocy z Angielskim – skontaktuj się z Ethnic Access Tel: 01905 25121'

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL  
making a difference  
www.redditchbc.gov.uk

## 3.2 Photographic style

Photographs illustrating most service areas are available to view on the Intranet for use in Council publicity material. All photographs available have secured the necessary permissions (see below) and are copyrighted to the Council.

Please note that officers should complete photographic consent forms for any pictures taken of members of the public and staff (as appropriate). The forms are available from the Communications Team, room 4.4 Town Hall.

3. Applications

3.3 Exhibition graphics, signage and vehicle livery

When producing signage and exhibition graphics the standard guidelines for the logo must be implemented. The logo must appear top or bottom right and follow the position and exclusion rules as outlined on page x.

Banners are to be used to raise people’s awareness of the identity of the Council and provide a focus for the event.

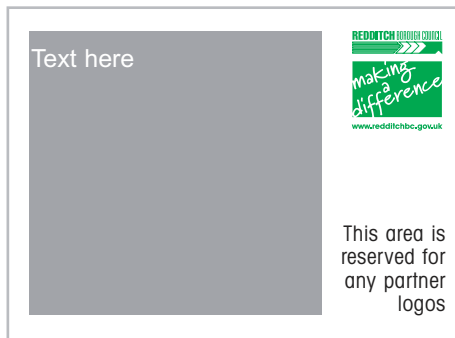
Occasions for use should include:

- Public consultations
- Publicity events
- Backdrops for meetings

Please ensure the erection of a banner does not infringe any planning regulations. If in doubt check with a Planning Officer.



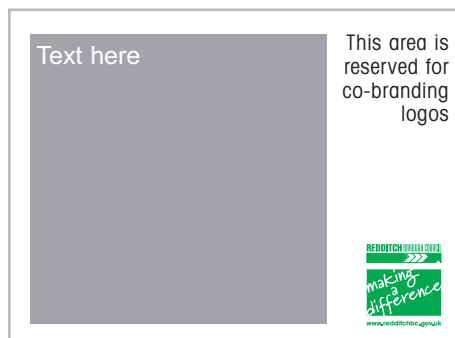
Corporate signage



Vehicle livery



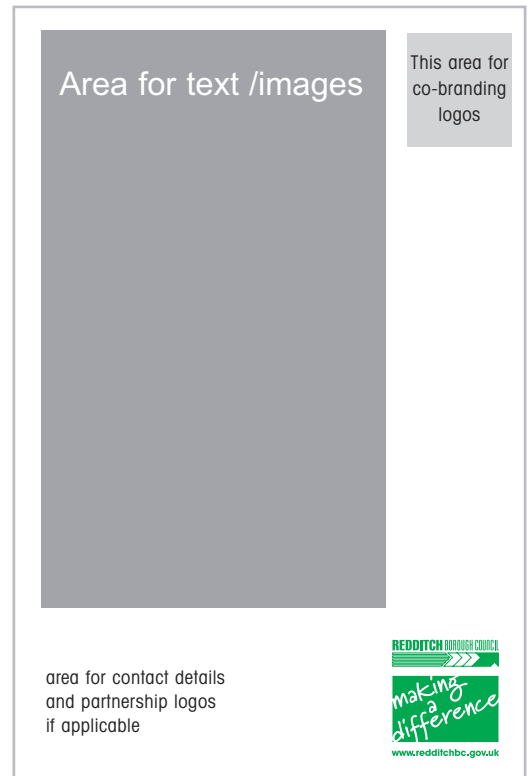
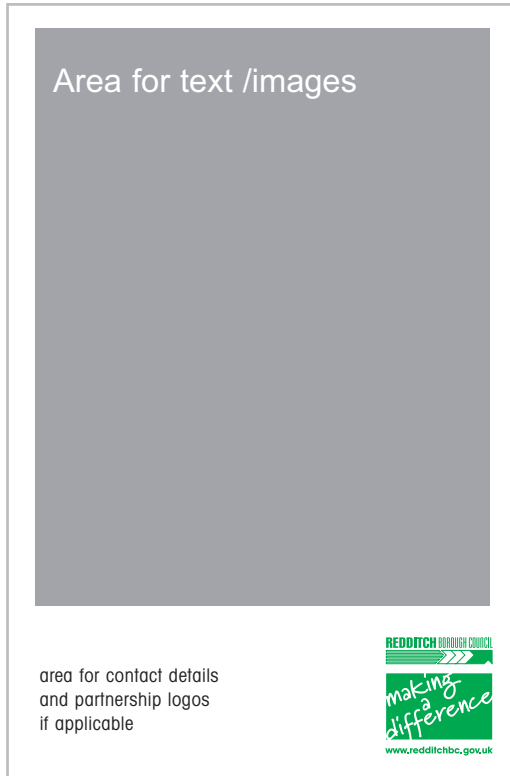
Co-branding signage



### 3. Applications

## 3.4 Advertisements and recruitment

The RBC logo must appear on the bottom right of all adverts and must be designed along corporate lines in both terms of design and text. Where approved co-branding is used, the advert or recruitment advert must also include the RBC logo. See below for examples:



### 3. Applications

## 3.5 Letterheads and compliments slips

From April 2010 a template for letterheads supplied to us by Worcestershire County Council will be used. The template will be able to be adapted to suit different contact details. Please contact your Directorate Support to access the template and / or create specific contact details for your service / team, from April 2010.

Compliments slips are pre-printed by the Print Team and can also be over-printed with specific contact details.

### Approved co-branding stationery

The approved logo will appear top right with the RBC logo bottom right which must follow the position and exclusion rules. Any Partnership logos should appear bottom left. See page 21 for approved primary or co-brand logos.

### Adding a special designation

If you would like to add a Charter Mark, Quest or similar to your stationery this would appear bottom right (or bottom left in the case of co-branding).

## A4 RBC letterhead

<b>Service or Team Name</b> Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch, Worcestershire B98 8AH	tel: (01527) 534123 ext: 2345 mobile: 07889 838211 fax: (01527) 65216 minicom: 595528 DX: 19106 Redditch email: <a href="mailto:information@redditchbc.gov.uk">information@redditchbc.gov.uk</a>	  <a href="http://www.redditchbc.gov.uk">www.redditchbc.gov.uk</a> our ref: 12345 your ref: 54321 contact: A. N. Other
---	---	---

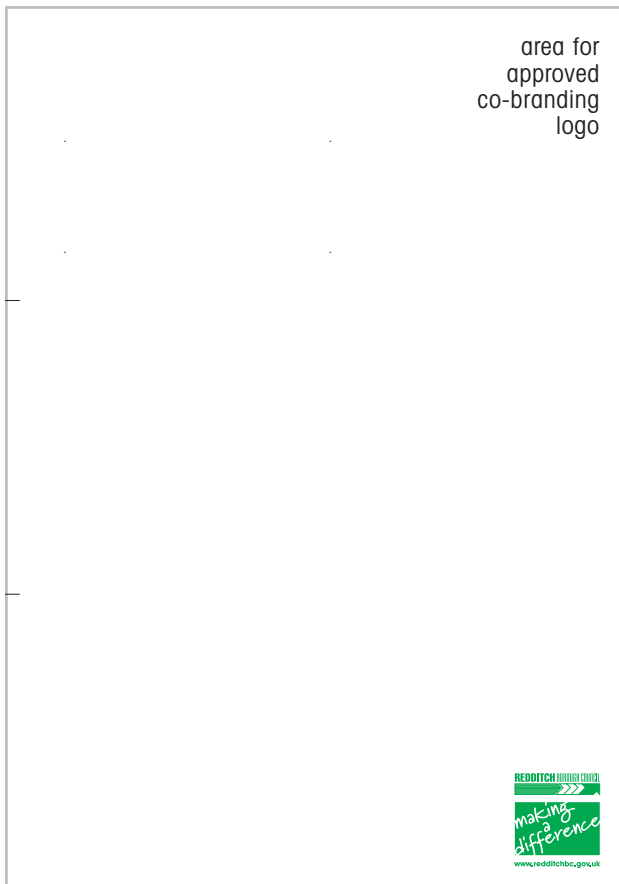


3. Applications

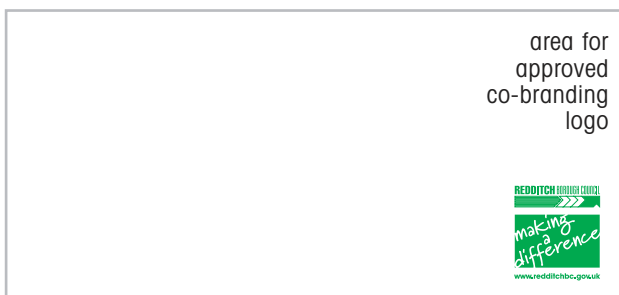
RBC compliment slip



A4 Co-branding stationery



Co-branding compliment slip



### 3. Applications

#### 3.6 Email footers

Email footers are how you sign off your RBC emails. With most correspondence carried out by email these days, it is important that they too follow a corporate style just as you would use for an RBC letter, with clearly spelt out contact details.

The following are examples of how your email footer should look:

- for somebody working in the Town Hall;
- at an outside Council office;
- for a co-branded venue or partnership where RBC takes the lead;
- for somebody working for a shared service but based here;
- for somebody working jointly across Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils.

Please adapt the details for your needs but you **must** follow the template. Note the vision for Redditch and ownership of the Palace Theatre is in green. This is deliberate to reflect the Council's corporate colour.

It is acceptable to have a temporary message below the Council's vision to promote a departmental consultation or new activity, for example.

Letters should appear after your name if you have these and want to use them. Mobile phone numbers can be added as `Mobile:` on the same line as `Tel:` (same applies for fax or Minicom numbers, if required).

After your job title please use your discretion as to whether you include your service name or Directorate. Some jobs e.g. Director, Chief Executive do not require either.

Email footers can be created or changed using Microsoft Outlook. Click on Tools – Options - Mail Format – Signatures – Edit, then save your message and it should appear every time you start a new email. We suggest Arial 11 point for your contact details.

You **must not** use background colours, border designs or similar as part of your email. The footer should be as shown on a plain white background.

### 3. Applications

#### **Example for Town Hall based**

**John Smith**, Landscape Officer, Environment and Planning Directorate

**Redditch Borough Council**, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch,  
Worcestershire B98 8AH

Tel: (01527) 64252 ext 8444

Email: john.smith@redditchbc.gov.uk Website: www.redditchbc.gov.uk

*Redditch's vision is an enterprising community which is safe, clean and green*



**Please don't print this e-mail unless you really need to.**

#### **Example for Outside Council office based**

**John Smith**, Tenancy Participation Assistant, Housing Services

**Redditch Borough Council**, Woodrow Centre, Woodrow, Redditch,  
Worcestershire B98 7RY

Tel: (01527) 534188

Email: john.smith@redditchbc.gov.uk Website: www.redditchbc.gov.uk

*Redditch's vision is an enterprising community which is safe, clean and green*



**Please don't print this e-mail unless you really need to.**

#### **Example for Working for a co-branded venue or partnership**

**John Smith**, Marketing Assistant

**Redditch Palace Theatre**, Alcester Street, Redditch, Worcestershire B98 8AH

Tel: (01527) 61544

Email: john.smith@redditchbc.gov.uk Website: www.redditchpalacetheatre.co.uk

*The Palace Theatre is owned and managed by Redditch Borough Council*



**Please don't print this e-mail unless you really need to.**

#### **Example for Working for a shared service**

**John Smith**, Electoral Registration Officer

**Redditch Borough Council**, Town Hall, Walter Stranz Square, Redditch,  
Worcestershire B98 8AH

Tel: (01527) 64252 ext 8444

Email: john.smith@redditchbc.gov.uk

Website: www.redditchbc.gov.uk

**Bromsgrove District Council**, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove,  
Worcestershire B60 1AA

Tel: (01527) 881288

Email: john.smith@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Website: www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



**Please don't print this e-mail unless you really need to.**

3. Applications

**Example for Working in a joint role for both Councils**

**John Smith**, Joint Emergency Planning Officer

**Redditch Borough Council**  
Town Hall  
Walter Stranz Square  
Redditch  
Worcestershire B98 8AH  
Tel: (01527) 64252 ext 8444  
Email: john.smith@redditchbc.gov.uk  
Website: www.redditchbc.gov.uk

**Bromsgrove District Council**  
The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
Bromsgrove  
Worcestershire B98 8AH  
Tel: (01527) 881288  
Email: john.smith@bromsgrove.gov.uk  
Website: www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



**Please don't print this e-mail unless you really need to.**

3.7 Presentations using PowerPoint

For presentations by PowerPoint, please use the template as shown below. This is available on the CD and Intranet.



PowerPoint template



### 3. Applications

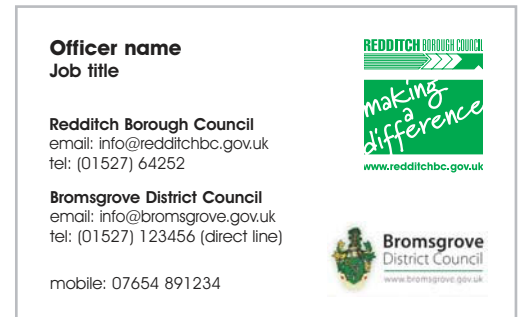
## 3.8 Business cards

Business cards are available pre-printed from the Print Team. Your details are then printed on to the card. As with email footers, you can include a mobile phone number if you wish or reduce your address details, if desired. Below are two versions of the business card, for somebody working for Redditch Borough Council, and somebody working for both Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils.

RBC business card



Joint working business card



Co-brand business card



## 3.9 Website and Intranet

When writing copy for the website and Intranet, or supplying images / photographs, all the principles outlined in these guidelines should apply for our website and Intranet. In particular, please refer to the Style Guide and Guide to Plain English for producing and supplying copy.

However, writing for the website and Intranet and adding copy to these sites is a specialism and to help you, a separate guide has been produced. This is available on the Intranet or from IT Services.

4. Co-branding

4.1 What is co-branding and how it should be used

Below are examples of other Council approved co-brand logos. When they are used the RBC logo must appear on the front at the bottom right of any leaflet or document produced and follow the position and exclusion rules as outlined on page 8.

Any new Council co-brand logos must be approved and registered with the Communications Team before their introduction. See below for current approved logos.




Revising in July 2009



For Civic use only.

This area is reserved for co-brand logo

This area is reserved for partner logo

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

example of an A5 leaflet with a co-branding, partnership and RBC logo.

4. Co-branding

## 4.2 Logo to use when we financially support or sponsor projects / activities

Below is a new logo that can be used when Redditch Borough Council financially supports or sponsors external projects and activities. The logo should be used by external organisations in colour if at all possible, although it is acceptable for external organisations to reproduce this logo in black and white as an alternative. Please ensure the external organisation uses the correct Pantone colour (green 355).



## 5. Style Guide

## 5 Style Guide

This Style Guide has been designed to be quick and easy to understand and, if used correctly, will help staff write better, more consistent communications. Consistency is key to developing a strong brand for the Council, so it is important that we all use the same 'tone of voice' and our communications follow the same set style.

**Abbreviations**

Try to avoid the use of abbreviations. They can look unprofessional, are not understood by everyone and can be seen as a lazy way of writing. On occasion, for example a listing in a leaflet, it is acceptable to use a hyphen between times of day or shorten the months of the year. But best to avoid if you can.

<b>Avoid</b>	<b>Replace with</b>
ie	in other words or that is
eg	for example
Jan, Feb, Nov	January, February, November
&	and
/ (except for financial years, example of 2009/10)	and, or
- (8.30am-5pm)	to (8.30am to 5pm)
NB	Please note:

**Etc**

Never use 'etc' because it leaves unexplained what the rest of list consists of. We can't assume people will know.

**Councillor**

When referring to a specific elected member, the word councillor can be shortened to Cllr. But when writing about councillors in general it must be spelt out.

**Example**

Cllr John Smith is the portfolio holder.

Councillors decided to agree to the officer's recommendations.

**Ext**

Always use ext for extension numbers not X.



## 5. Style Guide

### Style

Some words, such as CD, DVD, AIDS, NATO MORI, are always written in their abbreviated form because this is how they are best known to the general public. You rarely hear about people going to the shop to buy a compact disc.

All other words should be spelt out the first time they are used in a piece of writing. The abbreviation can be placed next to it in brackets and can then be used throughout the rest of the piece of work.

#### *Example*

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) will be holding a meeting on Monday.

CMT members are expected to make a decision by the end of the week.

### Capital letters

Capital letters can be overused and can look messy within a large piece of writing.

**Never** use block capitals for full sentences BECAUSE THEY ARE TOO DIFFICULT TO READ AND LOOK UGLY.

### Headings

Always write headlines and headings in lower case unless there is a name or title within the heading which needs to be capped.

#### *Example*

Families get crafty with the new Family Learning Programme

### Job titles

Council job titles can be capped and written out in full when talking about an individual such as Media and Communications Officer, Communications and Marketing Manager.

But when referring to a group of people there is no need for capital letters. For example officers, councillors, directors, managers, heads of service.

### The exception

Members should be referred to as councillors whenever you are writing for the public. When you do use Members use upper case to make it clear that you are referring to the Council's **M**embers rather than general members of a group or a team.

### The Council

When referring to the Council for the first time it should be called its full name – Redditch Borough Council.

After that it can be referred to as the Council, with a capital c.

Other groups work the same but do not need a capital letter when you refer to it for the second time.

## 5. Style Guide

### *Example*

**Redditch Borough Council** is aiming towards its new vision. **The Council** adopted this vision earlier this year and staff and councillors are now working towards making it a reality.

**Bromsgrove District Council** is working with Redditch Borough Council. The two **councils** plan to complete the project by the end of this year.

**West Mercia Police** is working with Redditch Borough Council on a new project to improve safety. The **police** have dealt with these issues before and the **Council** will be taking advice from officers.

### **Groups**

Titles of established Council groups or committees should be capped and should be written out in full the first time it is referred to. It can then be shortened and lower case or abbreviated.

### *Example*

The **Planning Committee** is due to meet next week. The **committee** will be discussing five planning applications.

The **Corporate Management Team** is meeting soon. **CMT** will be looking at how it will work.

### **Government**

When referring to the Government of the country, a capital letter is needed. Political parties such as Labour, the Liberal Democrats and the Conservatives should also be capped.

### **Seasons and events**

Use lower case for spring, summer, autumn and winter. But use initial capitals for religious festivals such as Easter. The words new year can be lower case but cap up New Year's Day or New Year's Eve.

Use capitals when writing the full name of an event such as Holocaust Memorial Day, but you can then refer to the event as memorial day in lower case.

### **Is or are?**

Although organisations are made up of a number of members of staff, when we write about them we see them as one single group.

### *Example*

The Council is

The Council has

The Council does

## 5. Style Guide

### Dates and times

Dates should be written in the format of 3rd July 2009. Never use 'the' before a date and do use th/nd/rd/st.

*Date and time examples*

3rd July 2009

3rd July

1950s (notice no apostrophe)

Times are written without a space between the figure and am or pm. **Do not** use noughts, do not use a colon and do not use the 24-hour clock.

*Example*

4am

7.30pm

12noon ( not 12pm )

### Numbers

Never start a sentence with a figure, but if you must always write it out in full. Numbers one to nine should be spelt out in words while 10 and up should be written as figures.

*Example*

One in 10 people said the Council needed to.....

The 21st time or the fifth time.

Use a comma to break up numbers over 1,000. While m can be used for million.

*Example*

£2,500

£13,600

£10m

Telephone numbers should be written out in full with brackets used for the area code. (01527) 64252.

When writing percentages the word 'per cent' must always be written out rather than using % except in tables.

In tables please align all figure to the right.

### Financial years

Write as 2008/09, 2010/11 to avoid any confusion and make it clearer to read.

*Example*

The budget for the financial years 2008/09 and 2009/10.

**Rather than**

The budget for financial years 2008 to 2009 and 2009 to 2010.

## 5. Style Guide

### Measures and weights

Metres = 10m

Kilometres = 10km

Kilograms = 10kg

Pounds = 10st 2lbs

Feet and inches = 6ft 2ins

### Fonts

The standard font for the Council is Arial 12 point and should be used at all times for letters, press releases and emails.

The smallest point size generally permitted is 10 point.

Arial is professional, clear and easy to read compared to other popular fonts such as Times New Roman and Comic Sans.

### Italics

Italics can be used to show that we are writing about a book, film or song title, such as *Pride and Prejudice*.

### Common mistakes to look out for

#### Amount and number

Amount refers to a collection of something which cannot be counted individually such as rice or sand.

Number refers to individual items which can be counted, generally larger items like sausages or envelopes.

*Example*

Who we can serve depends on the amount of rice left.

Who we can serve depends on the number of sausages left.

#### Less and fewer

This is a common mistake seen in nearly all supermarkets across the country.

The well-known sign '10 items or less' should actually read 10 items or fewer.

Less refers to an amount which cannot be counted – we have less rice.

Fewer refers to a number which can be counted – we have fewer sausages.

#### Affect and effect

A good way to remember this is that people are affected by an effect.

*Example*

How does this affect me?

What effect will this have on me?

## 5. Style Guide

### Americanisms

Avoid Americanism at all times. Be careful while doing a spell check as this often wants to turn the correct English spelling into the American version.

*Example*

Use lorry **rather than** truck

Use rubbish **rather than** garbage

Use organisation **rather than** organization

Use recognise **rather than** recognize

Use programme **not** program

### Help with punctuation

#### Apostrophes

Apostrophes are very often either over used or under used, can be complicated to understand at first and there are exceptions to the rule.

The easiest way to remember the rule is to think that the apostrophe is there to show possession.

*For example* 'that is John's wallet'. This shows that the wallet belongs to John.

It can also work for groups. The committee's members talked for hours. The members belong to the committee.

It also works the same for expressions of time. This week's meeting, one month's time. In a sense we are saying the meeting belongs to this week or the time belongs to that month.

#### Where to put the apostrophe?

Committee's – when there is one committee

Committees' – when there is more than one committee

One week's work – there is only one week

Two weeks' work – there is more than one week

Women's/children's – Women/children is already a plural so the apostrophe goes before the s.

Apostrophes **do not** automatically appear in abbreviations unless they are possessives. *Example* GCSEs, DSOs.

Use an apostrophe to show that something has been missed out, although it looks more professional to write words out in full.

*Examples*

don't (do not)

can't (cannot)

we'll (we will)

they've (they have)

## 5. Style Guide

### **The exception**

It's – **only means it is**. Unless you are saying a shortened version of it is, **never** use an apostrophe.

*Example*

It's wrong – it is wrong

The dog wagged its tail – the tail belongs to the dog but we do not use an apostrophe to show that.

### **Commas**

Commas are also very commonly over or underused. If used correctly they can make a piece of writing easy to read and follow. Commas are very much common sense. Read your sentence out loud and think where you would need to pause.

Commas can be used to separate a series of words or phrases of the same kind.

*Example*

Officers should always write in clear, concise, accurate English.

He provided information, gave advice, took notes and thought hard about it.

Commas can also be used to break up a sentence.

For example, The committee agreed, subject to funding, that the plans would go ahead.

**Do not** use commas to lengthen sentences that could be broken down into two or three shorter sentences.

Sentences rarely need to be more than 20 words long.

### **Speech marks**

When you are quoting someone directly as a separate sentence then double quote marks must be used.

John Smith said: "I am enjoying it here." – notice the full stop.

If you are not quoting someone's exact words do not put them into speech marks, just paraphrase.

John Smith said that he was enjoying it here.

Or only use speech marks on the direct quotes

John Smith said that he was "enjoying it here". – notice the full stop.

### **Colon**

Generally introduces lists of things but do not over use.

### **Semi-colon**

Again do not over use - a comma can nearly always be used instead.

## 5. Style Guide

### Hyphen

Hyphens should be used to show that two words belong together to create one meaning.

*Example*

Twenty-four

Vice-president

Well-known

Seven-year-old

Much-needed

Placing a hyphen in the wrong place can change the meaning of a sentence. This means that getting it right can be more important than you would think.

*Example*

A rusty-nail cutter – is an object which cuts rusty nails

A rusty nail-cutter – is a rusty object which cuts nails.

A man eating chocolate is less scary than a man-eating chocolate.

### Letters

Letters must always be justified left and Arial 12 point. They should include a signature followed by your name and job title.

If you know the name of the person you are writing to, use yours sincerely, if you do not, use yours faithfully.

### Reports to committees

Number all pages on internal and external documents. Footers showing useful information such as your name, the date or title of the document should also be used.

**Confidentiality** - assume reports will be open for public consideration, other than in extreme and clearly defined circumstances (Freedom of Information / Access to information law refers)

**Line through** - use line through to indicate text you propose to delete from a document.

**Bold text** – use **Bold text** to indicate standard sections of the report and the recommendation(s). Elsewhere faint / underlined text indicates sub-headings (or, less often BLOCK CAPITALS).

**Author** - the Report Author at the head of a report will normally be the relevant Head of Service. Occasionally the relevant Director / Chief Executive will be the Author, or Monitoring Officer, Returning Officer, for examples. The Author at the foot of the report will be the actual person(s) who originated the report.

## 5. Style Guide

**Length** - the target length is four sides of A4, including standard formatting / layout / font size. For lengthy reports, please consider a short summary of this length, with detailed appendices, as appropriate.

**Electronic versions** - since January 2007, all reports and attachments must be available in electronic format in order that they can be published on the website and / or sent electronically to Members / press etc.

**Colours** - Committee agendas will normally be printed, at corporate expense, in black only over a maximum of 4 colours of paper:

Cover – Black over approved colour artwork

Agenda list – Black over white paper

Public reports – Black on cream

Confidential reports – Black on purple

**As part of the editing process, Committee Support and Office Services staff are authorised to amend reports, or other corporate documents, in accordance with the above (and agreed report formats) without reference to the originator of the report.**



## 6. Guide to Plain English

# 6 Guide to Plain English

### **Introduction**

Plain English is about clear communication.

It is about writing so that you cannot be misunderstood.

It involves thinking about your purpose.

It means keeping words and sentences short.

It is about avoiding clichés and jargon.

The Guide to Plain English offers simple tips for writing clear, concise English. None of it is rocket science, just common sense. Its purpose is to make sure that Redditch Borough Council communicates effectively.

### **Purpose**

What are you writing - a report, a letter, text to go on a poster?

Who are you writing to or for - councillors, a resident, journalists, someone you know well?

Why are you writing - to apologise for a delay in fixing someone's leaky tap, to inform the local paper about a new park, to complain about a contractor's work?

These factors will affect the tone, content and length of what you write, for example:

- text for a poster needs to be as short and snappy as possible while still getting over the points you need to make
- an email to a friend will be less formal than one to the director of a partner organisation who you don't know
- a letter of apology needs to have a suitably apologetic tone.

## 6. Guide to Plain English

### Structure and style

Good communication means getting your point across as quickly and clearly as possible. Whatever you are writing, make it clear to the reader straight away why you are doing so. Don't bury your point several paragraphs in

Think about your reader. Nobody wants to be faced with a huge, cramped wedge of text. It is difficult to read. Put a line space between paragraphs. Use headings and sub-headings to break up reports. A diagram or chart could convey information more clearly and concisely than words

Keep paragraphs as short as possible. If you've moved on to a different theme, start a new paragraph

Keep sentences short. A sentence should not need to be any longer than 20 words. If you need to break it up with several commas it is too long

Never use a long word if a short one will do

Keep to basic punctuation such as commas and full stops wherever possible

Keep sentences active rather than passive. This means having people doing things, for example

- **The Council is launching its Play Ranger service** rather than **The Play Ranger service is being launched by the Council.**

### Clichés and jargon

Try to avoid using clichés. They are an easy way to express a familiar idea. Because of this, they can easily be ignored. Examples include:

- **at the end of the day**
- **at this point in time**
- **back to the drawing board**

Every profession has its jargon, or private language. You may understand it, your colleagues may understand it. But it's a fair bet that residents or even staff in other Council teams will have no idea what you are talking about. Always try and use everyday language. A good tip for avoiding jargon is to think about how you would explain something to a friend. Examples of jargon and everyday words you could use instead include

- **stakeholders** - try **residents** or **people**
- **members** – try **councillors**
- **toolkit** – try **guide**.

7. Contacts and updates to guidelines

## 7 Contacts and updates to guidelines

RBC logo artwork and PDF files of both this guide are available on CD, please use these for all reproduction purposes and pass on to any appropriate external design agencies you are working with.

If you have any questions about the guidelines or want copies of the CD please contact the Communications Team as follows:

Tel: (01527) 64252 ext 3059 / ext 3002

Email: [bobbie.ashby@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:bobbie.ashby@redditchbc.gov.uk)

[adrian.marklew@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:adrian.marklew@redditchbc.gov.uk)

NB: Updates to these guidelines will be issued as appropriate.



## Executive Committee

All Ward Relevance

22 July 2009

### MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL STRATEGY AND PLAN – 2010/11 TO 2012/13

(Report of the Head of Financial, Revenues and Benefits Services)

#### 1. Summary of Proposals

The purpose of the Strategy and Plan is to set out the framework within which the Council's finances will be managed over the three year period 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2013

#### 2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

**the Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan, as set out within Appendix A to the report, be approved.**

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

##### Financial

3.1 As outlined throughout the report.

##### Legal

3.2 A statutory framework exists to ensure that Local Authorities set a balanced budget. In order to comply with the statutory requirement, it is necessary to consider the availability of resources and the demand on those resources over the medium term. Appropriate action may then be taken in a timely manner to enable a balance budget to be set year on year.

##### Policy

3.3 The Strategy and Plan will provide a framework for future budget processes.

##### Risk

3.4 The Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan is key to ensuring the priorities of the Borough Council are properly funded and therefore deliverable.

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Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.5 There are no direct sustainability/environmental issues.

**Report****4. Background**

- 4.1 The requirements for such a financial framework are driven by a number of sources including the requirements of the Comprehensive Area Assessment (CAA) Use of Resources Judgement, good practice and the continuing tensions between the requirements on Local Authorities to expand their services within limited resources and delivering value for money efficiency savings.
- 4.2 It is important to ensure that resources align with the Council's objectives, priorities and thus service requirements. The General Fund, Housing Revenue Account and Capital Programme budgets are the financial representation of the Council's policies and as such must link with the Corporate Plan agreed by the Council.
- 4.3 In recent years, the Council has set its General Fund Revenue Budget and Housing Revenue Account in accordance with the broad parameters of keeping within annual government guidelines. It is incumbent on the Council to ensure that the long term level of revenue commitments does not exceed the long term funding likely to be available on the basis of expected levels of grant, council tax, and rental income. Capital Programmes have previously been resourced primarily by the use of capital receipts arising from Right to Buy (RTB) sales and asset disposals. There is now an increasing reliance on Prudential Borrowing.

**5. Key Issues**

- 5.1. The financial outlook for the economy as a whole is not promising. During the last year the bank base rate has fallen from 5.0% to 0.5%, in just five months the rate dropped from 4.5% to 0.5%. There has been a significant increase in unemployment, people working reduced hours or for reduced pay and this has led to an increase in benefit claims, many businesses have gone into administration and there has been a significant slowing of the housing market. The Council has already experienced significant reduction in income from planning fees, building control fees, local land charges and Right to Buy sales. The downturn in the economy has also affected the Council's ability to generate capital receipts to fund the redevelopment of the Abbey Stadium.

# Executive Committee

22 July 2009

- 
- 5.2 High levels of government borrowing and debt make it almost certain that local Government will be looking at real time cuts in central Government financial support in the period beyond 2010/11.
- 5.3 The Government has already announced changes to the public sector efficiency targets. Local Government's original efficiency target of £4.9bn has now been extended to £5.5bn – an equivalent of an extra 1% saving each year on top of the 3% annual savings already expected. Further efficiency savings are expected during the period 2011/12 to 2013/14. There is a clear expectation that councils will share services and thereby deliver efficiency savings.
- 5.4 The situation regarding the Housing Revenue Account (HRA) is also uncertain. During the beginning of July the government is expected to issue a consultation paper on the future of the HRA. John Healey, the new Minister for Housing has announced, amongst other things, that,
- He intends to dismantle the HRA subsidy system and replace it with a devolved system of responsibility and funding;
  - Introduce self financing with an end to the redistribution of income;
  - Make a one off initial redistribution of housing debt which would leave councils with levels of debt that they can afford and manage themselves;
  - Allow councils to finance their business from their own rental income;
  - Allow councils to retain all capital receipts, and
  - There would be a range of stock options available including a continuing strong role for ALMOS.
- 5.5 More locally the Council has yet to quantify the financial impact of implementing job evaluation from 1 April 2010.
- 5.6 The Medium Term Strategy and Plan appended to this report provides a framework which is designed to support the annual Budget process.

## 6. Other Implications

- |                  |   |  |
|------------------|---|--|
| Asset Management | - | The Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan will influence the Asset Management Strategy and Plan. |
| Community Safety | - | None directly.   |

# Executive

## Committee

22 July 2009

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Human Resources - May be a need for budget savings in future years.

Social Exclusion - None directly.

7. **Lessons Learnt**

None.

8. **Background Papers**

Budget working papers held by Financial Services.

9. **Consultation**

There has been no consultation other than with relevant Borough Council Officers.

10. **Author of Report**

The author of this report is Teresa Kristunas (Head of Financial, Revenues and Benefits Services), who can be contacted on extension 3295 (e-mail [teresa.kristunas@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:teresa.kristunas@redditchbc.gov.uk)) for more information.

11. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan – 1 April 2010 to 31 March 2013.



**Appendix 1**

**Redditch Borough Council**  
**Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan**



DRAFT

# Introduction

## The Medium Term Financial Strategy and Plan

Under the requirements of Best Value, Local Authorities and related bodies are required to produce meaningful medium term budgets over a three year forward period. The key features of such a budgetary framework have been identified as:

- a) a mechanism which delivers an indication as to the level of funding available in future years;
- b) a planning mechanism which generates targets for a three year period;
- c) a process to draw financial planning processes together and ensure consistency;
- d) a mechanism which produces budgets over three years which are meaningful at the level of service delivery;
- e) a process that allows Members to make informed decisions in funding development and when setting the Council Tax.

This document provides the framework for the setting of budgets in future years, commencing with the current financial year and ending in 2012/13.

# Financial Strategy

## Objectives of the Medium Term Financial Strategy

The key objective of this Strategy is to maximise the Council's financial resources and ensure they are utilised effectively to contribute towards the achievement of the Council's vision, objectives, policies, plans and priorities.

The Strategy aims to:

- enable the Council to set a balanced and sustainable budget over the medium term,
- allow resources to be reallocated over time to reflect changing priorities.
- ensure that the Council manages and monitors its financial resources effectively so that spending and commitments do not exceed the forecast resources in each year, and
- to plan the level of local taxation in line with levels that the Council, the residents of the Borough and central government regards as acceptable.

The amount the Council spends on its services is based on its objectives and priorities. These are set out in a range of strategy statements including:

- Sustainable Community Strategy
- Corporate Plan
- Capital Strategy and Asset Management Strategy and Plan
- Customer Access Strategy
- Procurement Strategy
- Value for Money Strategy
- T-Gov Strategy

The Financial Strategy is key to ensuring the priorities of the Council are properly funded and therefore deliverable. The Strategy provides the overall framework within which individual budgets are constructed.

Budgets are cascaded into individual service plans where both the corporate objectives from the Corporate Plan and operational service objectives are set out. Budget information is complimented in the service plans by performance measures. Risk assessments are also undertaken as part of the service planning and performance management process.

## Sustainable Community Strategy

The **Sustainable Community Strategy** provides the overarching vision for Redditch. The Strategy reflects the structure of the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement (LAA) by using six key themes. The shared vision for the future is for ***'Redditch to be successful and vibrant, with sustainable communities built on partnership and shared responsibility. We want people to be proud that they live or work in Redditch.'***

The themes and priorities of the Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy are:

- √ Communities that are safe and feel safe
- √ A better environment for today and tomorrow
- √ Economic success that is shared by all
- √ Improving health and well-being
- √ Meeting the needs of children and young people
- √ Stronger communities

## The Council's Vision and Priorities

The Council's vision is for Redditch to be ***An enterprising community which is safe, clean and green.***

**Key Priorities** for the Council:

- **Enterprising Community** which is defined as a vibrant and vital Borough where its population is well educated, has high skills levels and 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. The Council's voice is influential and respected by residents, partners, other governmental agencies and suppliers. The Town's economy provides sufficient high quality jobs for residents with good levels of pay and reward.
- **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** – to 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.

Redditch Borough Council strives to be a **well managed organization**. It expects to be at the heart of developing the local economy, environment and community. The council as a service provider pursues the delivery of high quality, cost effective services to realise the aims of the Community Strategy and the aspirations of the stakeholders of Redditch. It will achieve this though, amongst other things, **effective financial management**.

In particular the Council is committed to:

- An annual **review of budgets** linked to the long term financial plan – with member involvement in allocating resources to priority areas

Budgets should reflect the strategic priorities/objectives of the Council. To achieve this it is important to identify services and link available resources to these priorities. This may result in services being curtailed or cut back entirely. Resources will continue to be limited over the period of review and it will be

necessary to review and reallocate with emerging demands/changes. The Council needs to reduce its reliance on revenue balances to support the base budget.

- **Delivering a further programme of asset disposals**

In order to enable growth in the general fund capital programme, to support current initiative such as the Abbey Stadium redevelopment and support the revenue budget it may be beneficial to look at the potential for further asset disposals. The sums generated could be invested to provide revenue to fund the capital programme or support the revenue budget. This will be dependant upon an improvement in the housing/property market.

- **Implementing the Asset Management Plan**

The Council must make the best use of its assets in support of its objectives and needs to examine whether the assets that we currently hold are necessary or could be financed in different ways. We should examine methods of generating income through sales of assets we no longer require, and changes in financing arrangements by different forms of leases or rentals. The Council will build on the programme of reviews of utilities (gas, electric etc) consumption, reducing and recycling waste together with ensuring that the Council conserves non-renewable resources.

- **Partnership Working/Shared Services**

The Council needs to examine the continued development of partnerships and shared services to enable the sharing of resources. This is wider than purely financial resources and includes property, land, equipment and human resources with not only local authorities but with other public bodies, the private sector and the voluntary sector, where appropriate, building on the arrangements that are currently in place. This is particularly appropriate where partnerships could demonstrate economies of scale resulting in efficiencies within the organisation and potentially reduced costs. There is no requirement on individual authorities to deliver services on their own and the development of partnerships could in some cases lead to significant improvements for all the involved parties.

## **External Funding**

Resources for local authorities are now available from many different sources. The Government provides base funding for the provision of services through the Formula Grant, various subsidies and capital grants but there are many other sources of funding provided by not only different government departments but also other organisations, e.g. the various lottery funds. It is clear that the expectations on local authorities are to access external sources of funding to supplement their core service delivery and benefit the community.

The restrictions in ongoing core funding for local authorities will continue and in order to ensure that the Council can continue to develop services in line with its

objectives/priorities it is more and more important to explore these external sources of funding.

There are, however, wider resource implications from pursuing external funding. These include not only the cost of bidding, (including the cost of abortive work) but the costs associated with the implementation and ongoing support for new initiatives.

It is also important to ensure that the Council has an exit strategy for any developments that are supported through external funding as these are usually time limited.

### **Strategy for securing efficiency gains and delivering value for money**

The Council has a Value for Money Strategy. In order to achieve efficient, effective and economic services the Council will:-

- Achieve savings through competitive tendering and Shared Services
- Review staffing requirements and the management structure
- Introduce new working practices and organisational arrangements using ICT to enhance services to the public
- Control energy and other utility costs
- Maximise investment income (whilst safeguarding capital)
- Procure services in the most effective and efficient way.
- Review the Asset Management Plan for the effective use of the Council's land and property portfolio.
- Develop further the Council's Performance Management Framework to ensure that all services perform on par with the best in local government and achieve continuous improvement.
- Undertake value for money reviews of the Council's services and implement the efficiency improvements identified taking into account comparisons with similar services in comparable authorities.
- Cash limit budget increases wherever possible.
- Continually improve the skills and capacity of staff through training; improving efficiency; joint/partnership working and shared services

### **Budget Flexibility**

In considering future service provision and capital investment it is increasingly important that the Council consider the impact on its ability to reallocate resources to emerging priorities or to make efficiency savings in the future.

## Revenue and Capital Balances

The Council's revenue and capital balances as 31st March 2009 are detailed in the table below. The specific use to which some reserves and balances may be applied is restricted by statute. The Council has an existing policy for the use of each of its balances that is consistent with the legal requirements.

For the purpose of setting budgets a distinction can be drawn between:-

- a) revenue balances;
- b) balances earmarked for specific capital schemes;
- c) balances available exclusively for General Fund capital schemes; and,
- d) balances available for either General Fund or Housing Revenue Account capital schemes.

The table below describes for each balance:-

- a) the amount held at 31 March 2008 ;
- b) the amount be held at 31 March 2009;
- c) its legal status; and,
- d) the use to which it is put under current Council policy.

### Revenue Balances

#### General Fund Revenue and Housing Revenue Account Balances

These balances are the Council's 'working balances' and should be maintained at a prudent minimum to assist cash flow management, and to cover unforeseen expenditure or shortfalls in income. Excess amounts can be used to support expenditure, but cannot be relied on to support on-going expenditure.

Under the Local Government Finance Act 1988, all balances held by the Council are at the direct disposal of the General Fund with the exception of the Housing Revenue Account balance, the Collection Fund and those held in trust.

#### General Fund Revenue Balance

The Local Government Act 2003 requires the Chief Finance Officer to report on the adequacy of financial reserves when consideration is given to the General Fund budget requirement for the year.

In February 2003 CIPFA published a guidance document on Local Authority Reserves and Balances. The guidance does not prescribe the minimum level of balances to be held but recommends that consideration is given to the strategic, operational and financial risks facing the authority. During the consultation on this



document it was suggested that the recommended minimum should be 5% of net expenditure and this has been followed by a number of authorities. 5% for Redditch would mean maintaining balances at or around £625k. However, just a 1% variation in gross income and gross expenditure is equivalent to £340k. The increased pressures on limited resources as demonstrated by the projected increases in formula grant, the last round of revenue bids which totalled £880k, including the revenue implications of capital bids, and the economic uncertainty makes it increasingly difficult to contain expenditure within existing budgets.

In considering the Council's overall financial position and the increased pressures on the limited resources available **a general fund revenue balance of £750k is considered to be a prudent minimum.**

### **Housing Revenue Account Balance**

The balance at 31 March 2009 was £583k, equivalent to £96 per property. The element of the Housing Revenue Account subject to most fluctuation is the contribution to repairs account. Additional demands for repairs can place pressure on the already constrained budget. It is therefore recommended that the balance on the **Housing Revenue Account balance should be maintained at a prudent minimum of £100 per property which would equate to £605k.**

### **Usable Capital Receipts**

At 31 March 2009 the Council held £1,337k in usable capital receipts. With effect from 1 April 2004 capital receipts from right to buy council house sales have been subject to pooling and the availability to fund capital expenditure from those receipts retained by the Council has been subject to Government regulation.

## Capital and Revenue Balances

	31-Mar-08 Actual		31-Mar-09 Actual		Use under Current Council Policy
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	
<b>Capital Financing Reserve</b>					
Provision for Credit Liabilities (GF)	333		333		General Fund Capital
Sub-Total		333		333	
<b>Earmarked Reserves</b>					
Insurance	61		61		Self Insurance and Excesses
Community Development	33		33		Earmarked for CD projects
Car Loan Scheme	7		8		Self insurance for bad debts
Hemming Road Enterprise Centre	45		45		Major repairs
Environmental Health	3		3		Contaminated Land/NEA Grant
Taxi Licensing	22		22		Works to taxi rank at bus station
Public Donations	74		83		Forge Mill Museum/Shopmobility
Concessionary Fares	43		43		Implementation of smart cards
Mercury Emissions	120		180		Works required by 2010
Capital grants and contributions	397		152		Specific capital projects
Job Evaluation	200		400		Revenue costs of job evaluation
Section 106 monies	1,065		1,024		Revenue or capital according to agreement
HRA Capital	4,450		4,450		HRA expenditure
Sub-Total		6,853		6,504	
<b>Usable Capital Receipts</b>					
Capital receipts		2,146		1,337	Capital, GF or HRA
<b>Revenue Balances</b>					
General Fund		1,461		2,131	Working Balance, Revenue or Capital
Housing Revenue Account		659		583	Working Balance, Revenue or Capital
<b>Other Balances</b>					
Major Repairs Reserve		529		526	HRA capital expenditure
Collection Fund		(260)		217	Local Tax collection to meet precepts and General Fund demand
<b>TOTAL</b>		<b>11,721</b>		<b>11,631</b>	

# Medium Term Financial Plan 2010 – 2013

## General Fund Budget

### Financial Forecast

#### Introduction

In some respects the Council's financial position over the medium term is certain. The Comprehensive Spending Review 2007 (CSR07) set out indicative formula grant allocations for the three year period commencing in 2007/08 (see table below) and the government have already announced that further efficiency savings will be required as part of the next spending review. In other respects the future is more complex and uncertain. Pay awards are tending to be settled several months after the date of implementation and the economy is not showing any real sign of recovery. This adds to the uncertainty.

#### Key Issues:

#### Comprehensive Spending Review (CSR07)

CSR07 (public sector spending plan) determined the Council forecast formula grant settlement for Redditch the next three years. 2010/11 is the last year of the CSR07 review. The proposed settlement figures for the years covered by CSR07 are as follows:

	2007/08	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11
Formula Grant	6,328,604	6,393,827	6,425,796	6,457,925
Increase		65,223	31,969	32,129
% increase		1.0	0.5	0.5

The proposed increases in formula grant have, until recently, been significantly less than the current rate of inflation. It is anticipated that the forthcoming spending review will see a standstill position with regards to formula grant. The cap on council tax increases could also be reduced to around 3%.

#### Local Authority Business Growth Incentive Scheme (LABGI)

The CSR07 announced a reduction in LABGI funding with no funding for 2008/09 but £50m and £100m provided for 2009/10 and 2010/11 respectively. Consultation commenced on a proposed reformed scheme to be introduced for 2009/10. It is proposed that, in the longer term, LABGI will be mainstreamed as part of the local government finance system. **Consultation which ran until the 20 November 2008 illustrated allocations based on a £100m fund which would see Redditch receive just £42.3k.** This is significantly less than the sums received over the last three years. In 2007/08 the Council received £343.3k. The outcome of consultation is still unknown.

#### Impact of rising energy prices

At the time of preparing the estimates for 2009/10 energy prices were forecast to increase by as much as 100% for gas and 70% for electricity. The contracts have now been let for the next 12 months commencing in November 2009. The actual increases will be 32% for gas and 17.5% for electricity (see table below). The overall increase for 2010/11 is forecast to be 20% based on the wholesale prices for summer 2010 and winter 2011. The overall cost to the General Fund in 2010/11 is estimated to be £485.7k and to the Housing Revenue Account £178.8k.

The majority of these reductions will fall on the General Fund. The charges to the Housing Revenue Account will be largely passed on the tenants by way of service charges.

	Estimated Expenditure 2009/10		
	Electricity	Gas	Total
	£	£	£
General Fund	287,702	245,530	527,032
Housing Revenue Account	89,888	109,760	199,648
<b>Estimated Total 2009/10</b>	<b>377,590</b>	<b>355,290</b>	<b>732,880</b>
Potential saving – GF	50,470	77,969	128,439
Potential saving - HRA	15,764	34,866	50,630
<b>Post contact estimate</b>	<b>311,356</b>	<b>242,455</b>	<b>553,811</b>

### Pension Fund increases

The last review of the Pension Fund revealed that a rate of 23.9% to be payable by 2013/14 to move the fund towards being fully funded. This rate is currently being phased in over a 6 year period. The uncertainty within the stock/money market is likely to impact on the performance of the Pension Fund. The rates currently payable are as follows:

Employer Pension Contribution Rates				
	2008/09	2009/10	2010/11	2011/12*
	%	%	%	%
Rate payable	20.0	20.8	21.6	22.3
The rate payable from 1 April 2011 will be revised following the next actuarial review of the Pension Fund on 31 March 2010.				

The County Pension Service have advised the Council that any pension costs associated with early retirements will have to be paid as a lump sum or over a 3 year period. The Council has previously not made these payments but had liabilities added to the actuarial strain. The early retirements in 2008/09 cost £697.7k or £251k per annum for three years.

For the small number of liabilities that occur each year it would be preferable to pay the cost as a lump sum but for any major restructuring the Council may need to consider meeting the cost over three years because of the impact on revenue balances.

### Value Added Tax (VAT)

At the end of March 2009 a claim for overpaid VAT was been submitted by Grant Thornton on behalf of the Council for £620k plus statutory simple interest. Part of the claim for £274k, relating to the period prior to 1 January 1990, is more speculative. Due to the volume of claims being submitted these monies, if agreed, may not be received until the latter end of 2009/10 or 2010/11. In addition the Council has, on the advice of Grant Thornton, lodged a claim at the High Court for compound interest. The interest would potentially be paid at a rate equivalent to Government borrowing, however, the matter may take 2-3 years to resolve. The original projections from Grant Thornton estimated a total refund of £2 million based on interest being paid at 3% above base rate.

### Prudential Borrowing

In 2007/08 the Council undertook Prudential Borrowing in order to fund part of its housing and general fund capital programmes. Further borrowing will be undertaken in 2008/09 and future years. Prudential borrowing has a direct impact on revenue. In respect of the general fund

borrowing the Council is required to make a Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) equivalent to the beneficial life of the asset/improvement funded from borrowing. In addition to this provision both the Housing Revenue Account and the General Fund will be charged with the interest cost of borrowing.

Based on the current level of borrowing and the level of borrowing included in the approved capital programme the revenue implications are as follows:

<b>Fund affected:</b>	<b>Existing</b>	<b>2010/11</b>	<b>2011/12</b>	<b>2012/13</b>
	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>	<b>£'000</b>
<i>General Fund Borrowing</i>	2,321.6	5,876.9	7,663.9	9,017.5
MRP	171.0	408.1	527.2	617.5
Interest*	187.2	329.6	410.3	446.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>358.2</b>	<b>737.7</b>	<b>937.5</b>	<b>1,063.5</b>
<i>Housing Revenue Account Borrowing</i>	10,582.5	16,249.3	19,941.6	22,174.2
Interest*	356.1	536.6	723.8	842.3
<b>Total</b>	<b>356.1</b>	<b>536.6</b>	<b>723.8</b>	<b>842.3</b>

\* assuming interest at 4%

The figures in the above table assume that 90% of the HRA and 80% of the GF capital programme is delivered in the year as programmed. Any slippage will delay the revenue impact of borrowing.

The impact of the cost of borrowing requires due consideration because of the impact the Council's flexibility within the budget to make budget strategy savings or to reallocate resources in future years.

## General Fund Forecast

The table below show the actual outturn position for 2008/09; the approved budget for 2009/10; an updated position for 2009/10 and a forecast for the next three financial years.

2008/09 Actual £'000		2009/10 Estimate £'000	2009/10 Updated £'000	2010/11 Forecast £'000	2011/12 Forecast £'000	2012/13 Forecast £'000
11,223.3	<b>Net cost of services</b>	13,179.5	13,179.5	13,245.2	13,869.1	12,925.8
	Approved Bids		536.1	594.7	615.2	
	DWP reinvestment bids		68.8	98.6	31.6	13.5
	Approved savings		(870.1)	(1,370.3)	(1,477.1)	
	Energy		(128.4)	(45.0)	(45.0)	
	MRP etc		(50.0)	50.0	80.0	90.0
	Benefit Subsidy		(60.0)			
	VAT reclaim		(346.0)			
	Job evaluation (JE)			355.0		
	Pay award		(215.0)	(260.0)	(130.0)	250.0
	Inflation					100.0
	Fees and Charges			75.0	75.0	(90.0)
	Budget gap	(307.2)				(603.0)
269.9	Transfer to reserves					
<b>11,493.2</b>	<b>Net expenditure</b>	<b>12,872.3</b>	<b>12,114.9</b>	<b>12,743.2</b>	<b>13,018.8</b>	<b>12,779.3</b>
	<b>Resources</b>					
6,393.8	Formula Grant	6,425.8	6,425.8	6,457.9	6,457.9	6,457.9
5,284.0	Council Tax	5,573.3	5,573.3	5,712.6	5,855.5	6,001.8
457.3	LAGBI					
49.0	Area Based Grant	71.0	71.0	97.5	75.0	75.0
(20.7)	Collection Fund	13.8	13.8	0.0	0.0	0.0
<b>12,163.4</b>	<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>12,083.9</b>	<b>12,083.9</b>	<b>12,268.0</b>	<b>12,388.4</b>	<b>12,534.7</b>
(670.2)	Contribution from/(to) balances	788.4	31.0	475.2	630.4	244.6
<b>1,461.0</b>	<b>General Fund Balances</b>	<b>1,461.0</b>	<b>2,131.2</b>	<b>2,100.3</b>	<b>1,625.0</b>	<b>994.6</b>
(670.2)	less use of balances	788.4	31.0	475.2	630.4	244.6
	add transfer to balances	77.4				
<b>2,131.2</b>	<b>Balance c/fwd</b>	<b>750.0</b>	<b>2,100.2</b>	<b>1,625.0</b>	<b>994.6</b>	<b>750.0</b>

### Assumptions:

- 2.5% increase in council tax and fees and charges for 2010/11 to 2012/13.
- Pay award 1%.
- 3% increase in pay bill from 2010/11 due to job evaluation. There will also be a cost associated with any back pay which could be met from the job evaluation provision which will stand at £600k by the end of 2009/10.

- Increase in formula grant (Revenue Support Grant and redistributed NDR) as per CSR07 except 2011/12 & 2012/13– no increase assumed. A 1% change would be equivalent to £65k.
- Level of local authority error in respect of Benefits kept below threshold – maximising subsidy
- Any bids will need to be funded from additional savings. The above forecast does not take into any revenue impact of the Abbey Stadium Redevelopment.
- SERCO proposals not taken into account apart from approved savings from shared services.

The above table shows that there will be a budget gap of £603k in 2012/13.

## Sensitivity Analysis

### Job Evaluation and pay award 2010/11

The following table illustrates the potential impact of different percentage increases on the pay bill in 2010/11 due to job evaluation and the pay award. It also shows the potential ongoing impact for 2011/12.

Increase in pay bill (assuming 1% increase in 2009/10)	2010/11 £'000	1% increase 2011/12 £'000	2% increase 2011/12 £'000
2%	378	226	376
3%	524	228	380
4%	670	231	383
5%	816	233	387
6%	962	235	391
<b>Existing budget</b>	<b>357</b>	<b>366</b>	<b>366</b>
A pay increase of 0.5% would save around £280k on the existing budget			

### Council tax increase

The following table illustrates the income generated through differing increases in council tax, assuming that any growth in the tax base will be offset by any increases in non-collection.

	£'000	Band D increase £
<b>Current income from Council Tax (Band D £204.08)</b>	<b>5,573.3</b>	
Assumed increase 2.5%	<b>139.3</b>	<b>5.10</b>
1.5% increase	<b>83.6</b>	<b>3.06</b>
0.5% increase	<b>27.9</b>	<b>1.02</b>

## Implications of Shared Services (SERCO)

The following tables illustrate the impact of SERCO Business Case projections combined with the potential impact of job evaluation.

Projection based on 3% increase in pay bill for job evaluation plus 1% pay award.

	2009/10 Estimate	2009/10 Updated	2010/11 Forecast	2011/12 Forecast	2012/13 Forecast
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Net expenditure</b>	<b>12,872.3</b>	<b>12,114.9</b>	<b>12,743.2</b>	<b>13,018.8</b>	<b>12,779.3</b>
Add back forecast budget gap					603.0
add back approved savings from shared services			250.0	350.0	350.0
add SERCO projections		101.0	60.5	(569.0)	(1,303.0)
<b>Revised net exp.</b>	<b>12,872.3</b>	<b>12,215.9</b>	<b>13,053.7</b>	<b>12,799.8</b>	<b>12,429.3</b>
less					
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>12,083.9</b>	<b>12,083.9</b>	<b>12,268.0</b>	<b>12,388.4</b>	<b>12,534.7</b>
Use of balances	788.4	132.0	785.7	411.4	(105.4)
<b>General Fund balances b/fwd</b>	<b>1,461.0</b>	<b>2,131.2</b>	<b>1,999.2</b>	<b>1,213.5</b>	<b>802.1</b>
Add transfer to balances	77.4				
Use of balances	788.4	132.0	785.7	411.4	(105.4)
<b>Balances c/fwd</b>	<b>750.0</b>	<b>1,999.2</b>	<b>1,213.5</b>	<b>802.1</b>	<b>907.5</b>

Projection based on 5% increase in pay bill for job evaluation plus 1% pay award.

	2009/10 Estimate	2009/10 Updated	2010/11 Forecast	2011/12 Forecast	2012/13 Forecast
	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000	£'000
<b>Revised net exp. (from table above)</b>	<b>12,872.3</b>	<b>12,215.9</b>	<b>13,053.7</b>	<b>12,799.8</b>	<b>12,429.3</b>
add back forecast budget gap				347.0	200.0
Add additional cost of JE etc			295.0	(47.0)	105.0
<b>Adjusted net expenditure</b>	<b>12,872.3</b>	<b>12,215.9</b>	<b>13,348.7</b>	<b>13,099.8</b>	<b>12,734.3</b>
less					
<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>12,083.9</b>	<b>12,083.9</b>	<b>12,268.0</b>	<b>12,388.4</b>	<b>12,534.7</b>
Use of balances	788.4	132.0	1,080.7	711.4	199.6
<b>General Fund balances b/fwd</b>	<b>1,461.0</b>	<b>2,131.2</b>	<b>1,999.2</b>	<b>918.5</b>	<b>207.1</b>
Add transfer to balances	77.4				
Use of balances	788.4	132.0	1,080.7	711.4	199.6
<b>Balances c/fwd</b>	<b>750.0</b>	<b>1,999.2</b>	<b>918.9</b>	<b>207.1</b>	<b>7.5</b>
<b>Budget gap</b>				<b>542.9</b>	<b>742.5</b>



## Housing Revenue Account

To be updated in light of consultation paper due to be published in July 2009.

2008/09 Actual £'000		2009/10 Estimate £'000	2009/10 Updated £'000	2010/11 Forecast £'000	2011/12 Forecast £'000	2012/13 Forecast £'000
19,573.2	<b>Net cost of services</b>	20,593.9	20,182.2	20,593.8	21,707.8	
	Inflation			130.0	134.0	
	Financing			84.0	34.0	
	Subsidy			900.0	950.0	
	Bids etc.			0.0	0.0	
<b>19573.2</b>	<b>Expenditure</b>	<b>20,593.9</b>	<b>20182.2</b>	<b>21,707.8</b>	<b>22,825.8</b>	
	<b>Resources</b>					
18,723.3	Rents	19,608.5	19,280.2	20,550.0	21,575.0	
551.6	Non dwelling rents	567.4	567.4	570.0	570.0	
179.6	Charges/other income	174.1	174.1	175.0	175.0	
42.8	Interest	79.5	78.5	70.0	60.0	
	Transfer from reserves	0.0	0	150.0	500.0	
	Misc.	0.0	0	0.0	0.0	
<b>19,497.3</b>	<b>Total Resources</b>	<b>20,429.5</b>	<b>20,100.2</b>	<b>21,515.0</b>	<b>22,880.0</b>	
75.9	Contribution from/(to) balances	164.4	82.0	192.8	54.2	
<b>659.3</b>	<b>HRA Revenue Balances</b>	<b>883.9</b>	<b>583.4</b>	<b>785.6</b>	<b>592.8</b>	
75.9	less use of balances	164.4	82.0	192.8	(54.2)	
<b>583.4</b>	<b>Balance c/fwd</b>	<b>719.5</b>	<b>501.4</b>	<b>592.8</b>	<b>647.0</b>	

Significant elements within the Housing Revenue Account are outside local authority control. Rents are set according to the formula prescribed by central government. The contribution (around £3.7m) to be made to the Major Repairs Reserve is determined by the subsidy calculation as is the amount to be paid to central government in respect of negative subsidy. In 2009/10 this figure is estimated to be £6.2million, an estimated increase of £333k.

# Capital Investment

## Introduction

The Council was 'debt free' from May 2002 until 2006/07. Until 2004 its major source of capital funding has been from capital receipts derived from the sale of council houses under the Right to Buy (RTB) legislation and other asset disposals. The 1st April 2004 saw the introduction of pooling arrangements for RTB receipts. This meant that local authorities were required to pay over to central government 75% of all RTB receipts. However, as at the end of 2003/04 the Council was technically 'debt free' it was entitled to benefit from the transitional arrangements introduced at the same time. These arrangements ended on the 31st March 2007. In 2008/09 the Council sold just 6 dwelling under the RTB scheme. It has been assumed that in the short term there will be no further disposals.

## Borrowing – The Prudential Code

The Local Government Act 2003 abolished the system of credit approvals and gave councils the ability to borrow for capital purposes within a new prudential framework.

From the 1<sup>st</sup> April 2004 the Council has been required to comply with the Prudential Code with respect to the funding of capital expenditure. The Prudential Code allows authorities to borrow for capital purposes provided that they can demonstrate the borrowing is affordable.

## Capital Programme

The table below sets out the Council's approved Capital Programme for the next three years and the resources identified to fund the Programme.

### CAPITAL PROGRAMME 2010/11 - 2012/13

<b>Council Priority:</b>	<b>2010/11 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2011/12 Estimate £'000</b>	<b>2012/13 Estimate £'000</b>
<b>Clean and Green</b>			
Landscape/Environmental Improvements	450.0	450.0	200.0
<b>Total</b>	<b>450.0</b>	<b>450.0</b>	<b>200.0</b>
<b>Housing</b>			
Housing Improvements (HRA)	6,403.0	5,000.4	629.8
Other Housing (HRA)	770.0	770.0	
Grants & Loans (GF)	630.0	630.0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>7,803.0</b>	<b>6,400.4</b>	<b>629.8</b>
<b>Enterprising</b>			
Town Centre Enhancements	250.0	150.0	
<b>Total</b>	<b>250.0</b>	<b>150.0</b>	
<b>Well Managed Organisation</b>			
Works to Public Building	250.0	250.0	
Information Technology	25.0	25.0	
	<b>275.0</b>	<b>275.0</b>	
<b>Total Programme</b>	<b>8,778.0</b>	<b>7,275.4</b>	<b>829.8</b>
<b>CAPITAL RESOURCES:</b>			
Prudential Borrowing	4,818.0	3,315.4	200.0
Major Repairs Allowance (MRA)	3,700.0	3,700.0	629.8
Grants and other funds	260.0	260.0	
<b>Total Funding</b>	<b>8,778.0</b>	<b>7,275.4</b>	<b>829.8</b>

### Capital Receipts

It has been assumed that there will be no Right to Buy sales for the foreseeable future.

## Financial Risks

In preparing the budgets and forecasts a number of assumptions have been made. There is a risk that some of these assumptions may prove to be inaccurate or that other developments occur that require the budgets/forecasts to be revised. The table below details some of the assumptions/developments and their potential impact.

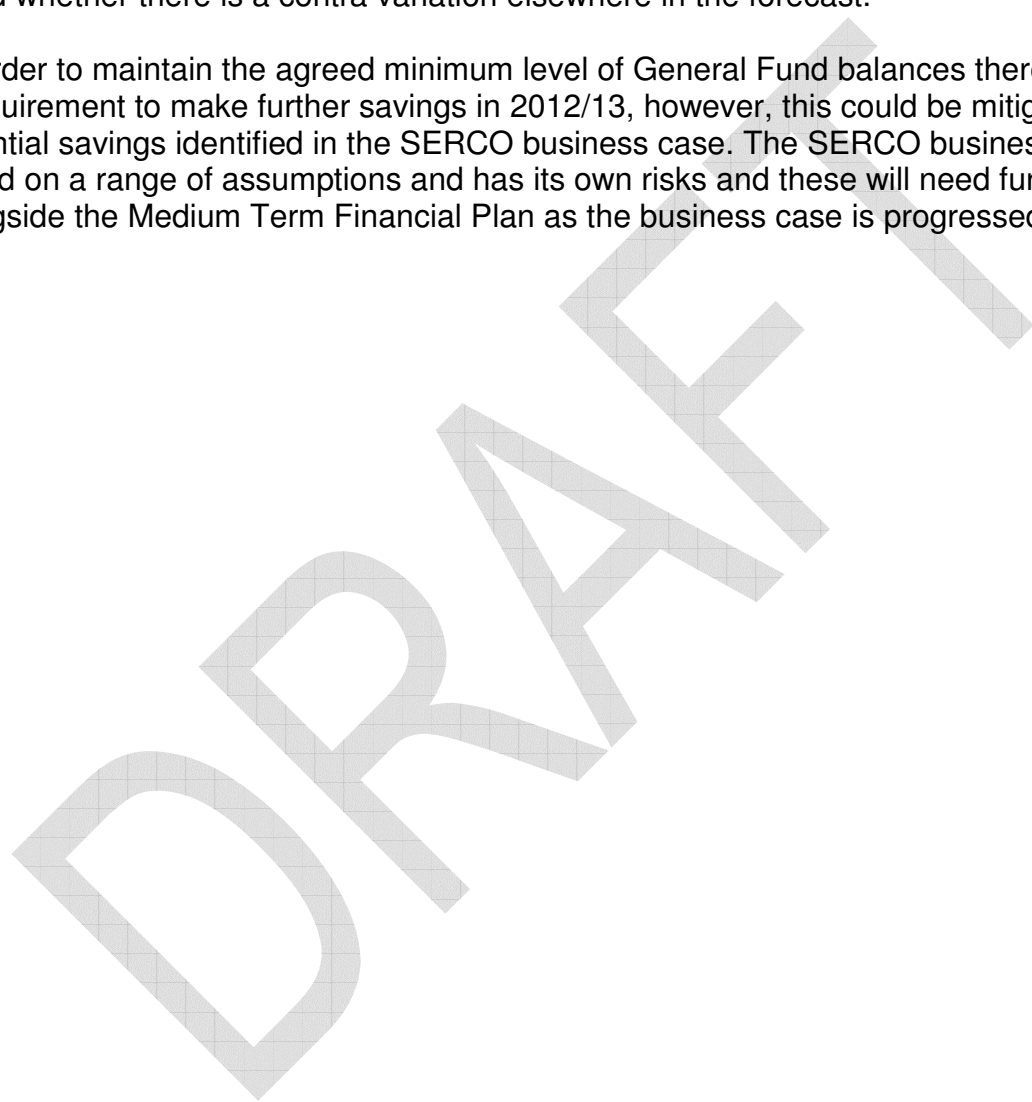
Budget element	Risk/Opportunity	Likelihood	Impact	Financial Impact £k
Pension Fund	Employers contributions are currently 20.8% of gross pay. An actuarial review is due to take place in 2010. An extra 1% would cost £150k. Any future early retirements will have an immediate impact on the revenue account.		Medium	£150
Concessionary Fares	There is a proposal to transfer the responsibility for Concessionary Travel to the upper tier authority. This will mean a reduction in Formula Grant the impact of which is uncertain.	High	High	£500+ potential
Shared Services	The forecasts for 2010/11 and 2011/12 include savings of £390k. There may also be cost associated with tribunal claims.	High	High	£390k
VAT reclaim	The Council has submitted a claim for £620k in respect of 'overpaid' VAT. There is no guarantee that this will be agreed by HM Revenue & Customs	Medium	High	£346k

Housing Benefit Subsidy	The budget forecasts include £100k to be generated from a reduction	Medium	Low	£100k
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	<p>in local authority errors thereby attracting more subsidy. This is dependant upon the error rate remaining below the threshold for the whole of the forthcoming period.</p>			
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The current forecast for the General Fund is based on a number of assumptions. The impact of any variation to these assumptions will be dependant upon the extent of the variation, the timing of it and whether there is a contra variation elsewhere in the forecast.

In order to maintain the agreed minimum level of General Fund balances there is already forecast a requirement to make further savings in 2012/13, however, this could be mitigated by the potential savings identified in the SERCO business case. The SERCO business case is also based on a range of assumptions and has its own risks and these will need further consideration alongside the Medium Term Financial Plan as the business case is progressed.



## Conclusions

1. The Medium Term Financial Plan indicates that the Council may need to make savings in the forthcoming period in order to set a balance budget. The level of savings will be largely dependant upon the outcome of job evaluation, the VAT reclaim and shared services.
2. The situation regarding the Housing Revenue Account is subject to government consultation on subsidy and will need to be reviewed during the year.
3. The current level of revenue balances for the General Fund is currently at a level which is considered to be a prudent minimum. The Housing Revenue Account balances are marginally below the agreed level.
4. The number of Right to Buy sales has seen a very significant drop over the last two years. It has been assumed that there will be no RTB sales in the short term. This will mean that the capital programme will be largely funded by prudential borrowing which has long term implications for the Council in terms of flexibility within its budgets.
5. The Council needs to ensure, as far as practicable, that it has sufficient flexibility within its base budget to permit the reallocation of resources to priority areas to enable it to deal with emerging issues and priorities.
6. The Council needs to regularly review its base budget in order to address budget pressures both from within the Council and nationally to ensure that it can deliver on its priorities. Also to reflect the changes arising from shared services.
7. The Medium Term Financial Plan needs to be kept under review because of the potential impact of variations to the assumptions over the medium term.

## Executive Committee

All Wards

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### THE SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007 - IMPLICATIONS

(Report of the Head of Strategy and Partnerships)

#### 1. Summary of Proposals

The report advises Members of the implications of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007.

The Committee is asked to consider whether the Council should opt in to the process of submitting proposals which influence and shape national policy, and contribute to the promotion of sustainable communities within Redditch. Such proposals would be subject to consultation through a panel of representatives.

Whilst the Council has the opportunity to decide whether or not to engage locally in discussions about proposals for potential submission, there is no requirement to do so.

#### 2. Recommendations

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

- 1) **the powers for Councils and communities contained within the Act be noted;**  
  
**and**
- 2) **to RECOMMEND that EITHER**
  - a) **the Council opt into the process, working with representative local people to submit proposals to central government, to promote potential opportunities for assistance; OR**
  - b) **the Council decline the invitation to make proposals; OR**
  - c) **the Council adopt a light touch approach to the legislation and associated process, with a report to Committee following the publication of further guidance to review the findings of the initial round of proposals and decisions.**

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

#### Financial

- 3.1 Additional funding for the implementation of proposals made under the legislation, has not been proposed by central government.
- 3.2 There will be financial implications associated with establishing a consultation panel.
- 3.3 The Council's financial status could be subject to further scrutiny through the production of local spending reports which have been introduced by the Act.

#### Legal

- 3.4 The implications of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 are addressed within the report. The Act provides central government with a legal duty to assist Councils in promoting the sustainability of local communities.

#### Policy

- 3.5 The Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy which contributes to meeting the social, economic and environmental needs of the area was endorsed by Council on 27 October 2008.

#### Risk

- 3.6 Failure to opt in may lead to the Council being challenged by the electorate and a loss of potential opportunities. However there is no statutory requirement to embrace the process covered by the Act and there are no guarantees that submitted proposals will be taken forward.
- 3.7 There is a risk to the reputation of the Council if suggested proposals are not agreed by the locally constituted panel or taken up and subsequently implemented by central government. Resident expectations would need to be suitably managed in order to minimise this risk, if the process is adopted.
- 3.8 There could also be a risk to the reputation of the Council in not taking up the opportunity to further contribute to the promotion of sustainable communities.
- 3.9 Considerable officer time will be required to implement the requirements if the decision is made to opt in and there is the risk of



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this outweighing the benefits realised if none of the proposals are accepted or indeed come to fruition.

- 3.10 The Council's consultation and engagement arrangements may be challenged if these are not sufficiently robust in line with the requirements of the Act.

### Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.11 The principal aim of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007 is to promote the sustainability of local communities by encouraging the improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the authority's area or part of its area.

### Report

#### 4. Background

- 4.1 The Sustainable Communities Act received Royal Assent on 23 October 2007. The aim of the Act is to promote the sustainability of local communities and it is part of the drive to empower citizens and communities.
- 4.2 The Bill was introduced as a result of a five year campaign led by a diverse coalition of 85 national organisations under the banner 'Local Works'.
- 4.3 The scope of the Act is very broad, and covers a range of economic social and environmental issues. It enables local people to make decisions within this scope about what they feel should be done to promote sustainability in their area.
- 4.4 It begins from the principle that local people know best what needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area, but that sometimes they need central government to act to enable them to do so. It provides a channel for local people to ask central government to take such action.
- 4.5 It is also a new way for local authorities to ask central government to take action which they believe would better enable them to improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. This could include a proposal to transfer the functions of one public body to another.

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### 5. Key Issues

#### Sustainability of Local Communities

- 5.1 Promoting the sustainability of local communities with regards to the economic, social or environmental well-being of the area or part of the area includes the participation in civic and political activity.
- 5.2 The Act links with the well-being powers contained within the Local Government Act 2000 (as amended by the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007). It contributes to the broader agenda for partnership working including the development of Sustainable Community Strategies and the negotiation of Local Area Agreements.
- 5.3 The well-being power enables local authorities to do anything they consider likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. The local authority and its residents are able to make the case for such proposals.

#### Proposals by Local Authorities

- 5.4 The Act requires the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government to invite local authorities to make proposals which they consider would contribute to promoting the sustainability of local communities.
- 5.5 On 14 October 2008 the first invitation was made to local authorities to submit proposals; the deadline for submissions is 31 July 2009. The invitation letter from the Secretary of State is appended to this report at **Appendix 1** together with a supporting letter from the Director of Empowerment.
- 5.6 The intention is that further invitations will be made periodically; the frequency of which is to be determined, but suggested may be annually.
- 5.7 Proposals may include a request for a transfer of functions between public bodies where it is believed that an alternative body may be better placed to carry out that particular function, subject to consultation.
- 5.8 Before making a proposal there are a number of matters in Schedule 2 of the Act which the local authority needs to take into account. These proposals reflect some of the concerns of Local Works.

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- 5.9 The matters that need to be taken into account include
- a) The provision of local services
  - b) Marketing of organic food production
  - c) The number of local jobs
  - d) Measures to conserve energy
  - e) Measures to reduce road traffic
  - f) Increase in social inclusion
  - g) Measures to increase community health and well being
  - h) Planning policies
  - i) Increase in the use of local waste materials

### Decision on Short-list

- 5.10 The Secretary of State has appointed the Local Government Association (LGA) as 'the selector'. The selector will assess and shortlist ideas submitted to them by local authorities for consideration inline with regulations which will be made following consultation. The Secretary of State will consult with the selector to try and reach agreement about which proposals to implement.
- 5.11 It has been made clear that there is no requirement on Councils to submit any proposals or 'opt in' to the Act; however the power has been made available. Local works campaigners state that 'it is about local authorities making suggestions on what they want government to do to help reverse community decline and promote sustainable communities'.
- 5.12 Local Works have identified the following rationale for local authorities to 'opt in':
- a) Assistance from government
  - b) Power to determine that assistance
  - c) Strength in numbers
  - d) Transferring functions and monies from central to local control
  - e) Access to central spending accounts information
  - f) Democratic citizen involvement
- 5.13 The LGA has advised that, as Selector, it will only be useful for them to consider proposals which need national action of some kind, for example a change in national policy, a change to public spending, a transfer of functions from one body to another, a change to legislation or a change in how a nationally driven public service is run.

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Action Plans

- 5.14 The Act requires the Secretary of State to publish the decision on the short-list together with a statement of the action to be taken to implement any proposal. A report must be published and laid before Parliament on the progress that has been made in relation to each action plan.

Proposals: regulations

- 5.15 The Secretary of State consulted earlier in the year on the draft regulations and statutory guidance for the Act. The regulations were laid before Parliament on 13 October 2008 and came into force on 3 November 2008.
- 5.16 Statutory guidance relating to the Act was published on 9 July 2008, as an annex to statutory guidance on the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 (Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities: Statutory Guidance).
- 5.17 The guidance is set out at Appendix 2 and covers matters that relate to establishing a panel of representatives, including persons from under-represented groups and consulting them on proposals.

Links to the 'Duty to Involve'

- 5.18 There are similarities with the 'Duty to Involve' which was introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. This duty requires local authorities to inform, consult or involve representatives of local people in the exercise of their functions.
- 5.19 It is suggested that where authorities are proposing to use panels as part of the duty to involve, it may be sensible for the same panels to be used in relation to the Sustainable Communities Act, provided the relevant requirements are met.
- 5.20 Nationally there has been a mixed response to the use of the legislation and more locally the process has not, to date, been adopted and implemented.

**6. Other Implications**

- Asset Management - There are no specific implications
- Community Safety - Any proposals which seek to address economic, social or environmental well-being may impact positively on community safety issues.

- 
- |                  |   |   |
|------------------|---|---|
| Human Resources  | - | There will be Human Resource implications in relation to officer time establishing a panel of representatives, conducting consultation exercises, submitting and contributing to the implementation of proposals. |
| Social Exclusion | - | The Act seeks to provide the opportunity for all people resident in Redditch to play an equal role in the economic, social and civic life of the area.  |

## 7. **Lessons Learnt**

None.

## 8. **Background Papers**

Sustainable Communities Act 2007: A Guide (Communities and Local Government, February 2008)  
 Local Government, February 2008)  
 Sustainable Communities Act 2007  
 Local Government Association Website ([www.lga.gov.uk](http://www.lga.gov.uk))  
 Local Works Website ([www.localworks.org](http://www.localworks.org))

## 9. **Consultation**

This report has been prepared in consultation with relevant Borough Council Officers and Worcestershire Heads of Policy Group.

## 10. **Author of Report**

The author of this report is Liz Bellaby (Acting Policy Manager), who can be contacted on extension 3318 (e-mail: [liz.bellaby@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:liz.bellaby@redditchbc.gov.uk)) for more information.

## 11. **Appendices**

Appendix 1 - Invitation letter and supporting information letter

Appendix 2 - Guidance





www.communities.gov.uk  
community, opportunity, prosperity

14 October 2008

All Local Authority Leaders and Chief Executives in England      Our Ref: SCA invitation

Dear Colleague

**SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007: FIRST INVITATION TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS**

Communities and Local Government is the lead department in Government for the implementation of the Sustainable Communities Act 2007. The Act provides a valuable opportunity for local authorities (as defined under section 8 of the Act) to make proposals which they consider would encourage the improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of local areas. It begins from the principle that local people know best what needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area, but that sometimes they need central government to act to enable them to do so.

The Act sets out a simple process by which ideas generated by local communities which aim to promote local sustainability are put forward by the local authority to central government through a body known as the "selector". The LGA was appointed as selector in February 2008 and has a role in "short-listing" proposals to be submitted to Government for consideration.

The Secretary of State is required to decide which proposals on the short-list should be implemented, to give reasons for that decision, and to do so after consulting the LGA and trying to reach agreement. The Secretary of State will then publish a statement of how the Government will take forward any proposals that are to be implemented (the "action plan"). Further details about the provisions of the Act can be found at the link below.<sup>1</sup>

We are working closely with colleagues at the LGA to ensure the process for progressing proposals, arising from the invitation issued by the Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government today, is as streamlined and as transparent as possible. The remainder of this letter outlines the agreed process for making proposals and reaching decisions.

Making Proposals

Before making any proposal, local authorities must establish or recognise one or more panels of representatives of local persons and consult these panels and try to reach agreement about which proposals (if any) it wants to put forward; authorities are not required to submit a proposal.

Proposals should be sent to the Local Government Association (LGA), who have agreed to undertake the role of "selector" under the legislation. The deadline for submitting proposals

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<sup>1</sup> <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/sustainablecommunitiesact>  
Department for Communities and Local Government      Tel 0207 944 0067  
5/C6      Email [Stuart.hoggan@communities.gsi.gov.uk](mailto:Stuart.hoggan@communities.gsi.gov.uk)  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
London  
SW1A 5DU

is **31 July 2009**. This is intended to allow sufficient time for proper consideration by communities and local authorities.

The LGA website contains further details about the way in which proposals should be submitted.<sup>2</sup>

## Reaching Decisions on Proposals

Following the deadline for receipt of proposals the LGA will consider and, in cooperation with the Secretary of State, short-list certain proposals. The Secretary of State will then, after consulting the LGA and trying to reach agreement, decide which proposals to implement. The Secretary of State will publish her decision on the short-listed proposals and her reasons, together with her action plan.

Local authorities have asked for an indication of the likely approach of Government to decisions on short-listed proposals. The Secretary of State will in cooperation with the LGA assess proposals against the purpose of the Act; namely the promotion of the sustainability of local communities.

The following additional information reflects the Government's current thinking and may help to inform any proposals local authorities are considering as part of this process:

- the purpose of proposals is to identify issues on which central government can act to assist councils and communities to promote the sustainability of local communities and the Government will consider favourably proposals which meet this test. It follows from this that proposals are more likely to succeed if they are specific about the action required of central government and also are not already within the powers of local authorities (including powers for the promotion of well-being in section 2 of Local Government Act 2000<sup>3</sup>);
- there are established processes for settling the levels and distribution of public sector resources. The Government does not regard the Act as a route for agreeing additional public expenditure, either at national or local level, and so a particularly strong case will need to be made in support of any proposals that require this;
- as with all public policies, the Government will assess proposals taking into account their broad cost-benefit, including in relation to areas or groups that may be wider than those putting forward the proposal, together with the impact on specific groups. This will include the likely costs of making arrangements which are specific to a particular area or group, against the economies of scale which arise from more uniform approaches. Proposals which these test are more likely to succeed;
- the Government will also take into account its existing policy positions for which it is publicly accountable.

## Regulations and Guidance

The Secretary of State has made regulations and published guidance on the Act. The main messages include:

- the regulations require local authorities, before making any proposals, to establish or recognise one or more panels of representatives of local persons and to consult

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<sup>2</sup> <http://www.lga.gov.uk/lga/core/page.do?pageld=561616>

<sup>3</sup> [http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/ukpga\\_20000022\\_en\\_2#pt1-pb2-l1g2](http://www.opsi.gov.uk/Acts/acts2000/ukpga_20000022_en_2#pt1-pb2-l1g2)



them about each proposal. The guidance states that for the purposes of this Act, “representatives of local persons” means a balanced selection of the individuals, groups or organisations the authority considers likely to be affected by, or have an interest in the proposal. The term “representative” does not refer to formally elected or nominated members of the community;

- the intention behind section 5(5)(a) of the Act is to ensure that panels of representatives of local persons include persons from under-represented groups. The regulations state that “under-represented groups” means those groups of local persons who in the opinion of a local authority are under-represented in civic and political activity in the authority’s area. Local authorities are best placed to know which groups are under-represented in their area and how best to engage with them;

- the guidance does not prescribe which groups should be included in panels, how panels should be constituted or how many panels a local authority may choose to establish or recognise. It does however set out reasonable steps to identify and include representatives from under-represented groups on new or existing panels;

- the guidance states that local persons are those people likely to be affected by, or interested in, a particular proposal. They do not have to be a resident, and could be someone who works or studies in the area, visitors, service users, local third sector groups, businesses, parish councils, or anyone else likely to be affected by, or interested in, the proposal;

- the guidance states that local authorities will want to consult parish councils in their area.

#### Next Steps

Ministers have said they hope this invitation leads to a productive dialogue between central and local government and local communities, and that this will lead to innovative suggestions on how to improve the sustainability of local communities and what central government can do to help.

Because the process is new and the scope of the Act is wide we cannot be precise about how quickly decisions will be made. This will depend on the number and complexity of proposals. Once the overall position is clear, the LGA and Communities and Local Government will publish further information on the timescales for next steps. The Act requires the Secretary of State to issue further invitations to local authorities. The timetable for these invitations will be informed by the first round as it develops.

I hope this information is helpful and look forward to working with LGA colleagues to improve the sustainability of our communities. If you have any queries about the process please contact Communities and Local Government by e-mail at: [sca@communities.qsi.gov.uk](mailto:sca@communities.qsi.gov.uk) or by telephone at: 020 7944 8648 or contact the LGA on 0207 664 3238.

**STUART HOGGAN**  
**DIRECTOR COMMUNITIES GROUP**



**The Rt Hon Hazel Blears MP**  
*Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government*

**Department for Communities and Local Government**

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Our Ref: SCA Invitation

14 October 2008

All Local Authority Leaders and  
Chief Executives in England

## **SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITIES ACT 2007 – FIRST INVITATION TO LOCAL AUTHORITIES TO SUBMIT PROPOSALS**

Dear Colleague

The Sustainable Communities Act 2007<sup>1</sup> creates a useful opportunity for local authorities to propose new ways to improve local neighbourhoods for their residents, visitors and businesses. I am formally inviting local authorities under section 2(1) of the Sustainable Communities Act to submit their proposals.

This initiative is part of the drive to empower citizens and communities; others are highlighted in the White Paper *Communities in Control: real people, real power*<sup>2</sup> which was published in July this year.

The principal aim of the Act is to promote the sustainability of local communities by encouraging the improvement of the economic, social or environmental well-being of the authority's area, including participation in civic and political activity.

It begins from the principle that local people know best what needs to be done to promote the success of their area, but that sometimes they need central government to act to enable them to do so. It provides a channel for local people to ask central government, via their local authority, to take such action and for central government to work in cooperation with the Local Government Association (LGA), which represents the interests of local authorities, in making it happen.

I hope this invitation leads to a productive dialogue between central and local government and local communities, and that this will lead to innovative suggestions on how to improve the sustainability of local communities and what central government can do to help.

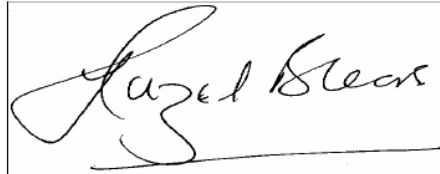
Local authorities have until 31 July 2009 to put forward proposals. All proposals should be sent to the LGA which has been appointed as the "selector" under the terms of the Act. I enclose a letter from the Director for Empowerment at CLG, Stuart Hoggan, which gives further details about the process for submitting and progressing proposals.

<sup>1</sup> Further details at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/localgovernment/sustainablecommunitiesact>

<sup>2</sup> Further details at <http://www.communities.gov.uk/publications/communities/communitiesincontrol>

I look forward to working closely with the LGA to identify those proposals on which Government can best assist local authorities and local communities in promoting the sustainability of local areas, in ways which benefit local people in tangible ways.

Yours sincerely

A handwritten signature in black ink, enclosed in a thin black rectangular border. The signature is written in a cursive style and reads "Hazel Blears".

**HAZEL BLEARS**





## Sustainable Communities Act 2007: A Guide



## Sustainable Communities Act 2007: A Guide

Communities and Local Government  
Eland House  
Bressenden Place  
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February 2008

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# Sustainable Communities Act – Implementation

The Sustainable Communities Act received Royal Assent on 23 October 2007. The aim of the Act is to promote the sustainability of local communities. This note describes what will happen next. It is in three parts.

1. A quick guide to the main provisions of the Act
2. A step by step guide to the Sustainable Communities Act. This describes what the Act means clause by clause. It makes clear what has to be done, who has to do it and when they have to do it.
3. A timetable for action, stating how the Government plans to implement the Act. This will describe the Government's approach to implementation and give details of key dates.

## Background

The Sustainable Communities Bill was introduced to Parliament as a Private Members Bill. It was sponsored in the House of Commons by Nick Hurd MP, Conservative, Ruislip-Northwood and in the House of Lords by Lord Marlesford. The Bill was supported through Parliament by the Government and all of the main English political parties. It is the result of a five year campaign led by a coalition of organisations under the banner Local Works. Local Works name 85 national supporting organisations reflecting a very wide constituency.

## A quick guide to the Sustainable Communities Act

The Sustainable Communities Act aims to promote the sustainability of local communities. It begins from the principle that local people know best what needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area, but that sometimes they need central government to act to enable them to do so. It provides a channel for local people to ask central government to take such action. It is also a new way for local authorities to ask central government to take action which they believe would better enable them to improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. This could include a proposal to transfer the functions of one public body to another.

The scope of the Act is very broad, covering economic, social and environmental issues. It does not limit the type of action that could be put forward, provided the action is within that broad scope. It is for local people to decide what they think needs to be done to promote the sustainability of their area.



The Act is designed to strengthen the role of communities. It provides a simple process by which the ideas generated by local communities are fed through their local authority and a body known as the “selector” (which we envisage will be the LGA) to central government. As it will not be possible for all suggestions to be put direct to central government, local authorities and the selector will have a “short-listing” role. The government will consult the selector and try to reach agreement on which of the proposals on the short-list should be implemented. The government will respond to all of the suggestions that are short-listed by the selector and will publish an action plan setting out how it will take forward the suggestions that it adopts.

As well as enabling local communities and local authorities to make suggestions for government action, the Sustainable Communities Act also ensures that communities are better informed about the public funding that is spent in their area. New “Local Spending Reports” will provide quick and easy access to information about where public money is spent. This will enable local authorities, their partners and communities to take better informed decisions about the priorities they choose to pursue to promote the sustainability of their local community.

# A step-by-step guide to the Sustainable Communities Act

## Section 1: Sustainability of local communities

### **The aim of the Act**

Section 1 describes the principal aim of the Act as being to promote the sustainability of local communities. In the Act, references to promoting the sustainability of local communities are references to encouraging the economic, social or environmental well-being of the authority's area, or part of its area. This includes participation in civic and political activity.

Section 1 was written in this way to reflect the well-being powers that local authorities were granted by the Local Government Act of 2000. The reason for making this link is to ensure that the Act supports the role of local authorities as community leaders and contributes to the broader agenda for partnership working at local level, including the development of Sustainable Community Strategies and the negotiation of Local Area Agreements.

### **The power of well-being**

The well-being power enables local authorities to do anything they consider likely to promote or improve the economic, social or environmental well-being of their area. The breadth of the power is such that councils can regard it as a 'power of first resort'. Rather than searching for a specific power elsewhere in statute in order to take a particular action, councils can instead look to the well-being power in the first instance. If what they propose to do is likely to promote or improve the well-being in their area and does not involve raising money. And if what they propose is neither explicitly prohibited, nor explicitly subject to limitations and restrictions, on the face of other legislation then a council can proceed.

The references to well-being are designed to be inclusive and are deliberately drawn broadly. This means that there is a very wide range of activity which falls within the scope of the Act. It is for local authorities – and local people – to make the case for which activities they think will contribute to the economic, social and environment well-being of their area when making proposals under section 2 of the Act.

## Section 2: Proposals by local authorities

### **Invitation to make proposals**

Section 2 describes one of the key new measures introduced by the Act. It requires the Secretary of State to invite local authorities to make proposals which they consider would contribute to promoting the sustainability of local communities. Other than the reference to sustainability there is no limit placed on the types of proposals that local authorities can make. The details of how these proposals are to be made are covered in subsequent clauses.

### **Transfer of functions from one body to another**

Section 2 also states that proposals may include a request for a transfer of functions from one person to another. Broadly speaking, this provision recognises that local authorities may believe that the functions of some public bodies may be better performed by another. They may, therefore, propose that those functions be transferred. This may be a transfer from a national body to a local body, or it could be a transfer from one local body to another. If a local authority decides to request that the functions of one body are transferred to another they may also request that responsibility for the funding that is linked to that function is also transferred.

If a local authority makes such a proposal it must first consult both the body which currently performs the function and the body which the local authority proposes to transfer the function to. The functions that could be in scope are limited only by the principal aim of the Act, which is to promote the sustainability of local communities.

### **Matters in the Schedule**

Before it makes a proposal a local authority must have regard to the matters specified in the Schedule to the Act. "Having regard to" means that the local authority needs to consider or take into account these matters. The matters described in the Act's Schedule reflect some of the key concerns of Local Works and its partners. They are designed to help local authorities and their residents form a view of the types of activity that could promote the sustainability of their local community.

### **Timing of first invitation**

The Secretary of State must issue the first invitation to local authorities to make proposals on or before 22 October 2008, which is one year after the Act was passed. While the Act does not specify a time at which the Secretary of State must issue further invitations, the intention is to do so periodically. The Government will work with the local government sector to agree the frequency and timing of further invitations.

## Section 3: Decision on short-list

### **Appointment of a “selector”**

Section 3 requires that before inviting proposals the Secretary of State must appoint a “selector” to consider the proposals. The selector must represent the interests of local authorities. The Secretary of State envisages appointing the Local Government Association as the selector. The selector must draw up a short-list of proposals and it must do so in co-operation with the Secretary of State. The selector must follow the procedure laid down in regulations (see section 5 below).

### **Co-operation between the Secretary of State and the selector**

On receiving the short-list the Secretary of State must decide which of the proposals should be implemented. Before doing so, the Secretary of State must consult the selector and try to reach agreement about which of the proposals to implement. Although the Secretary of State and the selector must try to reach agreement, the final decision on whether or not to implement any proposal rests with the Secretary of State.

## Section 4: Action plans

### **Publication of decisions**

Section 4 requires the Secretary of State to publish her decision under section 3, and the reasons for it. She must also publish a statement of the action she proposes to take to implement any proposal. This statement will be known as an “action plan”.

### **Reports to Parliament**

Each year the Secretary of State must publish and lay before Parliament a report which describes the progress that has been made in relation to each action plan.

## Section 5: Proposals: regulations

### **Regulations**

Section 5 requires the Secretary of State to make regulations about the procedure to be followed by local authorities and the selector in relation to proposals. Before making regulations the Secretary of State must consult the selector and others who the Secretary of State believes represent the interests of local authorities. This consultation will inform the content of the regulations.

The regulations **may**:

- specify, or authorise the selector to specify, steps to be taken by a local authority before making proposals;
- specify steps to be taken by the selector in considering the proposals and drawing up the short-list;
- require the selector to prepare and provide a report on the proposals.

The regulations **must**:

- require a local authority, before making any proposal, to establish or recognise a panel of representatives of local persons and consult it about the proposal;
- require a local authority to try to reach agreement about proposals with the panel;
- require a local authority to have regard to any guidance issued by the Secretary of State – see below.

The regulations have yet to be made but they may include requirements intended to ensure the clarity, workability and quality of the overall process. The objective is to design a system that captures the best ideas from communities.

## Guidance

The Act requires local authorities to consult and try to reach agreement with local people via a panel of representatives before they make a proposal. Beyond this requirement, the Act does not specify how local authorities should consult or who they should consult.

The Secretary of State is, however, required to issue guidance to local authorities relating to the proposals. This:

- **must** include guidance on the inclusion of persons from under-represented groups; and
- **may** include guidance about establishing and consulting a panel of local representatives.

Before issuing this guidance the Secretary of State must consult local authorities or persons who represent the interests of local authorities.

## Definitions

The Act defines what is meant by:

- **local person**: a person who is likely to be affected by or interested in a proposal
- **panel**: a panel constituted in accordance with the regulations made by the Secretary of State

- **representative:** a person who appears to the local authority to be representative of local persons
- **under-represented groups:** to be defined in the regulations.

### **Links to the new “duty to involve”**

Aspects of this section are very similar to the new ‘duty to involve’ which applies to best value authorities, introduced in the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. Best value authorities are defined in the Local Government Act 1999. The duty to involve requires best value authorities to inform, consult or involve representatives of local people in the exercise of their functions. Where authorities are proposing to use panels as part of their implementation of the duty to involve, they may find it sensible to use the same panels in relation to the Sustainable Communities Act where the panels meet the requirements of the Sustainable Communities Act.

## Section 6: Local spending reports

### **Local spending reports**

Section 6 requires the Secretary of State to make arrangements for the production of local spending reports. A local spending report provides information about public expenditure in relation to a particular area. This will help promote the sustainability of local communities by providing access to high quality information about the public funding that is spent in the area.

### **Arrangements**

The Act requires the Secretary of State to consult on the arrangements but leaves discretion about the details to the Secretary of State. It does not specify what information must be included in a report, or the way in which the information must be presented. Bodies whose expenditure may be included in the local spending report include local authorities, government departments and any other person exercising public functions. The area covered by a report must be one or more local authority areas, one or more parts of a local authority area or any combination of these. Reports can cover past, current or future expenditure and the Secretary of State can provide different reports for different areas. The first arrangements must be made on or before 22 April 2009, which is 18 months after the Act was passed, but we intend to do so well before this date. We plan to update the information provided in local spending reports as it becomes available.

### **Purpose**

The aim of this section is to support local authorities, their partners and local people in their work to promote local sustainability. This provision will inform local authorities’ consultations with local people, strengthen local democracy and enhance the operation of the new Local Area Agreements by ensuring that there is greater accountability and transparency. We intend to ensure that local spending reports are closely linked with the regular and accessible information on local services that we have committed to provide for local communities.

Local spending reports will enable local authorities, their partners and communities to take better informed decisions about the priorities they choose to pursue to promote the sustainability of their local community. They will also enable local people and local authorities to identify which functions (and funding) they might propose should be transferred from one body to another.

While the aim behind local spending reports is to identify where public money is spent, it will not be possible or cost effective to map all public expenditure. For example, some public funding supports services which are not geographically specific or are used by people from a number of local authority areas.

## Section 7: Sustainable community strategy

Section 7 simply amends existing legislation to rename “community strategies” as “sustainable community strategies”. This section has no further effect. The aim of this provision is to highlight the key role these strategies play in promoting sustainability.

## Sections 8, 9 and 10

These sections contain further definitions (for example of what “local authority” means in this Act), enable funding to be paid out to carry out the functions of the Act, and define the geographical coverage of the Act.

## Schedule

The Schedule describes a series of matters to which local authorities must have regard (see above). These are issues which members of the coalition led by Local Works believe have a significant impact on the sustainability of local communities. The Schedule is not intended to be exhaustive or exclusive. It is intended to give local authorities and local people an indication of the type of matters they may wish to address in their proposals.

## Implementation

### **Approach to implementation**

The Government will work closely with the Act's supporters to agree a plan of implementation. While the Act contains a number of requirements that must be met, we believe that the strength of the Act lies in the way that it will encourage central and local government and local people work together to promote the sustainability of local communities. So we propose that both the regulations and the statutory guidance will be "light touch" and we do not expect to set out a series of detailed regulations that must be followed. Much of the detailed operation of the Act is subject to consultation, and we will ensure that we follow Cabinet Office guidance on consultation.

### **Timeline for implementation**

The Act contains a number of commitments relating to consultations and to timing. There are a number of other measures that we will need to take forward in order to implement the Act effectively. This is the outline timetable that we propose to follow:

- Discussion with Bill's supporters to prepare consultation package by January 2008
- Appoint the selector (which we envisage will be the LGA) by February 2008
- Formal consultation on Regulations and Guidance: February to May 2008
- Lay Regulations before Parliament: May 2008
- Bring together Sustainable Communities Bill Guidance with Creating Strong and Prosperous Communities Guidance: May 2008
- Secretary of State issues first invitation for proposals by October 2008
- Consultation on Local Spending Reports: Summer 2008
- Secretary of State makes arrangements for first Local Spending Reports: Autumn 2008 (required by April 2009)



## Executive Committee

All Wards

22 July 2009

### DUTY TO INVOLVE – IMPLICATIONS

(Report of the Head of Strategy and Partnerships)

#### 1. Summary of Proposals

This report advises Members of the implications of the Duty to Involve and considers the arrangements required for ensuring effective involvement of local people in planning for and delivering services.

The principle behind the new duty is to ensure that local people have enhanced opportunities to have their say. In meeting the duty the Council will need to consider how it provides information, consults and involves throughout all functions.

#### 2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

- 1) the requirements of the Duty to Involve be noted; and
- 2) a self-assessment be conducted in order to establish areas of compliance, analyse gaps and identify actions required in order to meet the Duty to Involve; and
- 3) a Communications and Engagement Strategy be developed, taking into account the findings from the gap analysis.

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

##### Financial

- 3.1 Community engagement activities are currently funded from existing budgets within service units.
- 3.2 When gaps have been identified within the current arrangements it is likely that funding will be required for future activities in discharging the Council's responsibilities under the Duty to Involve. Further financial implications including resource requirements will be identified through the gap analysis.

# Executive

## Committee

22 July 2009

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### Legal

- 3.3 The Duty to Involve is set out in section 138 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007. The new duty does not replace existing requirements on authorities to engage users or citizens. Specific requirements are addressed within the report.
- 3.4 When considering if and how representatives of local persons should be involved authorities should bear in mind that the duty does not give any new powers. For instance it does not enable authorities to pass on duties or responsibilities to another body, group or individual beyond the powers set out in other legislation (eg s.101 of the Local Government Act 1972)

### Policy

- 3.5 The Corporate Plan was adopted by Council on 20<sup>th</sup> April 2009. The Well Managed Organisation key objective WM9 to develop and introduce a Communications and Engagement Strategy was approved as part of a range of objectives.
- 3.6 The vision for Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy, adopted by Council on 27 October 2008 is for 'Redditch to be successful and vibrant with sustainable communities built on partnership and shared responsibility. Shared responsibility promotes active community participation.

### Risk

- 3.7 There will be implications for the Comprehensive Area Assessment if the Council demonstrates poor performance against the requirements of the Duty to Involve. CAA will assess how well the Council and its partners know and understand the needs and aspirations of their communities. The inspectors will be seeking evidence of the effective implementation of the Duty to Involve.
- 3.8 The Council's overall engagement arrangements may be subject to challenge if they are insufficiently robust to meet the requirements of the new duty.
- 3.9 Without effective citizen involvement there is the risk that the intended benefits such as services which better reflect the needs of users, will not be achieved.

### Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.10 Engagement with citizens and communities is central to sustainable development. The Council has an important part to play in enabling

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involvement in decision-making, and ensuring that sustainability becomes embedded in local services.

### **Report**

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 'Engagement should be embedded as standard practice throughout the authority, central to service delivery, policy and decision making' as promoted by Communities and Local Government (CLG), in their guidance document.
- 4.2 Central government is placing an increasing emphasis on involvement and devolution of power. Various government departments have evidenced the benefits of involving citizens in decision making and service provision:
- a) strengthening the democratic legitimacy of government and the civic life of the community
  - b) more efficient and effective services that better reflect the needs of users and have higher levels of customer satisfaction
  - c) safer communities and a more attractive built environment that meets people's needs
  - d) strengthening community cohesion
- 4.3 The Council already undertakes a range of engagement activities to meet the existing requirements of individual service functions (such as spatial planning). The new duty will need to be considered in addition to existing activities in order to identify gaps.
- 4.4 There are strong links between community engagement and the performance of local authorities. There are seven indicators in the national indicator set that relate to empowerment:
- a) NI 1 – percentage of people from different backgrounds who believe people get on well together in their local area
  - b) NI 2 – percentage of people who feel they belong to their Neighbourhood
  - c) NI 3 – level of civic participation in the local area
  - d) NI 4 – percentage of people who feel they can influence decisions in their local area
  - e) NI 5 – overall general satisfaction with the local area
  - f) NI 6 – participation in regular volunteering
  - g) NI 7 – environment for a thriving third sector

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### 5. Key Issues

- 5.1 The Duty to Involve came into force on 1<sup>st</sup> April 2009. It requires the Council to take steps considered appropriate to involve representatives of local persons in the exercise of any of their functions, where they consider it appropriate to do so.
- 5.2 The following three ways of involving must be considered:
- a) **Providing information** about the exercise of the particular function
  - b) **Consulting** about the exercise of the particular function
  - c) **Involving** in another way
- 5.3 A summary of the requirements is presented at Appendix 1 setting out who the Council will need to engage with, how this will be conducted, what factors need to be considered in applying the duty and what success will look like for both the Council and local people.
- 5.4 There are a range of issues and considerations to be addressed in order to successfully implement the Duty to Involve. The Council's Communication and Engagement Strategy will need to ensure:
- a) involvement leads to change
  - b) involvement is co-ordinated
  - c) the authority is set up for involvement
  - d) information is tailored and targeted
  - e) involvement is broad and inclusive
  - f) councillors lead involvement
  - g) involvement harnesses the third sector
  - h) involvement is monitored and evaluated
- 5.5 Community empowerment is the outcome of effective community engagement. It is also defined in the *Communities in control: real people, real power* white paper as 'passing more and more political power to more and more people, using every practical means available'.
- 5.6 The Improvement and Development Agency (IDeA) has developed a framework for an 'ideal empowering authority' and provides a benchmark against which the Council can assess its empowerment work. The framework uses diagnostic questions and identifies detailed success factors in the following key areas:
- a) Mainstreaming community empowerment
  - b) Working with communities, neighbourhoods and localities
  - c) The role of Members in community empowerment
  - d) Building the evidence and business case for community
  - e) Empowerment

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- f) Integrating community empowerment with community cohesion,
- g) equalities and human rights

5.7 The findings from this self assessment will help to inform the Communication and Engagement Strategy. In addition, the Strategy will identify the practical ways in which to engage with communities including empowerment methods, consultation methods and participatory techniques.

5.8 A timetable for carrying out the self-assessment and developing the strategy is shown below.

Audit existing communications and engagement activity – July 2009

Conduct self assessment in relation to compliance with the Duty to Involve – August 2009

Introduce revised corporate identity – August 2009

Introduce new Media Relations Policy – August 2009

Produce Communications and Engagement Strategy document – September 2009

## 6. **Other Implications**

Asset Management - No specific implications

Community Safety - Improved customer engagement will assist the Council and its partners to develop actions to meet the requirements of section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 as amended.

Human Resources - Human Resource implications will be identified through the self-assessment process.

Social Exclusion - Strengthening the way in which the Council engages will have a positive impact on social exclusion in the area

## 7. **Lessons Learnt**

7.1 Community engagement should be mainstreamed as part of everything that the Council does with the aim of better outcomes for people and places. This endorses the legal requirement *'to take appropriate steps to involve representatives of local people in the exercise of any functions'*.

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**8. Background Papers**

Creating Strong, Safe and Prosperous Communities: Statutory Guidance, Communities and Local Government, 2008

Community Empowerment, Improvement and Development Agency, April 2009

The Duty to Involve: Making it Work, Community Development Foundation, 2009

**9. Consultation**

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

**10. Author of Report**

The author of this report is Liz Bellaby, Acting Policy Manager, who can be contacted on extension 3318 (e-mail: [liz.bellaby@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:liz.bellaby@redditchbc.gov.uk) ) for more information.

**11. Appendices**

Appendix 1 – Summary of the Requirements of the Duty to Involve.

**Summary of the Requirements of the Duty to Involve**

The duty requires authorities to take those steps they consider appropriate to involve representatives of local people in the exercise of any of their functions, where they consider that it is appropriate to do so.

It specifies the three ways\* of involving that need to be covered in this consideration:

**Providing information**  
**Consulting**  
**Involving in another way**

**To involve representatives of local persons**

Those likely to be affected by, or interested in, a particular authority function. (Not necessarily just local residents)

It refers to a mix of 'local persons', ie a balanced selection of the individuals, groups, businesses, organisations etc that may be affected by or have an interest in the function. (Includes children and young people).

\* The Council will need to consider which approaches are appropriate (one, two, three or none) in the exercise of any particular function. Different approaches will be needed for different functions.

**Providing information**

- Provide appropriate information about services, policies and decisions
- Provision should support people in having their say and getting involved
- This goes beyond basic information such as how to access services
- Information should be easy to understand and tailored to different audiences to enable involvement

**Consulting**

- People should be offered opportunities to have their say about decisions and services
- Examples are statutory consultation, satisfaction surveys, direct dialogue through groups / panels
- Councils should ensure that consultation is carried out in line with good practice

**Involving in another way**

- Where it is appropriate people should have the chance to have their say and get involved over and above being informed and consulted
- Involvement is the most interactive form of engagement, giving people greater influence over decisions or delivery
- Opportunities should be provided for people to:

- 
- Influence or directly participate in decision making (eg participatory budgeting, shaping priorities via panels)
  - Provide feedback on decisions, services, policies and outcomes (eg feedback forms, website)
  - Co-design / work with the authority in designing policies and services (eg being involved in the commissioning of services)
  - Co-produce / carry out some aspects of services for themselves (eg responsibility for a community centre, transfer of the management of assets)
  - Work with the authority in assessing services (eg mystery shoppers, co-option onto Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

### **Applying the Duty**

When is it appropriate to inform, consult and/or involve?

The Council will need to consider:

- How to meet the duty in relation to routine functions and one-off decisions
- Combining and linking up engagement activities across the authority and with partners where possible
- How much influence is being offered over a decision eg where people are involved in difficult issues
- Privacy (people cannot be involved in individual cases but could be engaged with on policy development in these areas)
- Previous engagement or involvement (should be used to inform the next stage of involvement)
- Possible benefits and costs (cost benefit analysis should be carried out)

Who should be informed, consulted and/or involved?

This will vary depending on the authority, spatial level, policy or service in question.

It is particularly important in discharging the duty that a diverse range of groups are engaged.

The Council will need to consider:

- Who might be affected by a particular function
- Who might be interested in a particular function
- Ways to ensure the relevant parts of the community are reached, including those who are hard to reach
- Ensuring that equality requirements are applied to the duty

The Role of the Third Sector

(Non-governmental organisations including voluntary and community organisations, charities, social enterprises, cooperatives and mutuals)



The Council may wish to engage third sector organisations in a variety of ways:

- They may be affected by or interested in a particular function
- The Council may decide it is appropriate to engage with them
- They may act as advocates for local people and become involved that way, in support of residents
- They may be able to provide expert knowledge and assist in reaching out to marginalised and vulnerable groups

What information, consultation and/or involvement is appropriate?

Authorities need to regularly need to make decisions about how best to engage their local community. In fulfilling the duty the Council must consider:

- Accessibility (need to consider the needs of individuals)
- Proportionality (to the significance of the issue – both to the authority and local people)
- Coordination (integrated across the area)
- Partnership working (work through the LSP)
- Timing (engagement should be at the earliest possible time)

What will success look like?

Appropriate engagement and empowerment should be embedded as standard practice throughout the Council, central to service delivery, policy and decision making.

The Council should be able to demonstrate that:

- It understands the interests and requirements of the local community
- It uses this understanding to ensure the right level of engagement is delivered on the right issues, target at the right time and accessible to those the authority is trying to reach
- There is an appropriate corporate approach to engagement that flows from strategic policies into service delivery, and that activities are co-ordinated
- Local people feel that they are provided with engagement opportunities and will know how they can become involved. Local people will recognise that the Council's priorities and policies reflect their involvement and services are tailored to local needs.



## **Executive Committee**

No specific Ward

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### **ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES – FORESTRY MANAGEMENT**

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(Report of the Head of Environment)

#### **1. Summary of Proposals**

The current five year forestry authority grant aided woodland management programme is due to end and in its place a rolling programme of works can be developed on a two year cycle which allows for flexibility with regard to resources, non-controllable external factors and also enables reprioritising of work to suit market influences. Continuation of the programme will also enable continued enhancement amenity access of the woodlands.

#### **2. Recommendations**

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

- 1) the current five year programme of works be remodelled into a two year rolling programme;**
- 2) the existing arrangement with the external forestry consultant be continued until the 31 March 2010 Officers will appoint a suitable consultant via the Councils procurement procedures with effect from the 1 April 2010 for a period of four years with the option to extend the contract for one additional year;**
- 3) the works be let on a bi-annual basis based on competitive quotations and subject to availability and satisfactory performance by the contractors; and**
- 4) proposals for works to improve the aging footpath network within the woodland areas and any consequential capital bids be brought to the Committee in due course, including the identification of any potential external sources for funding of new or improved footpaths.**

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

#### Financial

- 3.1 The work is funded from Forestry Commission grant aid; receipts from the sale of the timber and existing revenue budgets with the aim of breaking even by the end of the programme. The external funding is linked to the type of work carried out in terms of the quality and amount of yield and, the return on that yield is directly influenced by market forces. A more flexible approach to how the programme is carried out may enable a more pro-active stance in taking advantage of potential sources of revenue.
- 3.2 The proposed changes with regard to Planning policy and the development of a Community Infrastructure Levy (CIL) may be a possible source for additional funding in the future with regard to physical/structural enhancements in the woodland areas and a flexible management system would be able to accommodate and take advantage of such opportunities in terms of the timing of the works.

#### Legal

- 3.3 As a landowner we have a duty of care under the Occupiers Liability Act 1984 to ensure that land that is publicly accessible is maintained in an appropriate condition and that any work carried out on that land conforms to national regulations such as the Health and Safety at Work Act 1974 and the Wildlife and Countryside Act 1981 as well to any industry standards and codes of practice. The forestry management work is not work primarily aimed at ensuring that the general condition and safety of the site is maintained as this is done via the Councils in house service however, it is subject to the same legal constraints and must not be at odds with the amenity use of the site.
- 3.4 The external funding that is gained via grants from the Forestry Commission will be subject to some contractual agreements in terms of what the funding will provide for and the time in which it is achieved. The use of the external forestry consultant is meant to ensure that not only do we achieve the funding but also that we comply with any relevant contractual conditions as well as ensuring that we do not operate in a manner that is detrimental to the status or statutory control of the sites i.e. SSSI or English Nature.

#### Policy

- 3.5 The proposals sit within the key priority of a Clean and Green Redditch and by having a designated programme of works we are able to ensure that the green character of Redditch is maintained in

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a manner that realises its potential whilst aiming to ensure that it is sustainable in perpetuity. It will also provide information for inclusion in the data that is required for reporting on NI 197 – Local Biodiversity.

### Risk

- 3.6 By not delivering a structured forestry programme external funding streams will not be available and any such work would have to be funded in its entirety from existing revenue sources which will mean that the programme will have to be reduced or, existing resources will have to be diverted from revenue budgets which provide for the general landscape maintenance across the whole Borough. In effect it is probable that only work relating to Health and Safety issues is likely to be undertaken. This may adversely affect the status of the woodland areas, one of which is a SSSI and five of which, due to their excellent condition, are currently classified as Local Nature Reserves.

### Sustainability / Environmental

- 3.7 A deterioration of the woodland areas will result in a loss of special designation and will result in a steady decline of the trees to a point where any commercial value is lost and the environmental diversity diminishes due to a lack of natural regeneration and future planting schemes as well as domination by poorer species. The diversity of species is also important for ensuring that should a species become particularly susceptible to disease that major losses are avoided as other species will be present to take their place so that the overall landscape is not immediately lost. Species diversity and management of the species within woodlands is also important to ensure that wildlife habitats are retained and where possible improved upon and well managed woodlands and woodland belts act as wildlife corridors providing a network of habitable green species across the borough for numerous wildlife species.
- 3.8 Woodland management can support the climate change agenda in a number of ways, from existing woodland simply acting as an important carbon store, to new woodland being able to buffer existing native woodlands against climate change, or through reducing flood risk by delaying water movements. There is also increasing scope for woodland management to contribute to developing a green economy, with a number of small wood fuel businesses developing within Worcestershire. In addition, through the Worcestershire Partnership, our role in maintaining and supporting Natural England and the West Midlands Biodiversity Partnership through developing biodiversity 'corridors' and using land use planning to both mitigate carbon emissions and to ensure that our woodlands are resilient and adapted to future climate

change impacts in the UK mean that ongoing, high quality maintenance of the woodland network in the Borough is essential.

### **Report**

#### **4. Background**

- 4.1 Redditch Borough Council owns and manages over 168 hectares (415 acres) of woodlands. The majority of this area, approximately 116 hectares (289 acres), is designated Ancient and Semi-Natural Woodland and is divided between 5 major woods and several smaller spinneys. The remaining 51 hectares (126 acres) consists of younger plantations of mixed conifer and broadleaved tree species, established as landscape/amenity, noise and pollution belts, often separating major roads, housing and industrial area throughout the Borough.
- 4.2 The woodlands are a highly valued part of the landscape of the Borough, providing the backdrop for much of the residential and industrial developments of the town as well as creating green corridors adjacent to the extensive road network.
- 4.3 The original Woodland Grant Scheme commenced in 1996 after detailed consultation with key agencies and has allowed for almost continuous management of the woodland areas in accordance with best silvicultural practices aimed at a) producing quality mixed age stands and b) enhancing the woodland infrastructure to ensure its long term viability.

#### **5. Key Issues**

- 5.1 The areas included within the current programme and those considered for future inclusion are not commercial woodlands but are intrinsic elements of the parks/amenity space that defines the landscape of Redditch and, as such their status is reflected in the management regimes that are not purely based on a potential financial crop yield.
- 5.2 The management objectives for each of the woodlands or barrier plantation are variable. They focused on the needs of local residents, consideration of conservation best practice or ideal silvicultural management systems all of which require slightly different management techniques in order to achieve the objectives. There are groups of local wardens and other user groups who have an input into what goes on within the woodlands, although all work is under the control of Officers within the Council, and instructed and supervised by the Council's woodland management agent, Pryor & Rickett Silviculture, whilst wildlife considerations are assessed by the Councils Greenspace Development and Bio-diversity Officers.

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- 5.3 There is a distinct difference in approach between the plantation woodlands owned by the Council and the designated Semi-Natural Woodlands, due to their national conservation status and their management history. In broad terms, the management approach for each is broadly as follows:

### Ancient & Semi-Natural Woodlands (ASNW)

- 5.4 Due to the general dislike by the residents of large-scale clear felling, a variety of uneven aged woodlands management systems have been adopted across all the Semi-Natural Woodland areas, which are focussed on natural seeding and regeneration where possible. Essentially thinning intervention and under storey management varies at a sub-compartment level, and the Council is looking for a range of different structures, canopies and ages to be created within each wood. Tree species diversity is to be maintained when thinning, only selecting for a stem quality once all species represented are retained in broad natural proportions. A mix of approaches to selection on thinning is adopted – sometimes the stands are marked by the Council and their agents, other times selection is undertaken by a contractor with either sample marking or marking of individual guidance. In broad terms the range of non-woodland habitats (rides and glades) is thereby increased. Dead wood, fallen and standing retentions are important from a conservation perspective, as are the retention and enhancement of character and particularly pleasing amenity trees and other amenity features, such as views and internal landscapes. Silvicultural operations are generally suspended during wet weather, and times to avoid school holidays and nesting seasons, often with forwarding (timber extraction) requiring some delay due to ground conditions. Brash is retained in the core of the stands, but cleared (either removed or scattered at designated points) or chipped if it is in close proximity to major paths and tracks. The degree of tidiness is often relative to major user groups' needs but is also considered in terms of the benefits regarding conservation. Timber sales, whilst important, are viewed as a secondary but intrinsic product of the mainstream management activity however, the manner in which timber is presented is nevertheless important to help maximise sales once the other objectives have been delivered.

### Plantation Woodlands

- 5.5 Many of these woodlands were established in the 1960's consisting mainly of mixed conifer and broadleaved tree species – many of which are fast growing - for landscape, amenity and noise pollution purposes. Each of these woodlands has its own particular context and the management approach varies with each. In broad terms there are a number of principles that apply across the woodland spectrum. The Council is seeking to develop more diversified and

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interesting plantations, with better age-class and vertical canopy structures. Silvicultural interventions and thinning selection focus on increasing the broadleaved component, whilst favouring sub-storey and seedling trees and shrubs to particularly enhance the under-layer. Faster growing species, such as conifer, poplar and sycamore, are selected for removal, as these species will have delivered their short-term objectives, and are in many cases beginning to result in management issues such as becoming potential risks due to proximity to highways, preventing development of nearby slow growing species and becoming potentially unstable due to their poor growth habit. Native shrub and tree species are therefore favoured wherever possible. Timing of operations in the plantations is a little more flexible due to the reduced conservation interests, but work is timed usually to avoid the main bird nesting season, from April to June. The approach to clearance of brash is dependant upon the local conditions and the visual intrusiveness of the brash concerned. In many cases it is cut through and left within the core of a stand but, near major paths, entrances and higher profile viewing sites, the material is often chipped in situ or racked into habitat piles. Brash throughout is generally cut through by chainsaw and left scattered, lying below knee height in general. Once selection for desired future canopy structure has been undertaken, the selection between tree species is undertaken on a silvicultural basis, and trees of better form and vigour are retained, with a view to assisting with reducing the long-term costs of managing the woodlands.

#### Highway barrier plantations

- 5.6 There is also be a foreseeable increase in demand throughout the Borough to manage via thinning operations the tree lines that border on to the major road network. Many of these were planted in the late 1960's early 1970's now constitute a densely planted maturing tree stock, the canopies of which have the potential to affect both local carriageways and properties. An additional budget requirement is necessary to meet the traffic management cost but, the most economical way for the Council to manage the level of work required on these plantations in volume is to include them within the future Forestry Management Programme and treat them as woodland areas with a potential yield.

#### Annual Work Programme

- 5.7 The cycle of intervention within the ASNW and plantation woodlands varies on a 4-15 year cycle, depending upon growth and management objectives. The Council, in any one year, aims to have a broadly even level of intervention, which equates to approximately 18-20 hectares of a mixture of silvicultural operations, ranging from coppicing and early thinnings, to mature oak thinnings in any one



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year. A flexible approach is required by the successful contractor, understanding the needs and operational requirements for each of these work types. Full-time commitment to the contracts is not required; however, operations are required to be undertaken in a timely and sensitive manner as mentioned above. The work schedule is quoted for on an annual basis due to cost of materials, fuel, labour and wood sale values being heavily affected annually by the current industrial climate. Close consultation with the Council's representatives and Agent is necessary to tailor the work in line with the woodland management requirements and economical considerations. It is anticipated that ordinarily all work will run from September to March and will be contained within the financial year.

- 5.8 Approximately two thirds of the work schedule in the last five year plan was completed, the short fall being due to a combination of the following:
- a) Poor weather conditions
  - b) Lack of availability of suitable specialist contractors
  - c) Access problems
- 5.9 Therefore it is proposed that the work is delivered on a two year basis which will give the flexibility needed to select suitable sites within that timeframe and to seek the necessary external funding whilst giving the flexibility to forward plan should priorities change. The successful tenderer will, subject to satisfactory performance carryout the work over two years with year two rates being subject to negotiation and normal financial adjustments i.e. RPI. It is hoped that a stable, long-term working relationship can be developed with a suitably qualified contracting firm to deliver best value for the woodland management service to Redditch Borough Council.
- 5.10 As well as ensuring that the woodlands are maintained in a sustainable manner it is important that other improvements are incorporated in to the programme. This can be achieved by updating the existing Management Plans to ensure that the overall objectives are consistent with Council policy and those plans are tailored to ensure sites are appropriately managed to enable further Grant Aid applications along with any other potential revenue sources. In order to facilitate the Forestry Commission grants it is important that the long term relationship developed with Pryor & Rickett Silviculture is continued as they are best able to advise on the appropriateness of the work scheduled and the likely funding that can be obtained. All the Forestry Commission grant funding is obtained via Pryor and Rickett who, on the Councils behalf, submit the relevant applications in line with the most beneficial and likely grant/budget bid criteria.

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- 5.11 It is also intended that by retaining Pryor and Rickett and ensuring a continuity of service we will be able to develop long term strategies on how to manage and improve the woodlands. In particular we would to seek advice on replanting schemes - bearing in mind the potential for natural regeneration to take place, the existing site species, the need to avoid creating areas of monoculture and the need to create woodland diversity in terms of trees and under storey cover.
- 5.12 The long term strategies will also seek to include interaction with other interested parties to review how the woodlands are utilised in terms of friends groups, schools involvement, interpretation and presentation of material that will be of interest to the general public as well as creating points of interest i.e. woodland sculptures.
- 5.13 It is also intended that a review of access to the woodlands is also undertaken in terms of how the existing footpath networks could be improved, what new access points may potentially be provided and, what improvements can be made to suit the needs of those less able i.e. undertake a disable access audit using the local group.

## 6. Other Implications

- Asset Management - The pro-active rather than reactive management of the woodlands will ensure that major landholdings of RBC are properly maintained and developed with a long term view and, that such maintenance will encourage the routine repair and long term replacement of structures and fixtures which may otherwise be left to decline. These costs may then have to be met via existing budgets or alternatively by the use of Section 106/Capital funds.
- Community Safety - The enhancement programme will aim to address the Councils responsibility with regard to Section 17 of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998. It will also look to improve the car parking areas by increasing the opportunity for passive surveillance to take place.
- Human Resources - The workload associated with the woodland management is currently built in to the duties and responsibilities of

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one of the Landscape and Countryside Officers.

- Social Exclusion - The management of the woodlands will, to some extent, improve access for visitors but it is envisaged that a proactive management regime will lead to overall improvement in terms of disabled access and will enable a review of the woodland routes currently accessible by disabled users together with what improvements are potentially required.

## 7. **Lessons Learnt**

- 7.1 A five year programme is quite inflexible and does not allow for Officers to take a more pragmatic approach to the order in which the sites are done to take advantage of market forces and contractor availability as well as adapting to seasonal and weather conditions.
- 7.2 Officers are able to say from experience, particularly the last five year contract period that the manner in which the work is currently scheduled is too long given the potential alterations that have to be made in allowing for operational issues.
- 7.3 The visual impact of forestry thinning can be very high and it is often perceived as being extreme by the public who are not fully appreciative of how the work is funded and managed. In light of this we would look to provide information and to inform people when possible on the intended work and its aims and objectives. This is particularly relevant where we undertake work in high profile or more sensitive areas where additional consultation may be necessary.

## 8. **Background Papers**

Woodland management programme and locations/details of the sites.

## 9. **Consultation**

- 9.1 This report has been prepared in consultation with relevant Borough Council Officers, Heads of Service and Directors.
- 9.2 A site visit was arranged in order to give a general overview of the forestry work which took place on the 14 July and was an open invitation to all Council Members.

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**10. Author of Report**

The author of this report is Carl Walker, Landscape and Countryside Manager, who can be contacted on extension 3421 or at [carl.walker@redditchbc.go.uk](mailto:carl.walker@redditchbc.go.uk) for more information.

**11. Appendices**

None.

## Executive Committee

All Wards

22 July 2009

### ARROW VALLEY COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE – REVIEW OF EXTERNAL SUPPORT

(Report of the Head of Leisure and Arts)

#### 1. Summary of Proposals

To seek approval to commission external support to undertake a review of the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre.

#### 2. Recommendations

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

- 1) up to the sum of £10,000 be approved from General Fund balances to commission the work; and

subject to which, to **RESOLVE** that

- 2) Officers commission an external consultant to support the review of the future management of the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre.

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

##### Financial

- 3.1 The financial implications are £10,000 to be allocated from General Fund balances.

##### Legal

- 3.2 Under Section 19 of the Local Government Act 1976, the Council has the power to provide such recreational facilities as it thinks fit.
- 3.3 Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000 gives the Council the power to do anything which it considers is likely to achieve the promotion or improvement of the social well-being of its area. This includes the power to incur expenditure.

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## Policy

- 3.4 No policy implications have been identified.

## Risk

- 3.5 There are limited risks if Executive Committee does not approve the expenditure. Officers would continue to carry out the review. However, they would be restricted in potentially being able to provide Members with a comprehensive range of options for the future of the Countryside Centre.

## Sustainability / Environmental / Climate Change

- 3.6 The primary focus of the review is to explore options to consider the longer term sustainability of the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre.

## Report

### 4. Background

The full Council on 23 February 2009 requested Officers to undertake further work relating to the Countryside Centre.

### 5. Key Issues

- 5.1 Officers presented to the Portfolio Holders on 12 June 2009 details of the current practices and activities that are facilitated from the Countryside Centre.
- 5.2 Following the presentation to Portfolio Holders, further exploratory work is required to:
- a) Consider potential options for how the centre can deliver value for money for the Council;
  - b) Identify alternative ways of delivering the service for the communities benefit;
  - c) Look at the length of contract period against the investment potential from prospective partners;
  - d) Define how best a contract specification can be packaged bearing in mind the number of activities that are currently managed from the facility.
- 5.3 Officers are seeking to procure external support to carry out the exploratory work.

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### 6. Other Implications

- Asset Management - As part of the Asset Management Strategy services need to ensure that assets are delivering value for money which will form part of the review.
- Community Safety - None directly at this stage.
- Human Resources - None directly at this stage.
- Social Exclusion - None directly at this stage.

### 7. Lessons Learnt

None identified at this stage.

### 8. Background Papers

None indicated.

### 9. Consultation

There has been no consultation other than with relevant Borough Council Officers.

### 10. Author of Report

The author of this report is Ken Watkins (Head of Leisure & Arts) who can be contacted on extension 3384 (e-mail: [ken.watkins@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:ken.watkins@redditchbc.gov.uk) ).

### 11. Appendices

None.





# Executive Committee

No Specific Ward Relevance

22 July 2009

## 13. REVIEW OF ARROW VALLEY COUNTRYSIDE CENTRE – EXTERNAL SUPPORT: RECOMMENDATION FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

(Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee)

### 1. Purpose of Report

To enable Members to consider a recommendation from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on the subject of the proposed review of the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre.

### 2. Recommendations

**The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee establish a Task and Finish Group to undertake a review of the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre.**

### Report

### 3. Background

The Overview and Scrutiny Committee received the Portfolio Holder for Leisure and Tourism's Annual Report at a meeting held on 14 January 2009. In this report, the Portfolio Holder identified that a review of the usage of the Countryside Centre and the Visitor Centre at Bordesley Abbey would be a timely piece of work that could be undertaken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. The Committee requested that the Portfolio Holder submit a scrutiny scoping document outlining the possible terms of reference for this review.

The submission of a scoping document was postponed until Officers could present further information to Members regarding the Countryside Centre. The Portfolio Holder has advised that it was unlikely that any further action needed to be taken by the Council regarding the Visitor Centre. However, owing to the submission of a report by Officers specifically regarding the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre, the Overview and Scrutiny Committee agreed that it was relevant to submit this recommendation to the Executive Committee at this time.

**4. Key Issues**

At a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 8 July, Members discussed the proposal being submitted by Officers to the Executive Committee that the Council make available £10,000 to commission external consultants to undertake a review of the Countryside Centre. All Members agreed that a Task and Finish Group could be established instead of the Council commissioning consultants to undertake this review. They commented that a Task and Finish Group could undertake a thorough and independent review of this subject and for a fraction of the cost. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee therefore urge the Executive Committee to consider requesting that the Overview and Scrutiny Committee establish a Task and Finish Group to undertake this review.

**5. Conclusion**

Based on the information contained within this report the Overview and Scrutiny Committee request that the Executive Committee give due consideration to their recommendation.

**6. Background Papers**

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 14 January 2009.

Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on Wednesday 8 July 2009.

**7. Author of Report**

The author of this report is Helen Saunders (Overview and Scrutiny Support Officer), who can be contacted on extension 3267 (e-mail: [helen.saunders@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:helen.saunders@redditchbc.gov.uk)) for more information.



# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Wednesday, 17 June 2009

## MINUTES

### Present:

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

### Also Present:

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

### Officers:

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

### Committee Services Officer:

J Bayley and H Saunders

### 13. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

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

### 14. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

### 15. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED that

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

.....  
Chair

# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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## 16. ACTIONS LIST

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

a) Scrutiny of the Countryside Centre

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

b) National Angling Museum Domain Names

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

c) Budget Strategy and Deficit Information

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

d) Public Transport in Redditch

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

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

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

## **RESOLVED that**

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

## **17. CALL-IN AND PRE-SCRUTINY**

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

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

There were no Call-ins.

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

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

## 19. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

The Committee received reports in relation to current reviews.

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

This was considered under item nine of the agenda.

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

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

### c) National Angling Museum – Chair, Councillor P Mould

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

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d) Neighbourhood Groups - Chair, Councillor K Banks

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

**RESOLVED that**

**the Task and Finish Group update reports be noted.**

**20. WORCESTERSHIRE LAND DRAINAGE PROTOCOL**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **RECOMMENDED that**

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

## **RESOLVED that**

**the report be noted.**

### **21. COUNCIL FLAT COMMUNAL CLEANING TASK AND FINISH GROUP**

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

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



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

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

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

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

## **RESOLVED that**

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

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

## **22. COUNCILLOR CALLS FOR ACTION (CCFAS) - PROCEDURE**

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

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

### **RESOLVED that**

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

## **23. FEEDBACK FROM JUNE SCRUTINY CONFERENCES**

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

- a) Crime and Disorder Scrutiny – 15 June 2009

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

## **RESOLVED that**

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

## **24. REFERRALS**

There were no referrals.

## **25. WORK PROGRAMME**

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

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

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

## **RESOLVED that**

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

The Meeting commenced at 7.00pm  
and closed at 9.10pm



# Executive Committee

No direct Ward relevance

22 July 2009

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

(Report of Chief Executive)

### 1. Purpose of Report

To provide, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels, and similar bodies which report via the Executive Committee. At a meeting of the Committee in early 2009 it was agreed that Portfolio Holders review the present arrangements for their respective Advisory Panels and Working Parties and come to a conclusion as to whether they were still serving a purpose. The matter was to be discussed more generally at the next meeting of the Constitutional Review Working Party.

### 2. Recommendation

**The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that**

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

### 3. Updates

#### A. ADVISORY PANELS

	<u>Meeting :</u>	<u>Lead Members / Officers :</u> (Executive Members shown <u>underlined</u> )	<u>Position :</u> (Oral updates to be provided at the meeting by Lead Members or Officers, if no written update is available.)
1.	Climate Change Advisory Panel (formerly Environment Advisory Panel)	Chair <u>Cllr MacMillan</u> / Guy Revans.	Next meeting – 15 July 2009.
2.	Community Safety Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Brunner</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Banks Angie Heighway	No meetings planned at present.

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3.	Economic Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr MacMillan</u> John Staniland / Georgina Harris	Last meeting - 20 August 2009 (Joint meeting with Planning Advisory Panel)
4.	Housing Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Pearce  Jackie Smith	Next meeting – to be arranged.
5.	Leisure Contracts Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Anderson</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr MacMillan  Ken Watkins / Kevin Cook	Last meeting – 20 January 2009.  No requirement for meeting at present.
6.	Customer Services Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u> Jackie Smith / Jane Smith	Last meeting – 17 March 2009.
7.	Planning Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr MacMillan</u> / Vice-Chair  Cllr Chalk  John Staniland / Ruth Bamford	Next meeting – 21 July 2009.

**B. OTHER MEETINGS**

8.	Constitutional Review Working Party	Chair Cllr MacMillan / Vice Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u>  Steve Skinner	Next meeting – to be arranged.
9.	Grants Panel	Chair Cllr Mould / Vice Chair  <u>Cllr Braley</u>  Angie Heighway	Last meeting – 8 June 2009.  Next meeting - to be confirmed.



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10.	Independent Remuneration Panel	Independent Members / Chair Mr Andrew Powell	Next meeting – to be arranged. Currently working up proposals for 2010 Allowances Scheme.
11.	Member Development Steering Group	Chair <u>Cllr MacMillan</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Brunner  Steve Skinner / Trish Buckley	Next meeting – to be arranged.
12.	Procurement Steering Group	Chair <u>Cllr MacMillan</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Hall  Sue Hanley	Next meeting – 30 July 2009.
13.	Church Hill District Centre – Members' Panel	Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u>  Rob Kindon / Jim Prendergrast	First meeting – to be arranged.

**4. Author of Report**

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

**5. Appendices**

None.





# Executive Committee

No direct Ward relevance

22 July 2009

## ACTION MONITORING

(Report of the Chief Executive)

Portfolio Holder(s) / Responsible Officer	Action requested	Status
<b>13 January 2009</b>		
	<b>Third Sector Task and Finish Group</b>	
<b>Cllr Gandy</b> A Heighway	1) Discussions to be held with other local authorities in the north of the County in respect of the provision of a joint-funded post to support the grants process.	Discussions to be arranged.
<b>Cllr Gandy / Executive Committee</b>	2) 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>22 April 2009</b>		
<b>Cllr Braley/</b> T Kristunas / E Storer	<b>Staff Vacancy and Sickness Absence Reporting</b>  Members noted the recent lack of reporting of staff vacancies and sickness absence figures.	Staff Vacancy report taken to meeting on 20 May: Sickness Absence report scheduled for 1 July meeting.
<b>Cllr MacMillan/</b> Ruth Bamford	<b>Action Monitoring – Economic Advisory Panel</b>  Economic Development Strategy - Visits to Redditch businesses being arranged.	

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<b>20 May 2009</b>		
<b>Cllr Braley / T Kristunas</b>	<b>Redditch Borough Council Establishment</b>  Officers to provide information on employment of Agency staff to Councillor Hartnett	Information passed to Councillor Hartnett – now awaiting supplementary information.
<b>10 June 2009</b>		
<b>Cllr Braley / D Taylor / T Kristunas</b>	<b>Benefits Service Improvement Plan</b>  Officers were asked amend the action plan to include contact with Registered Social Landlords (RSLs) in Redditch with a view to negotiating a similar agreement to that concluded with Redditch Co-op Homes	Action Plan amended in accordance with request.
<b>1 July 2009</b>		
<b>Cllr Braley / C MacMillan A Rutt / R Bamford</b>	<b>Delegation to Officers – Enforcement Powers</b>  Officers undertook to propose arrangements, prior to Council, so as to take account of Members' ward interests and matters of potential wider interest in respect of the additions to the Scheme of Delegation	
<b>Cllr Braley E Storer</b>	<b>Corporate Sickness Statistics</b>  Members suggested minor amendments to the recording method for sickness absence, proposing that the "No Reason" category might be termed "Other" and that there be a more explicit breakdown of the work-related and non-work related absences due to "Bones, Joints and Fractures".)	

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<b>Cllr Braley</b> S Mullins / T Buckley	<b>Overview and Scrutiny Committee</b>  The Head of Legal Democratic and Property Services undertook to respond to Councillor B Clayton in respect of the exact budget allocation of the cost of training courses attended by two Overview and Scrutiny Members.	
<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 1/07/09

