

# Council

Mon 7th Feb  
2011  
7.00pm

Council Chamber  
Town Hall  
Redditch



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

# Access to Information - Your Rights

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

Your main rights are set out below:-

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

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**If you have any queries on this Agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of the above rights of access to information, please contact  
Ivor Westmore  
Committee Support Services**

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e.mail: [ivor.westmore@redditchbc.gov.uk](mailto:ivor.westmore@redditchbc.gov.uk)**

**Minicom: 595528**

# Welcome to today's meeting.

## Guidance for the Public

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### **Agenda Papers**

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

### **Chair**

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

### **Running Order**

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

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

### **Decisions**

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

### **Members of the Public**

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

### **Special Arrangements**

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

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

### **Further Information**

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

### **Fire/ Emergency instructions**

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

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

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

**Do Not use lifts.**

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

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

# Declaration of Interests: Guidance for Councillors

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DO I HAVE A "PERSONAL INTEREST" ?

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

**OR**

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

you have a personal interest.

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

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

IS IT A "PREJUDICIAL INTEREST" ?

In general only if:-

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

**and**

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

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

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



# Council

7th February 2011

7.00pm

Council Chamber Town Hall

## Agenda

### Membership:

Cllrs:	Kath Banks (Mayor)	Bill Hartnett
	Anita Clayton	Nigel Hicks
	Peter Anderson	Roger Hill
	Michael Braley	Gay Hopkins
	Andrew Brazier	Robin King
	Juliet Brunner	Wanda King
	Michael Chalk	William Norton
	Simon Chalk	Jinny Pearce
	Greg Chance	Brenda Quinney
	Brandon Clayton	Mark Shurmer
	Jack Cookson	Debbie Taylor
	Andrew Fry	Derek Taylor
	Carole Gandy	Diane Thomas
	Adam Griffin	Graham Vickery
	Malcolm Hall	

<b>1. Welcome</b>	<p>The Mayor will open the meeting and welcome all present.</p> <p>The Mayor's Chaplain, the Reverend Jo Musson, will lead the Council in prayer.</p>
<b>2. Apologies</b>	<p>To receive any apologies for absence on behalf of Council members.</p>
<b>3. Declarations of Interest</b>	<p>To invite Councillors to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda.</p>
<b>4. Minutes</b> Chief Executive	<p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meetings of the Council held on 13th December 2010 and 10th January 2011.</p> <p><b>(Minutes circulated in Minute Book 7- 2010/11 – to follow)</b></p>
<b>5. Kieth Boyd-Carpenter</b>	<p>To pay tribute to the late former Councillor and Mayor of the Borough of Redditch Kieth Boyd-Carpenter in recognition of his contribution to the Borough and its residents.</p>

# Council

7th February 2011

<b>6. Communications and Mayor's Announcements</b>	<p>To receive a report from the Mayor on civic matters which have arisen since the last meeting or events which may be occurring in the near future.</p> <p>To give notice of any variation to the items listed in the Forward Plan and/or items accepted as "Urgent Business".</p> <p>(No separate report / oral update)</p>
<b>7. Leader's Announcements</b> (Pages 1 - 12)	<p>To receive a report from the Leader on matters considered to be of significance to the Council.</p> <p>(Oral update – minutes of the last two meetings of the Redditch Partnership Board attached)</p>
<b>8. Leaders' Questions</b> (Pages 13 - 14) Chief Executive	<p>To consider the following Question for the Leader, which has been submitted in accordance with Standing Order 8A:</p> <p><u>"Big Society"</u> (Councillor Juliet Brunner)</p> <p>(Question attached)</p>
<b>9. Notices of Motion</b> Chief Executive	<p>No Notices of Motion have been received.</p>
<b>10. Executive Committee</b> (Pages 15 - 192) Chief Executive	<p>A. To formally receive the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on:</p> <p><u>2nd December 2010.</u></p> <p>(There is one outstanding recommendation which requires the Council's consideration, a matter which was deferred at the last ordinary meeting of the Council.)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Tenant Involvement Agreement</li></ul> <p>(Report, Tenant Involvement Agreement document showing amendments in full and decision attached)</p> <p><u>10th January 2011</u></p> <p>(All decisions here have been fully resolved. There are no outstanding recommendations or referrals which require the Council's consideration.)</p>

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**(Minutes circulated in Minute Book 7 – 2010/11 – to follow)**

- B. To receive the minutes and consider the recommendations and/or referrals arising from the following meeting of the Executive Committee:

12th January 2011

Matters requiring the Council's consideration include:

- Customer Experience Strategy 2011 – 2014;
- Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and
- Shared Services Board

(Reports and decisions attached)

**(Minutes circulated in Minute Book 7 – 2010/11 – to follow)**

- C. To receive the decision notice and consider the recommendations and/or referrals from the following meeting of the Executive Committee:

1st February 2011

Matters requiring the Council's consideration may include:

- Housing Revenue Account Initial Estimate 2011/12;
- Independent Remuneration Panel for Worcestershire District Councils – Annual Report and Recommendations for 2011/12;
- Shared Information and Records Management Strategy;
- Crematorium Energy Recovery Project;
- Introduction of a Private Home Support Service
- Polling Stations – Annual Review 2011; and
- Shared Services Board.

(Reports attached – Decision notice to follow)

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<p><b>11. Regulatory Committees</b> (Pages 193 - 222) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To formally receive the minutes and/or consider the recommendations / referrals arising from the following meetings of the Council's Regulatory Committees:</p> <p>Audit &amp; Governance Committee - 24th January 2011</p> <p>Matters requiring the Council's consideration include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2011/12;</li></ul> <p>Licensing Committee - 17th January 2011</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Hackney Carriage – Fare Tariff;</li></ul> <p>Planning Committee - 7th December 2010 - 4th January 2011</p> <p>(Reports and decisions attached)</p> <p><b>(Minutes circulated in Minute Book 7 – 2010/11 – to follow)</b></p>
<p><b>12. Urgent Business - Record of Decisions</b> Chief Executive</p>	<p>A. To note the following decision taken in accordance with SO36 since the last ordinary meeting of the Council:</p> <p><u>HMRS – Licence for use of Town Hall Premises</u> (Chief Executive)(Decision Reference 488)</p> <p>All necessary approvals were sought to permit a licence to be granted to Her Majesty's Revenue Service (HMRS – the 'Tax Office') for use of a small amount of back office space (for three desks), plus access to the RBC Customer Service Centre (OSS) on a number of days per week (three currently proposed). Revenue of £18,000 p.a. will be generated. The need for Member authority was only latterly noted and, for practical purposes, taking into account the Christmas and New Year holidays, a decision was sought before the next available meeting of the Executive Committee in 2011.</p> <p><b>It was therefore RESOLVED that</b></p> <p><b>1) authority be delegated to the Head of Resources and Head of Customer Services</b></p>



	<p>and Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships to take all necessary steps to achieve the aims indicated above; this to include authority to sign all necessary agreements with HMRS; and</p> <p>2) the Council be asked to note the financial implications and adjust budgets accordingly.</p> <p>B. To note the following decision taken in accordance with the Council's Constitutional Rules since the last meeting of the Council:</p> <p><u>Council Response to "Local Decisions - A Fairer Future for Social Housing" – Decision to remove the right to call-in the item</u> (Executive Committee, 12th January 2011)</p> <p><b>RESOLVED that</b></p> <p><b>the response to the consultation paper: Local Decisions, A Fairer Future for Social Housing be endorsed.</b></p> <p>The Mayor agreed, in accordance with Part 2, Article 6, Paragraph 16 of the Constitution, that the decision proposed, above, was reasonable and that, owing to the urgency around the response to the consultation, it should not be subject to call in (the response was required by 17th January, within the call-in period).</p> <p>This provision was highlighted in advance on the agenda for the Executive Committee meeting (circulated to all Members on 4th January) and by Officers at the meeting itself.</p>
<p><b>13. Urgent Business - general (if any)</b></p>	<p>To consider any additional items exceptionally agreed by the Mayor as Urgent Business in accordance with the powers vested in her by virtue of Section 100(B)(4)(b) of the Local Government Act 1972.</p> <p>(This power should be exercised only in cases where there are genuinely special circumstances which require consideration of an item which has not previously been published on the Order of Business for the meeting and/or on the Leader's Forward Plan.)</p>

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## 14. Exclusion of the Public

Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, to consider excluding the public from the meeting in relation to any items of business on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged it may be necessary to move the following resolution:

**“that, under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter(s) on the grounds that it/they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs (*to be specified*) of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.”**

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(Note: Anyone requiring copies of any previously circulated reports, or supplementary papers, should please contact Committee Services Officers in advance of the meeting.)

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**Minutes of the Meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> December 2010**

**Present:**

Cllr Carole Gandy (Chair)	Redditch Borough Council
Cllr Mike Braley	Redditch Borough Council
Cllr Graham Vickery	Redditch Borough Council
Sue Hanley	Redditch Borough Council/Chair RCSP
Hugh Bennett	Redditch Borough Council
Angie Heighway	Redditch Borough Council
Liz Williams	Redditch Borough Council
Helen Broughton	Redditch Borough Council
Cllr Barry Gandy	Worcestershire County Council
Maggie Bryan	Worcestershire County Council
Ian Joseph	West Mercia Police Authority
John Callaghan	NEW College
Peter Fryers	Worcestershire PCT
Lee MacKenzie	Community Forum

**In attendance:** Susan Tasker, Duncan Berry (YMCA)

**1. WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Cllr Carole Gandy welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were noted for Kevin Dicks, Gary Woodman, Ann Sowton, Des Sutton

**2. MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

As requested at the previous meeting, it was reported that a letter had been sent to all schools informing them of the availability of Partnership Board organisations to help fill any vacant Community Governor positions.

Hugh informed the Board that he and Ruth had met about the Church Hill Centre redevelopment and related issues regarding the bus lanes. A further meeting would be held to progress this.

**ACTION: HUGH, ANGIE AND RUTH**

Ian reported that the bandstand issue appeared to have resolved itself following monitoring.

**3. YMCA – OVERVIEW OF THEIR WORK – WINYATES AND CHURCH HILL**

Duncan Berry, Chief Executive of YMCA Redditch attended the meeting to give some background to the YMCA. He explained that the YMCA began in Redditch in 1975 with fundraising efforts taking place the following year which led to housing being built in Church Hill. The YMCA then became a PLC in the 1980s. The vision of the organisation was '*transforming communities so that all young people truly belong, contribute and thrive*'. The YMCA in Redditch included community buildings with a nursery, linked to two Surestart centres. Duncan informed the Board that YMCA had worked in partnership with a number of organisations to deliver a number of schemes across the town including mentoring schemes and schools with an accredited centre. In line with RBC priorities, YMCA had been supporting enterprise working with the College and schools and individually with young people. They had also worked with the prison services and prisoners' children. They had also been looking at projects to improve the environment, particularly those that could encourage children to become more interested in such causes.

Duncan reported that there were approximately 40 projects in Church Hill. One success story from one of the projects included a young resident who was awarded the Young Volunteer for West Midlands and who had gone on to secure a work placement with a local school. Duncan reported that they were currently working on securing the old church in Winyates in order to be able to develop a new community / youth centre. A further 20 projects were also planned in and around Winyates.

Hugh asked about physical regeneration in Church Hill and asked Duncan his views on aspects of the social regeneration of the area. Duncan felt that there were opportunities to make the area more vibrant. He explained that the existing St John Fisher site was the only place where a Children's Centre was not attached to a school but was a community centre. He felt that this was a good model for encouraging community cohesion and engagement. He noted that the more that could be encompassed through one hub the more likely that silos could be broken down.

Graham asked if the Christian tag had prevented some groups from participating in YMCA activities. Duncan explained that it had not and that they were genuinely 'open to all'.

Barry mentioned the integration of Surestart into schools and the possible pros and cons. Angie explained that there had been an evaluation of Surestart and suggested that Judith Willis, Children's Centre Programme Manager attend a future meeting to give a presentation about this issue.

**ACTION: AGENDA**

**4. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY UPDATE**

The Board was informed that the Strategy was in the process of being updated and would be brought to the next meeting in January. It would then be considered by Councillors at Redditch Borough Council through February and March. A launch event would then follow in April. The 25 page document would be summarised on 2 pages to be contained as part of the Worcestershire Sustainable Community Strategy. It was reported that Worcestershire Partnership was currently undergoing an exercise to map all of the priorities from the District LSPs to enable them to come up with a list of definitive priorities for the new Worcestershire SCS. There was some similarity of priorities across the District LSPs so it was hoped this would be achievable. Maggie

reiterated that the Redditch SCS was part of the wider Worcestershire SCS and should be seen as providing direction for the way in which the Worcestershire SCS would be delivered in Redditch. It was noted that some LSPs had decided not to write their own separate SCS.

**ACTION: AGENDA**

## **5. HEALTH ACTION PLAN**

Peter provided an update on the Health Action Plan.

He explained that the Plan was now complete. It was felt that the composition of the current Health and Well Being Subgroup was no longer appropriate to deliver this Action Plan and so the Group had been dissolved. Peter suggested that the Board needed to decide on the best mechanism for delivering the Plan and if the Health and Well Being Subgroup was to be re-established, who should be on it.

It was suggested that representatives on any new Group would need to have the authority to commit resources and be involved in the delivery of the areas covered by the Action Plan. Membership could be time limited and should be subject to regular review. Additional people could be co-opted for specific projects if needed.

Peter suggested that he should continue to chair the group and along with Helen would provide the linkage to the Partnership Board. It was suggested that representation against the priorities should be as follows:

- Obesity / Healthy Eating – Redditch Borough Council Leisure Services and Regulatory Services, voluntary sector representation.
- Smoking – a health practitioner working in this specialism, voluntary sector, Federation of Small Businesses.
- Alcohol – DAAT, voluntary sector representation.

Maggie suggested that an Area of Highest Need project representative should attend the meetings.

It was suggested that Ann from BARN should be approached regarding advising about the voluntary sector representation on the Group. It was agreed that it might be more suitable to co-opt a representative from the sector rather than approaching individuals.

Hugh supported the proposal and suggested that he, Angie and Sue could nominate appropriate officers. Carole agreed it needed to be a 'doing' committee. Sue stated that in terms of supporting the Group 4 or 5 RBC Heads of Service could be potentially involved. She suggested that it might be more constructive if Heads of Service only attended when there was an item of relevance to them for that meeting. Angie suggested that Redditch Borough Council Housing Services needed to also be represented.

**ACTION: HUGH, ANGIE, SUE**

Peter asked for views regarding Member representation. Mike suggest Cllr Juliet Brunner as she was the relevant Portfolio Holder for Licensing for Redditch Borough Council and she was also the Chair of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Peter explained that the focus of membership was on Health, Council, Voluntary Sector and Federation of Small Businesses but all partners may have an interest and it would not preclude them from having an opportunity to contribute to the work of the Group. Angie said she has close links with police so could attend for them.

The timing of the meetings was questioned, whether they should take place before Partnership Board meetings or afterwards. It was agreed that they should take place before Board meetings.

With regards to the Action Plan, Hugh suggested that as the National Indicators would be disappearing reference to them should be removed. The Chair thanked Peter for his hard work in producing the document.

## **6. WINYATES – AREAS OF HIGHEST NEED UPDATE PRESENTATION**

Liz provided a presentation to the Board regarding the work currently taking place on the project.

Liz asked for snappy names to brand the project (instead of Winyates of Areas Highest Need). Liz explained she had been using Winning Winyates but wanted to give the opportunity to the Board to come up with something different.

**ACTION: ALL**

## **7. THEME GROUP UPDATES**

### **Local Children's Partnership**

The Group had met with John Edwards from WCC, and he agreed he would update the Education Action Plan to reflect the discussions held at the previous meeting of the LCP. Once finalised it would be brought back to a future Board meeting.

### **Community Forum**

An awayday had taken place with representatives from Partner organisations and the voluntary sector. Unfortunately there had been only a small number of the public/residents, possibly due to bad weather that day. Discussion focussed on: the possibility of holding future meetings in different parts of the town: what types of events they could organise to encourage the public to participate; the need for the use of simple terminology in their work (not council jargon); and how to improve publicity about the meetings and events in local press and in communities in general.

Carole explained that she had discussed with people why more residents had not attended meetings in the past. It was felt that more needed to be done with the format of the meetings to encourage more people to attend. It was felt that the language used could be intimidating to people. Graham suggested targeting people who might already be active and interested and then try to encourage them to bring other people with them. Hugh suggested that rotating the meeting venue may cause issues of continuity.

## **Community Safety**

Sue informed the Board that at a county level 'interim arrangements' were in place as it was not known about future funding and performance regimes. Funding for Community Safety was not yet known. Tasking arrangements were being reviewed but it was envisaged that tasking groups would meet less frequently and be more topic based to ensure that the right people were attending each meeting.

It was reported that the possibility of combining the Community Safety Partnership across the whole of North Worcestershire was being considered.

## **8. COMMUNICATIONS AND CONSULTATION**

Hugh referred to the database of Consultation and Events. The idea of the database was to keep a record of upcoming consultation and events opportunities by partners. Barry said the We Are Redditch event in January included all partners whereas at the Morton Stanley Park event each partner had their own separate stand. It was agreed that in the future it would be more effective if all partners were clearly badged under the Partnership.

Hugh asked that if there was any good news or information from partners at each meeting that this be used to publicise locally.

**ACTION: HUGH & HELEN**

## **9. ANY OTHER BUSINESS**

John informed the Board that NEW College had opened their new Higher Education and Business Centre at Osprey House. This would enable the College to offer University level courses. From 2012/13 the number of students taking higher education and apprenticeships could double. This would enable people living locally to train to Levels 4 and 5. It was agreed that this was exciting news and showed true collaboration and partnership working.







Minutes of the Meeting held on 17<sup>th</sup> January 2011

Present:

Cllr Carole Gandy (Chair)	Redditch Borough Council
Cllr Mike Braley	Redditch Borough Council
Cllr Graham Vickery	Redditch Borough Council
Kevin Dicks	Redditch Borough Council
Sue Hanley	Redditch Borough Council/Chair RCSP
Hugh Bennett	Redditch Borough Council
Ruth Bamford	Redditch Borough Council
Helen Broughton	Redditch Borough Council
Trish Burton	NEW College
Cllr Barry Gandy	Worcestershire County Council
Pete Sugg	Worcestershire County Council
Lee McKenzie	Redditch Community Forum
Ian Joseph	West Mercia Police
Ann Sowton	BARN
Peter Fryers	Worcestershire Primary Care Trust

In attendance: Susan Tasker (minutes), John Edwards – Worcestershire County Council (item 1-3.a)

1. **WELCOME AND APOLOGIES**

Cllr Carole Gandy welcomed everyone to the meeting.

Apologies were noted for Angie Burnett, Angie Heighway, John Callaghan, Maggie Collins (Bryan).

2. **MINUTES OF THE LAST MEETING**

The minutes of the previous meeting were agreed as a true record. The following matters were arising.

Sue reported that Angie Heighway would be the RBC representative on the **Health and Wellbeing Group**

Hugh reported that he had met with officers about **Church Hill Centre interrelated issues** including the bus lanes. A multiagency group had been set up to take this forward.

**Osprey House/New College** – Trish said a positive article had appeared on the front page of local paper.

**Areas of Highest Need** – there had been no alternative suggestions for a snappier name.

**Future Agenda item** – Carole asked that Judith Willis be invited to the next meeting to update on Sure Start/Children's Centre (as per minutes of meeting held on 16<sup>th</sup> December).

**ACTION: Helen**

### **3. SUSTAINABLE COMMUNITY STRATEGY (SCS) AND ACTION PLANS**

Hugh drew the Board's attention to the draft Strategy and Action Plan. He explained that the Strategy had been written to solely concentrate on the priorities of education, health, the economy and areas of deprivation.

Graham questioned the total population figure quoted in the document as it was different to the figure used in the Core Strategy. Helen informed the Board that the figure used was the 2009 Mid Estimates provided by the Office of National Statistics. Helen agreed to contact Planning to ensure consistency of the figures and to list the source as a footnote.

**ACTION: HELEN/HUGH/RUTH**

Graham also remarked on the comments made through public consultation regarding the buses. Carole said it had been a major issue emerging from consultation that where events were taking place people could struggle to reach them due to a lack of buses. It was noted that as part of the Abbey Stadium opening there would be a need to look at transport issues to ensure young people had access.

Kevin pointed out that the section detailing information on the economic priority did not contain information on the work already taking place to address this priority area. He requested that the section be amended to reflect current work taking place.

**ACTION: HELEN/HUGH**

Carole said she felt the three issues (jobs, education and health) in the document were reflective of issues raised through the public consultation and it was not for the Board members to decide differently.

Hugh explained that whilst the aim was to make inroads in three years, the vision was longer term i.e. 10 years. Ruth suggested it should be a longer period such as the same timeframe as for the Core Strategy and within that action plans breaking into short/medium/long term targets. It was agreed that the vision would be long term over 26 years but that a refresh should be undertaken every three years when any new/amended priorities could be built in.

Sue H asked for an update on the Worcestershire-wide SCS and the links the Redditch SCS would have to this. Hugh understood the local SCS would be summarised into 4 pages to be appended to the Worcestershire SCS, however the full document would be the local working/business plan. As Maggie was not at the meeting the exact position was unable to be confirmed. Helen said she understood that Worcestershire County Council was in the process of mapping the priorities of all district LSPs. Peter Fryers added that it was important to know how the priorities would be mapped across and how different district priorities could form key priorities for Worcestershire. Peter suspected that the PCT would be more likely to sign up to the Worcestershire wide version (with separate local area sections within that), rather than each separate one. Carole commented that the reason she was keen to retain a separate Local Partnership was that it focused on Redditch, although that may not be the view / way ahead for other areas.

Carole commented that since Amanda had left there had been no representation from the Kingfisher Centre and that it was important that representation was maintained given the economic priorities of the Partnership. Ruth said they have been closely involved in Town

Centre Strategy work and Town Centre Partnership and she could ask them to send a representative. Carole asked Ruth to invite them.

**ACTION : RUTH**

The way in which Theme Groups reported to the Board was discussed. Hugh asked if there was any preferred method that the Board received updates. It was agreed that written updates were preferred so that anyone who was unable to attend the meeting still received the information.

The Board discussed the Theme Groups of the Partnership and their membership. Peter felt that the membership needed to be broader on the theme groups. There was some discussion about the need for a group to take forward the work of the economic priority. Hugh said he would look at the groups to ensure the right people were attending.

It was agreed that Hugh and Helen would update the SCS as per comments made.

**ACTION: HELEN**

### **3a. Educational Achievement Action plan**

John Edwards introduced himself as Head of Educational Achievement at Worcestershire County Council. John explained that whilst educational attainment was lower in Redditch, the pace of improvement had been in line nationally. John explained that the new baccalaureate indicator (5 GCSEs including English, maths, science and humanities) had proved interesting as some schools who had previously scored well in 'attainment' were scoring lower on this indicator.

Results had improved but he stressed that it was important to decide where comparisons were made against (statistical neighbours, Worcestershire or nationally). John explained it was important to look at all but in particular to compare the level and progress against the rest of Worcestershire.

He went on to explain that with regard to improving literacy and numeracy, there had been – better progress at 16 years than 11 years. There was some concern about the low numbers of girls aged 11 not achieving highly enough in maths.

Carole agreed there was some good news and that a balanced view needed to be taken. Carole said that previously the Board had asked that a survey be undertaken to establish where and why parents were choosing to send their children to other schools outside of Redditch. John confirmed that this piece of work was being undertaken by officers at the County.

Barry was concerned where schools receive pupils from good schools, they could coast through the next school but not improve, which may not show up on the figures. John acknowledged this.

The Board discussed whether or not the name of a school made an impact on a parent's choice of school. The changes in funding were highlighted as a concern for pupil attainment. NEW College received pupils from all schools of different levels of attainment but there were resources to help those pupils that need more support; however that support had been cut significantly. A lot of pupils attending the College received the Education Maintenance Allowance; with this benefit now being cut it was noted that this may deter some pupils from pursuing further education.

Lee mentioned that Sandycroft had secured additional tutors for pupils in Redditch outside of school time. There had been a large number of people from deprived areas wanting to take up places for their children. It had been oversubscribed and many hardship cases had been seen. Ruth asked if there was anything the voluntary sector/organisations could do to help. Lee said that what was really required as private sector / trained teachers. Lee said volunteers may be able to help with homework support. It was agreed that this issue would be discussed outside the meeting.

**ACTION: Carole/Ruth/Lee/Ann**

Barry mentioned the Pupil Premium and the extra support for pupils which could be gained through this especially through free school meals scheme. This could bring in enough funding for extra support. Barry suggested that parents should be encouraged to apply even if they do not take up the meals. John said letters are already going out to parents to urge them to apply for this.

Kevin asked if there was enough in the action plan that was education focussed. John said that there was not and he would work with Helen/ Hugh to amend it.

**ACTION: John/Helen/Hugh**

**3b. Health Action Plan**

There was nothing more to add.

**3c. Economy Action Plan**

Ruth introduced the Action Plan and explained that it mainly consisted of actions being delivered by the RBC Economic Development team.

Graham commented that the item on job clubs appeared to be bringing back the REDDI Centre. Carole disagreed, saying that this is more a jobs club with help / support for getting a job, not courses which was what the REDDI Centre became. Lee said Sandycroft had established similar jobs clubs and that different people using them were at different points with need different needs, which must be taken into account. Lee said job clubs needed to be age specific, given the varying experience of needs.

Peter suggested that a health intervention project focussed on unemployed people could be established. There was evidence that employability increased for people who were fitter and healthier.

It was pointed out that the plan needed updating as Business Link was due to close. The Chamber of Commerce, Federation of Small Businesses and WCC also had responsibility for delivering actions so the Action Plan should be reflective of any work these organisations were undertaking.

Trish explained that Business link was coming up with a scheme and the College would be talking to Ruth about this. There was also a campaign for employers to take on apprenticeships, so Trish agreed to speak to Ruth regarding these issues. Ruth commented that there had been little progress regarding apprentices for the Abbey Stadium Project. Carole had the details of the person involved in the Abbey Stadium project.

**ACTION: Carole/Ruth/Trish would chase this**

Peter questioned how many of the actions were truly 'adding value' and occurring because of the Partnership, rather than what individual organisations would be delivering anyway. Pete Sugg commented that on education, a lot was happening because of the red flag and only because of the partnership.

**3d. Areas of Highest Need**

Carole mentioned the carol service/PACT meeting which took place in December was well attended and the first community event for a long time.

Once the strategy had been agreed, targets/performance measures and reporting need to be determined.

**ACTION: Angie/Liz W**

**4. STATE OF THE BOROUGH CONFERENCE**

Hugh suggested that a launch event for the Strategy should take place in April with all partners in Redditch. It was suggested that feedback could be given at the event on education and health issues. It was agreed that the event should take place mainly in the daytime.

The Board discussed who the event was aimed at – stakeholders or the public. Carole asked what the purpose of the event was – was it to be focussed on the public or partners. It was agreed that the event should focus on engaging with partners.

Sue suggested that something was needed to encourage people to attend. Peter suggested that each agency should have a stall (i.e. food lunchboxes, food swaps). The possibility of drama or performing arts/Indigo arts was also discussed. Ann suggested that as it was after the latest grants round the voluntary sector provide information about what they were doing to fit with the priorities of the Partnership. Peter suggested that each person needed to have something to go away with – individual actions. It was agreed that in the first instance Hugh and Helen would work up a plan to circulate to Board members before the next meeting.

**ACTION: Hugh & Helen**

Trish said Cllr Jane Potter was organising a jobs fair hosted at the college, to give pupils information on careers to see what skills and qualifications they need to develop; however there had been a lack of interest from local employers. There was a list of occupations they still needed representatives for and Hugh would distribute this to Board members to see if they could help fill some of the spaces.

**ACTION: Hugh**

Ruth had previously raised idea of compiling a list of all the events Partners are putting on to make sure there is a co-ordinated /managed involvement of these.

Mike raised the concern that if this event was for first school children, that they were far too young to benefit from this. Trish explained that there was a strategic group meeting to discuss it and if anyone has any comments/ questions they should contact Jane Potter directly.

It was agreed that an update on the careers fair should be circulated to the Board.

**ACTION: Helen/Hugh**

Whilst glad something was happening, Kevin raised concern that the Board had not been briefed by WCC on this event.

**5. THEME GROUP UPDATES**

**5a. Local Children's Partnership**

Barry explained that the last meeting was cancelled but that the implementation of the Action Plan would be discussed at the next meeting.

**5b. Economic / Town Centre Partnership**

Ruth informed that it was progressing well. Christmas Carol/events had been held in the town centre to encourage people to visit. These events would be built upon in future.

**6. COMMUNICATIONS AND CONSULTATION**

Hugh asked about other events taking place. Ruth commented that the Core Strategy consultation started in January, together with consultation on landscaping.

**7. FUTURE AGENDA ITEMS**

Judith Willis – presentation on Children's Centres evaluation.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****COUNCIL**

7th February 2011

**QUESTIONS TO THE LEADER****1. “BIG SOCIETY”**

The following Question to the Leader has been submitted in accordance with Standing Order 8 by Cllr Juliet Brunner:

*“Would the Leader agree with me that in Redditch we already have the Big Society going on.*

*Would she join me in congratulating the good people of Matchborough, Woodrow, Batchley, Winyates, Church Hill and the Town Centre for coming together for community Christmas carol concerts?*

*Thousands of our residents stood in arctic conditions to welcome in the yuletide festivities.*

*Would she agree that Redditch does not deserve the negative comments attributed to it?*

*What suggestions does she have to build on the positive work already been undertaken by this Council and our residents to help promote the positive aspects of Redditch?”*





REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**COUNCIL**13th December 2010

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TENANT INVOLVEMENT AGREEMENT**RECOMMENDED that**

**subject to Members' comments\*, the new Tenant Involvement Agreement, attached to the report at Appendix 1, be adopted.**

(\*Members' comments included:

- Fixing the quorum figure for BTP meetings at 4;
- Auditing of accounts in an appropriate and proportionate ('light touch') way only;
- Some minor rephrasing and textual amendment to improve the wording, such as using '*to be apolitical*' rather than ('*not to be party political*').")



**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**2<sup>nd</sup> December 2010**TENANT INVOLVEMENT AGREEMENT**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Clayton, Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment and Health
Relevant Head of Service	Liz Tompkin – Head of Housing
Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

The purpose of this report is to ask members to approve the new Tenant Involvement Agreement which is the Council's recognition criterion for formal resident panels and guidance to enable tenants and residents to be actively involved with the delivery of housing services.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that**

**the new Tenant Involvement Agreement (Appendix 1) be adopted.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Tenant Involvement has been themed throughout housing services since the mid 1990's in the formation of tenant groups and the Borough Tenants Panel the umbrella group over all local groups.
- 3.2 In June 2006 Members approved the Borough Wide Tenant Compact which is an agreement between Redditch Borough Council and its Tenants.
- 3.3 Since 2006 Tenant Involvement has moved forward considerably and inspectorates of Housing have themed involvement with tenants as high priority.
- 3.4 Central Government was the driver behind involving tenants in housing and as a result of this Officer's presented Members with Housing Services first Tenant Involvement Strategy which was approved in December 2009.
- 3.5 In order to modernise Tenant Involvement in Housing a 3 year action plan was devised within the Tenant Involvement Strategy and as part of our modernisation we committed to review the existing Borough Wide Tenant compact with our tenants and draw up a new modern agreement.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

**2<sup>nd</sup> December 2010**

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- 3.6 The compact was reviewed by Officers and research into other housing providers tenant agreements was undertaken. As a result of this a new draft 'Tenant Involvement Agreement' was drawn up
- 3.7 It is imperative that our Tenants are consulted on any documents; therefore, the draft has been presented to our all of our resident groups that are currently constituted for consultation and feedback.
- 3.7 The final document has been produced taking into account our tenants views and was taken to Borough Tenants Panel on 20<sup>th</sup> October 2010 for sign off.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 Tenant involvement is considered to be central element of good service delivery in housing.
- 4.2 An agreement for recognition criteria and guidance for formal panels who want to be actively involved in how local housing services are delivered is considered to be best practice and will also contribute to Redditch Borough Council's commitment to offer as many involvement opportunities in parallel with the Tenant Involvement Strategy.
- 4.4 In consultation with tenants a new 'Tenant Involvement Agreement' to replace the existing 'Borough Wide Tenant Compact' has been produced (Appendix 1).

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

Within existing budgets.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Under Section 111 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to do anything (whether or not involving expenditure, borrowing or lending of money or acquisition or disposal of any property or rights) which is calculated to facilitate, or is conducive or incidental, to the discharge of any of its functions.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

2<sup>nd</sup> December 2010

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**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 Tenant Involvement Strategy and Action plan December 2009.
- 7.2 Tenant Services Authority, a new regulator to ensure tenants have the opportunity to be involved in management of housing. The Tenant Involvement and Empowerment' standard.
- 7.3 Public policy
  - 1. Strong and Prosperous Communities
  - 2. Cave review
  - 3. Housing and Regeneration bill
  - 4. Duty to involve

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 8.1 Housing Service Business plan key deliverable, in partnership with tenants increase the opportunities for tenant involvement in decisions on their services.
- 8.2 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

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

None identified.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

None identified, impact assessment completed.

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

None identified.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**2<sup>nd</sup> December 2010**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

None identified.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

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

None identified.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

None identified.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

None identified.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	No
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	No
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**2<sup>nd</sup> December 2010

Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All wards

**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1: Redditch Borough Council Housing Services Tenant Involvement Agreement.

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**Existing Borough wide Tenant Involvement Compact  
Tenant Involvement Strategy and Action Plan 2009-12  
Tenant Involvement Agreement Equality Impact Assessment**AUTHOR OF REPORT**Name: Jayne Bough (Housing Services Manager).  
E Mail: jayne.bough@redditchbc.gov.uk  
Tel: 01527 64252 or Extn: 3131





**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL HOUSING SERVICES**  
**TENANT INVOLVEMENT AGREEMENT**

This Tenant Involvement Agreement is the Council's recognition criteria for formal Panels and guidance to enable tenants and residents to be actively involved with the delivery of housing services.

The agreement is also part of the Council's commitment to offer as many opportunities of involvement in parallel to Redditch Borough Council's Tenant Involvement Strategy.

This agreement has been developed in consultation with Tenant representatives.

There are different ways in which tenants can become involved; however, in order to be formally recognised by Redditch Borough Council and to be involved in decision making that affects how Services are delivered Panels must have a constitution.

**Constitution:**

Panels must have a constitution that:

- Shows the Council it is accountable, representative, open and honest.
- Demonstrates inclusiveness through an equal opportunities statement that is regularly reviewed.
- Have clear aims and objectives to include making their local area a better place to live by working together.
- Has a code of conduct and clear and open procedures for election and suspension of members.
- *Is apolitical*
- Identify the geographical area they are representing.
- States clearly how changes can be made to the constitution.



## Agreement Standards

### **Meetings:**

Panels must:

- Hold three general meetings a year as a minimum, one of which shall be an AGM.
- Have a quorum (the number of people who must attend meetings) of 4 tenants or residents.
- Any resident living in the area may join a group but have no voting rights on tenant related matters e.g., Capital improvement programme.
- Notify Tenant Involvement Officers of all meetings and invite area Officers to attend.

### **Committee:**

Panels must:

- Have a committee that live in the area they represent and consists of as a minimum, Chair, Secretary and Treasurer. (if applying for grant funding).
- Have a committee that is elected at the AGM.
- Elect up to 2 of its members to join the Borough Tenants Forum.
- When a decision is required by vote each member present is entitled to one vote with decisions by simple majority. The chair has a casting vote.

### **Communication:**

Panels must:

- Produce regular newsletters or other written communication for their members.
- Provide notice of meetings.
- Produce a brief, written annual report which is given to Redditch Borough Council.

### **Finance:**

To be eligible for an annual running grant Panels must:

- Hold a bank account in the name of the Panel.
- *Audit accounts in an appropriate and proportionate way*
- Have a least 3 nominated signatories (to include the Treasurer) for the bank account (only 2 to sign at any time).
- Make the latest bank statements available at all committee meetings.
- Balance sheet to be made available at the AGM.



### Performance Development Review Panel Agreement

The Performance Development Panel is responsible for monitoring and reviewing Tenant Involvement as well as housing performance.

The Panel will meet bi-monthly and agenda's will be set with the Chair and Tenant Involvement Officers.

Membership of the group will consist of the following:

- Chair (Tenant)
- Vice Chair
- 2 Co-opted Local Councillors
- A maximum of 2 members from each recognised Community Panel
- Tenant Involvement Officer (support – no voting rights)
- *Volunteers identified from other involvement groups/panels or database of interest.*
- Representative from the Housing Services Wider Management Team (depending on the service area that is being monitored or reviewed).

Information discussed during these meetings will be fed back to the Borough Tenants Forum as a standard Agenda item and will be the responsibility of the Chair and Tenant Involvement Officer.

An AGM will be conducted annually where the Chair and Vice Chair will be elected and an annual action plan produced.

All members of the Forum must comply with the Tenant Involvement Agreement Standards and Code of Conduct.

An annual budget will be provided for this Panel and will be held by Tenant Involvement Officers.

### Borough Tenants Forum Agreement

The Borough Tenants Forum is the umbrella group of Tenant Involvement and is representative of all groups and panels.

The Forum will meet bi-monthly and agenda's will be set with the Chair and Tenant Involvement Officers.

Membership of the group will consist of the following:

- Chair (Tenant)
- Vice Chair
- 2 Co-opted Local Councillors
- A maximum of 2 members from each recognised Community Panels



- Tenant Involvement Officer (support – no voting rights)

NB: Non-tenants can be part of the Forum; however, hold no voting rights on any housing related matter.

It is the responsibility of the Members of the Forum to feedback and consult with members within their local Community Panels.

An AGM will be conducted annually where the Chair and Vice Chair will be elected and an annual action plan produced.

The purpose of the Forum is to focus on strategic aims of involvement and to be consulted on council documents such as policies and procedures where key decisions will be reached. An annual action plan will be produced in line the Councils Forward Plan and Overview and Scrutiny Committee planned actions.

All members of the Forum must comply with the Tenant Involvement Agreement Standards and Code of Conduct.

An annual budget will be provided for this Panel and will be held by Tenant Involvement Officers.

### **Involvement in the Housing Advisory Panel**

The Housing Advisory Panel is a panel of local Councillors specifically elected to oversee Housing and is chaired by the Portfolio Holder for Housing. Officers are invited to the Panel to present any information central to the delivery of Housing Services.

The Panel meet 4 times and year and the Chair from the Borough Tenants Forum (or representative in their absence) are co-opted onto the Panel.

### **Involvement in Overview and Scrutiny Reviews**

Any member of the community is entitled to request to be involved in a Scrutiny Review being under taken by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

In Housing related reviews Members of any panel or group are encouraged to become involved and information upon request will be provided by Tenant Involvement Officers.

To express an interest in becoming part of an Overview and Scrutiny review should be done by contacting either the Councils Committee Services or the Chair of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.



**De-recognition:**

The Borough Tenants Forum is the umbrella group of representatives from all groups and includes local Councillors.

The Forum has responsibility for tenant involvement and will make the final decision on whether a Panel should continue to be recognised. A Panel will only be de-recognised as a last resort.

Any grant funding will be returned to the Council should a group be de-recognised.

**Code of Conduct:**

It is a condition of all groups, panels and forums that members behave in an appropriate way. Members must promote good working relationships and practice and abide by this Code of Conduct.

- All members shall commit themselves to promote equal opportunities within the community and within their memberships.
- *Members to be apolitical.*
- At meetings members should speak through the Chair and conduct themselves in a manner which will not cause offence to another person or bring the role of the group into disrepute. This includes
  - Racist, sexist or other inflammatory remarks
  - Preventing other members from having a say and
  - Refusing to accept instructions from the chair.
- The Chair has a right to ask any member behaving in such a manner to leave the meeting.
- Any group member may be excluded from the group, panel or forum for breach of the Code of conduct by a majority vote.
- Any member that has been excluded has the right of appeal to the Tenant Involvement Team.





**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

7th February 2011

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**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2011- 2014**

**RECOMMENDED that**

**the Every Customer, Every Time Customer Experience Strategy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.**





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

12th January 2011

**CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY 2011 - 2014**  
**- EVERY CUSTOMER, EVERY TIME**

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

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

To agree the Every Customer, Every Time, Customer Experience Strategy.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

**the Every Customer, Every Time Customer Experience Strategy, attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This is the first joint customer experience strategy and aims to build on the achievements of the customer access strategy previously in place in Redditch.
- 3.2 Ongoing actions from the previous strategy as well as customer service actions identified in individual service business plans have been pulled into this Strategy, along with new initiatives aimed at improving the overall customer service we provide as an organisation.
- 3.3 The strategy does not intend to be exhaustive, because in reality almost everything the council does contributes to the overall customer experience.
- 3.4 It focuses on the key principle that 'everybody matters' and pulls together our transformation aspirations and our commitment to developing staff - because great customer service starts with our people. It also covers the basics of excellent customer experience, and understanding our customers.
- 3.5 Whilst customer 'access' is important, this forms only part of the overall customer experience, therefore this strategy looks at the wider picture.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

**12th January 2011**

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- 3.6 The strategy aims to be a living document and one which anyone can easily understand. This document will be supported with a staff handbook as well detailed guidance on specific areas of customer interactions.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

12th January 2011

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**4. KEY ISSUES**

The four key themes in the strategy are already well established within our organisations. The Every Customer, Every Time strategy establishes the link between the themes in respect of our customers but also recognises that great customer service starts with our staff and ends with 'right first time, every time' service delivery.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The only specific financial implications are in respect of the cost of Customer Service Excellence accreditation, and gathering customer feedback. However, the lack of budget would not entirely prohibit activity in these areas and we can find ways of managing within the resources available.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no specific legal implications.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

As set out in the Strategy at Appendix 1.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

The recommended strategy is in line with the Council's vision in respect of putting the customer first

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

9.1 Failure to adopt a clear strategy aimed at improving the customer experience would indicate a failure to understand customers needs and an unwillingness to drive customer service improvement. This could have a negative impact on the Council's reputation.

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

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

12th January 2011

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**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

This strategy puts the customer at the heart of everything we are doing and aims to ensure we become a truly customer' obsessed' organisation evidenced through our actions, our staff, the way we behave, and the decisions we make in respect of service delivery.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

The strategy applies to all customers and recognises that some customers have individual needs. An impact assessment based on the proposed strategy has been completed and there are no specific actions arising.

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

Improvements in customer service generally results in a reduction of preventable contact which increases value for money, by increasing capacity to deal with other issues. The transformation work in particular will not only improve customer service, but also identify savings,

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

Development of improved online service will enable more customers to do their business on the internet thus potentially reducing travel to the Customer Service Centre and One Stop Shops.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

This strategy impacts on every member of staff and also future members of staff as we set out clear expectations of the team in respect of their behaviour.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Improving the customer experience improves general satisfaction with the Council.

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

None.

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

12th January 2011

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

Not applicable.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

The strategy has been distributed to members of the Community Forum for feedback and also some staff consultation has taken place via a newly formed staff customer focus group. Senior Managers and Heads of Services have been consulted. Wider consultation was not considered necessary at this time, as customers are unlikely to disagree with the aims or actions which will provide for a better customer experience for all. We will use customer feedback to help establish future actions.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Deputy Chief Executive/Executive Director – Leisure, Environment and Community Services	Through CMT
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Through CMT
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Through CMT
Head of Service	The Author
Head of Resources	Through CMT
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Through CMT
Corporate Procurement Team	Not applicable

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

**12th January 2011**

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**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards.

**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Draft Customer Experience Strategy.

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Not applicable.

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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# Draft

## **EVERY CUSTOMER EVERY TIME**

### **“Everybody matters”**

**A Customer Experience Strategy for Bromsgrove District and  
Redditch Borough Councils**

**2011 - 2014**



**Bromsgrove**  
District Council

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



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5. Our vision
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7. How will we know when we are getting it right?
8. Delivering value for money and making savings
9. Responding to the challenge



## 1. Foreword

Welcome to the customer experience strategy for Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils.

This is the first joint customer strategy and marks an important step in our aim to share services whilst maintaining local identity and political control.

We recognise that the needs of individuals vary but customers, wherever they live or do their business, have the same expectations in respect of customer services and access to services. As Councils have no tangible 'product' and customers have no choice about which council they can go to, our reputation rests on the quality of our service provision which is why the provision of excellent customer service is so important to us. By working together we can also ensure value for money.

This strategy builds on the good work already done in both Councils to improve customer service and access to services in recent years. It sets out our vision for customer service delivery and how we will make a real difference to the customer service provision.

Councillor Geoff Denaro  
Portfolio holder, Bromsgrove District  
Council

Councillor Michael Braley  
Portfolio holder, Redditch Borough  
Council

Insert pictures of portfolio holders

## 2. Introduction

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough councils began sharing the services they provide to residents, and the management team that operates both authorities, during 2008/09. We have now started a radical 3 year transformation programme to review all our services and look to share provision when opportunities arise.

Our vision for high quality customer services is driven by the need to improve the experience customers have when contacting us, or doing business with us. We want to give our customers confidence that we can be relied upon to provide the best quality service within available resources. We want to ensure value for money, whilst also aiming to get more right first time. We want to ensure that customers do not have to contact us several times to get the service they have requested which will also save taxpayers money.

Considerable work had already been done in both Councils. In Bromsgrove through the Customer First Programme, and in Redditch, the Customer Access Strategy, and we have seen many achievements in the development of customer service provision. This strategy will build on these achievements. The work that has been done in Bromsgrove to map customer journeys and identify improvements to service delivery through the service action plans will continue and will, by joined up business planning, spread across both authorities. In Redditch work such as in respect of Customer Service Excellence in Housing and the improvement plans in Benefits support the actions in this strategy.

In developing a joint strategy it is necessary to accept the differences within the two Councils, in respect of customer base and culture, and work with them for the benefit of the customer, taking both organisations forward on a journey to excellence.

Whilst many of the national drivers for such a strategy have been removed by the coalition Government this does not remove our desire to ensure we have a strong commitment to driving customer service provision locally.

The shift of power from Westminster to local people will give communities and individuals a bigger voice. The Structural Reform Plan also includes proposals for giving residents the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and veto excessive council tax increases. 'New Localism' – the name the Government has given this new way of thinking and working - also suggests an increased focus on community engagement, through techniques like participatory budgeting and neighbourhood budgets. We recognise that services built around customer needs are a priority in the current political and economic climate and, more importantly, an expectation of customers and tax payers. Transformation of service delivery using the 'systems thinking approach' will help to ensure that we achieve this priority.

This strategy sits alongside our other local strategies, such as the Council Plan, Equality and Diversity Strategy, Workforce Development, and our Climate Change Strategy and the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement, which makes the link between national, regional and local policy. It also fits with the Total Place agenda, which looks at how we can work with other partners to drive through efficiencies and take a holistic approach to public service provision.

At both Bromsgrove at Redditch we have strong local priorities.

Bromsgrove District Council Priorities	Redditch Borough Council Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Economic Development.</li> <li>• Town Centre.</li> <li>• Value for Money</li> <li>• One Community.</li> <li>• Housing.</li> <li>• Climate Change.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• An enterprising community.</li> <li>• Safe.</li> <li>• Clean and green.</li> <li>• A well managed organisation</li> </ul>

This Strategy and all related objectives have synergy with the priorities of both authorities and specifically help to ensure we provide **Value for Money** and have a **Well Managed Organisation**

A robust service business planning framework exists and customer service delivery forms an integral part of the development plans of each service.

Finally, we work closely with Worcestershire County Council, though the Worcestershire Hub Partnership to deliver joined up customer access. This partnership, made up of all the districts and the county council has successfully developed face to face, telephone and online access points for customers to gain easy, one stop access to services. This strategy sits alongside the Worcestershire Hub 'Our Customers' Strategy and the countywide Self Service Strategy.

This document not only sets out our vision but also how we aim to make this happen. This will only be a part of the journey and as customer needs change, and service delivery develops to meet those changing needs, this strategy will also change. Therefore it will be reviewed annually in line with our timetable for business planning and budget setting.

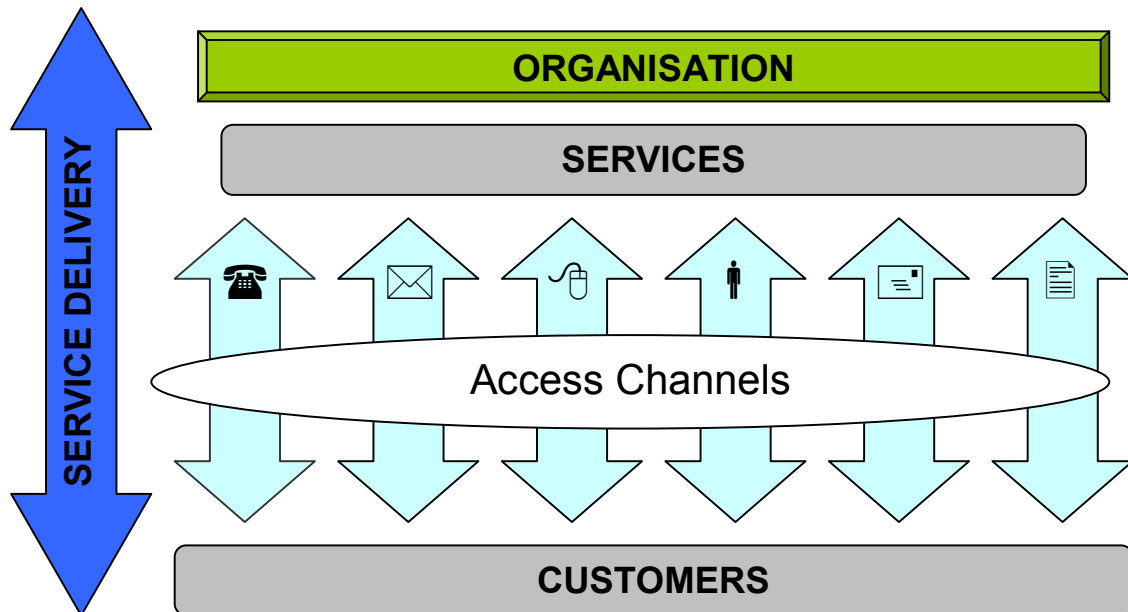
Consultation with staff has taken place via our staff Customer Focus Group, as well as with senior managers and members. The strategy takes into account the results of the Hub customer survey, conducted in Dec 2009 and the View Point survey conducted early in 2010. Feedback has been received from the Ethnic and Diversity Forum (Bromsgrove) and the Community Forum in Redditch.

### 3. Current Position

Both authorities had Customer Access Strategies in place which have steered the work to improve customer service over recent years. These have resulted in many improvements such as:-

- ✓ More services are now available through the Hub Customer Service Centres in both Bromsgrove and Redditch.
- ✓ Clear standards of service are in place for all services.
- ✓ Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils are now signed up to the county wide interpreting and translation service which enables customers for whom English is not a first language to receive translation and interpretation support. It is hoped that providing the same service across the County, which manages requests on a case by case basis rather than just translating leaflets on mass, that people who live and work in different parts of the County will receive the same service Countywide.
- ✓ The Housing Service in Redditch was awarded the Charter Mark, which recognises excellent customer service, for the 5<sup>th</sup> year running.
- ✓ The benefits team in Redditch has recently introduced visiting officers who go to people's homes to assist with benefits applications.
- ✓ Redditch Borough Council introduced the Community Forum and this is now a thriving group of partners, stakeholders, and residents, who meet regularly to discuss the equality and diversity issues that relate to our services and the way they are delivered to minority groups.
- ✓ Customer First training was delivered to all staff in Bromsgrove and backed up with useful guidance in respect of handling customer feedback.
- ✓ The websites for both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils were re-launched, using a countywide template to make navigation consistent and information easier to find. We worked with the RNIB and a local visually impaired support group to ensure the site meets the specific needs of people with sight problems. We have also reduced the number of contact addresses and 'phone numbers published on the website to make it easier for customers to contact us. We also increased the number of online services available, for example online benefits applications in Redditch.
- ✓ Customer Feedback is being used to inform changes to service delivery and reported regularly to members and customers, and we invested in a system to ensure we can properly track and report on this feedback.
- ✓ Customer service based improvements are a key part in every service's business planning.
- ✓ Redditch Matters magazine has been launched to ensure residents are kept informed of council and community developments.
- ✓ Customers now have a say in the way that the Council spends their money with a budget jury made up of people from across the Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
- ✓ Customer service behaviour and objectives now form part of the annual personal development review for each member of staff.

#### 4. What do we mean by 'access to services?'



However customers make contact with us, whether it is by telephone, email, the internet, in person, or via other means, we want them to find that access is quick and easy. However, the geographical nature of the district of Bromsgrove and Redditch Borough means that access may be limited to a smaller number of channels and customers will, by necessity, be forced to use particular means of contacting us.

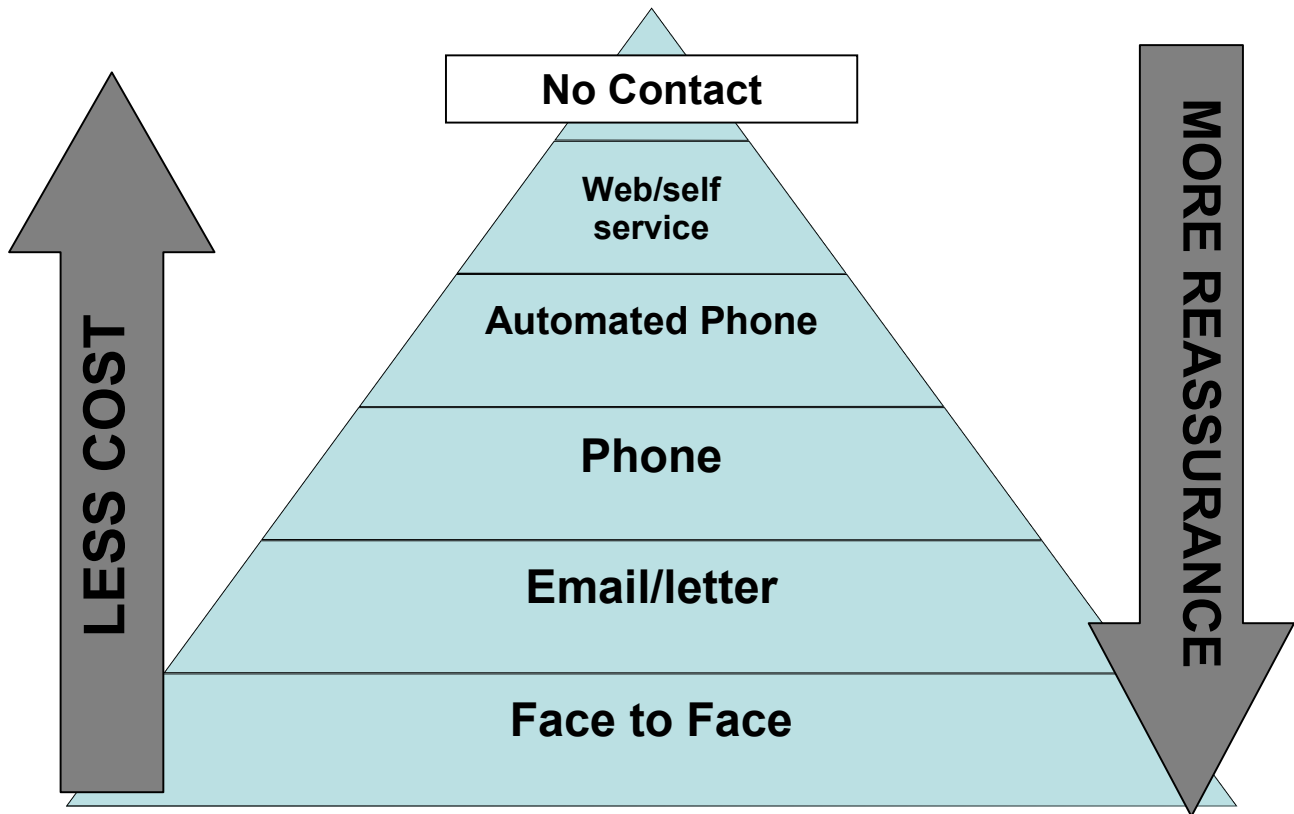
A recent survey of 1,185 residents of Worcestershire, carried out in December 2009 indicated that nearly 40% of residents contact us by telephone and 30% through face to face contact at one of the Customer Service Centres or One Stop Shops. 24% of people who completed the survey said they made contact online, via the internet or email.

83% of people said they used the internet at home and over half of all the people asked said they would consider using the internet to access council services. The survey also told us that people who tried to do their business online were also more likely to have to contact us more than once to resolve their enquiry. 43% of all responders who had to get in touch with us more than once did so because their enquiry was not resolved, and a further 38% were trying to find out what progress had been made in respect of their issue.

This suggests that we have some work to do to improve the online contact channels as this could provide better access for those people who cannot use some of the other methods of contacting us. We also need to get more right first time and get better at telling customers what is happening, or when they can expect action, in respect of matters they raise with us.

We also have contacts with many people which are instigated by us, or through everyday activities, for example at the Leisure or Community Centres, or contact with Shopmobility, or Dial a Ride amongst many others, and it is equally important to us that these contacts are positive for our customers.

There is a generally accepted model for the effectiveness of the major channels of contact available which is shown below.



What this model shows is that as we move up the triangle the costs gets lower for the organisation. However, for some types of contact a greater level of human contact is necessary, particularly where greater reassurance is needed. It is therefore vital to understand the types of contacts and the level of reassurance that a customer is likely to require when designing services for customers.

## 5. Our Vision

This strategy applies to **all** our customers, whether they live, work or visit Bromsgrove or Redditch. It applies to businesses, partners, other agencies and our internal customers (employees). The strategy is driven by a clear vision which links directly with our corporate priorities.

### **Our vision is to:-**

- **make it easy to access services, joining up with other organisations where possible;**
- **provide a high quality customer experience for all customers who make contact with us, regardless of when or how they make contact;**
- **ensure customers get the information and advice they need in a way that suits their needs and is easy to understand.**

In practical terms this means that for all services and activities we will:

- Always put the customer first by:
  - Treating them as individuals.
  - Listening to them.
  - Taking ownership of problems.
  - Doing the little things – ensuring attention to detail, and going the extra mile, because we know it makes a difference.
- Work with other organisations to provide joined up services.
- Listen to and act on feedback and tell customers what we've done.
- Ensure customers get a quick response, and action or information on progress, so that they don't have to keep chasing us.
- Keep everyone informed.
- Communicate in plain language, which is easy to understand and removes the need for customers to contact us for explanations.
- Get the basics right.
- Develop our online services to provide easier access for those who can do their business with us online, and ensure it meets customer's needs.
- Use our service reviews to tailor services to our customers needs.
- Look for more efficient ways of doing things to make savings wherever possible to deliver value for money services.
- Get more right first time.

The ultimate aim of this strategy is to have people, systems, and processes in place which make it easy for customers to contact the Council by using a variety of access points. To ensure everyone gets the same excellent level of service and to have questions and issues dealt with at the first point of contact as often as possible.

**We aim to exceed expectations and delight our customers.**

## 6. Understanding our customers

Both Councils undertake a great deal of work to consult with our customers. We also gather a lot of data about customers which is held on various systems.

We use customer feedback, such as complaints and compliments to tell us how well we are doing and where we could do better and customer satisfaction surveys are used by many departments to gain direct feedback from service users.

We need to further develop our knowledge of customers and their needs, so that we can tailor our services appropriately. There is a growing need to use 'customer insight' to enable us to target services, communications and inform service developments. Whilst customer insight data can be bought in, it is how we use it that will affect the success of its use.

We will further exploit the potential of customer insight tools, to inform on lifestyle profiling which if used in conjunction with other information we already hold about customers, will help to provide a coherent view of our customers.

We will also continue to actively engage customers in decision making through dialogue where major changes in service provision are likely.

## 7. How will we know we are getting it right?

The judges of the success of this strategy will be the users of the services, - people who contact us for whatever reason.

Greater satisfaction with the Council and the individual services will be a key indicator of success.

Other measureable outcomes will be:

- More things done right first time.
- Increased take up of the cheaper access channels, such as online or automatic payment methods.
- Excellence in customer service provision recognised by achieving the Customer Services Excellence accreditation.
- Resolution of enquiries at the first point of contact.
- The removal of avoidable contact.
- Joined up services or co-location of public services, so that customers can access a wider range of services in one place.
- Removal of unnecessary red tape.
- Customer focused staff.
- Confident, decisive and supportive managers.
- Greater customer and staff involvement in the design of service delivery.
- Reduced costs and better value for money.

Satisfaction surveys, Worcestershire Viewpoint (resident's panel) results, Customer feedback through complaints and compliments, and reduced avoidable contact will be used to measure success. We will also use the Customer Service Excellence Accreditation to assess our progress.



## 8. Delivering value for money and making savings

This is obviously a major priority.

Technology needs to be exploited to provide greater ability to self serve and allow customers to do their business with us at a time that suits them, from the comfort of their own home or workplace. For the 17% of residents who do not have access to the internet at home we need to ensure that other mechanisms exist and this may mean extending public internet in Council offices, or finding other alternatives such as mobile phone technology, kiosks, or digital TV.

We will actively encourage the use of contact-less and self service channels for payments, which are expensive to handle face to face.

We will work with our partners across Worcestershire to ensure we provide joined up services. We will also develop other partnerships, where it is appropriate to do so, to bring services together and reduce costs.

Our approach to reviewing how we deliver services will enable us to assess what customers really need and remove unnecessary and costly steps in the process. This will also reduce 'avoidable' contact – contact that could have been prevented if we had done things differently. This not only reduces costs but also significantly improves the service to customers.

## 9. Responding to the challenge

This strategy is built around 4 key themes which enable us to focus on how we meet the challenge of delivering the best quality services that meet the needs of individuals for the lowest possible costs.

**Customer experience** - going back to basics to ensure that the customer's experience of contacting us is always positive – even when we can't give the answer the customer wants.

**Transform** – reviewing, and changing, service delivery based on what customers actually want and need and building the processes around the customer rather than to meet organisational needs.

**Understanding the customer (including internal customers or partners)** – through feedback, complaints, compliments, surveys, forums, and using customer insight tools such as Mosaic and the information held on our own systems.

**Our Staff** – ensuring all our staff are truly customer focused, and share the values and behaviours necessary to ensure we exceed our standards and our customer's expectations.

By implementing this Strategy we will make a significant contribution to the delivery of both Council's priorities specifically ensuring we provide **Value for Money** (Bromsgrove District Council) and have a **Well Managed Organisation** (Redditch Borough Council). We will also ensure that the needs of all our customers are met and that we meet our pledges in respect of **equality and diversity**.

**EVERY CUSTOMER – EVERY TIME**  
**“Everybody matters”**

## THEME 1 – CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Good customer service is an entitlement, not a privilege. By going back to basics to ensure that the customer's experience of contacting us is always positive, even when we can't give the answer the customer wants, we will ensure that we exceed our standards and delight our customers. We know that customers expect a high level of customer service and we must never lose sight of the fact that we are here for the customers benefit.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<p>✓ That every customer should receive a high quality service every time.</p> <p>✓ That every customer should be treated with respect.</p> <p>✓ That customers should know we are genuine.</p> <p>✓ That customers should understand the information we provide them with.</p> <p>✓ That customers should know who is dealing with their issues and have confidence that something will be done.</p> <p>✓ That customers have the right to feedback to us their</p>	<p>Aim high – OK is not good enough and excellence will be our standard.</p> <p>We will go the extra mile and take pride in our work, setting goals to strive to achieve excellent results.</p> <p>Treat everyone as we would like to be treated whether customers, colleagues, staff or Members.</p> <p>Treat people as individuals.</p> <p>Be consistent and fair.</p> <p>Mean what we say and do what we say we will.</p> <p>Let customers know if we cannot meet the timescales originally agreed, or set out in our Customer Service Pledges</p> <p>If we cannot meet a customers needs we will be up front about this because even though we can't give the answer a customer wants we do care about their issue.</p> <p>Use Plain English, and present information in a way that is easy for all to understand</p> <p>Ensure staff use the website in their every day</p>	<p><b>1.1 Revise and relaunch our customer service standards (Customer Experience Pledges)</b></p> <p><b>1.2 Review our Customer journey mapping and ensure all actions are completed.</b></p> <p><b>1.3 Review recruitment procedures to ensure customer focus is at the heart of successful candidates.</b></p> <p><b>1.4 Develop staff 'protocols' to ensure all staff are clear of the behaviour expected of everyone when dealing with customers.</b></p> <p><b>1.5 Develop and implement a customer focused training plan</b></p> <p><b>1.6 Develop and launch a staff customer service guide.</b></p> <p><b>1.7 Implement Plain English Training</b></p> <p><b>1.8 Review all information/letters/web pages to ensure they are easy to understand, are empathetic, and remove the need for clarification.</b></p> <p><b>1.9 Develop and conduct a customer satisfaction survey</b></p> <p><b>1.10 Develop peer review and mystery shopping mechanisms.</b></p>

<p>experiences and that we should use this information to shape future improvements.</p> <p>✓ That we should evaluate our customer service performance</p>	<p>work to ensure that it is fit for purpose</p> <p>Give our names when we have contact with customers</p> <p>Take ownership, not pass the buck and never blame others when things don't go to plan.</p> <p>If we have made a mistake we will be open and honest and work with the customer to establish a satisfactory outcome</p> <p>Improve our customer feedback process to ensure that customers who find it necessary to complain can do so easily and receive a quality response – even if we can't change the outcome.</p> <p>Work towards Customer Service Excellence Accreditation.</p>	<p><b>1.11 Achieve Customer Service Excellence accreditation.</b></p> <p><b>1.12 Reduce avoidable contact</b></p> <p><b>1.13 Get more 'Right First Time'</b></p> <p><b>1.14 Tailor our marketing, promotional and communication materials to suit the needs of all our customers.</b></p> <p><b>1.15 Work with minority groups where appropriate to improve access to services.</b></p> <p><b>1.16 Use customer complaints as a force for good, identifying service improvement opportunities.</b></p>
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## THEME 2 – TRANSFORMATION

By reviewing, and changing, service delivery based on what customers actually want and need and building the processes we use around the customer rather than to meet organisational needs, we will drive out waste, reduce preventable contact and make savings. Customers will see changes to the way we do things as we roll out our three year programme of transformation. This is coupled with a move to sharing services wherever possible to maximise resilience within the teams, provide a more cost effective service and ensure a consistently high standard of service for customers of both authorities.

Wherever possible we need to work with other organisations to develop joint service provision and make it easier for our customers to do business with all public services. We know that customers see local government as a single organisation so we already provide joint access to County Council and District council services. We also need to explore how we could extend this to include other public services through co-location or joint service delivery.

Many services already have good working relationships with other organisations in the course of delivering services and these will continue to be developed and maximized for the benefit of customers.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<p>✓ Services should be customer focused and easy to access across a range of access channels.</p> <p>✓ In getting the best possible value out of our resources.</p> <p>✓ In eliminating wasteful duplications or inefficient process.</p> <p>✓ In reducing preventable contact, where customers have to contact us a number of times to get something done, or to chase progress.</p> <p>✓ That technology should support and enhance customer access and service delivery.</p> <p>✓ That by working with others we can make better use of resources and expertise.</p> <p>✓ That partnerships are fundamental to delivering excellent joined-up services.</p>	<p>Review our service delivery and processes to shape them around the customers needs, using systems thinking methodology, which assesses customer demand and plans for 'perfect' service delivery.</p> <p>Ensure that when planning new processes we cut out non value work.</p> <p>Work with other organisations to develop joined up service delivery and make it easier for customers to access public services</p> <p>Ensure that wherever possible customers can access services online, over the phone and face to face.</p> <p>Provide a one stop service and reduce the number of times customers have to make contact with us to get something done.</p> <p>Develop a way of enabling customers to tell us about change of personal details once rather than numerous times.</p> <p>Develop our web service to enable more to be done through self service.</p> <p>Encourage customers to use self service where it is possible to do so.</p>	<p><b>2.1 Review key frontline services using the systems thinking methodology and put the customer at the heart of changes to the end to end process.</b></p> <p><b>2.2 Increase resolution at first point of contact, where ever and with whomever that contact might be.</b></p> <p><b>2.3 Develop a 'Tell us once' mechanism for customer changes of address and other details.</b></p> <p><b>2.4 Implement Shared Services where it is appropriate, cost effective and beneficial to service delivery.</b></p> <p><b>2.5 Work with partners to join up service provision and provide more cost effective services.</b></p> <p><b>2.6 Work with our local government partners across Worcestershire to develop self service.</b></p> <p><b>2.7 Review and revise web content to ensure it is relevant and fit for purpose.</b></p> <p><b>2.8 Continue to develop our online service to ensure that those who want to, can access information and services via the web.</b></p> <p><b>2.8 Maintain public internet access at our Customer Service Centres.</b></p> <p><b>2.9 Provide mediated web access and customer awareness training to encourage take up of self service.</b></p> <p><b>2.10 Maintain one phone number for council services (with limited number of 'specialist' phone numbers to allow 'menu-less' access to telephone services).</b></p>

**2.11 Ensure customer service features in action plans in all services, as part of our business planning process.**

**2.12 Review face to face service to ensure resources are most effectively used.**

**2.13 Use previously developed customer service initiatives where appropriate across any new shared services.**

### THEME 3 – UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER

In order that we communicate properly with customers, fully understand customer needs and shape our services in a way that best suits the majority we need to use all of the feedback we gather. We currently receive feedback via Members, complaints, compliments, surveys and forums and we need to use this ‘intelligence’ to help shape service improvements. By actively engaging with customers, staff, Members and partners and joining up all the information we hold we will be able to develop a wider view with which to inform the service transformations and service improvement plans. This will enable us to build service delivery around the needs of customers rather than around the organisational structure.

Customer insight information is valuable to help us to target communications appropriately and cost effectively. We need to use the information we receive through customer insight tools to inform the redesign of services and mainstream it’s use within the decision making process for all policy and procedural changes.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<p>✓ That customers have the right to tell us if they are unhappy with the service we have provided.</p> <p>✓ That our customers concerns are our concerns – we should know what they are and act on them if it is possible to do so.</p>	<p>Ensure our customer feedback process is easy to understand and that complaints are dealt with at the highest possible level</p> <p>Publicise the ways in which residents and business can engage with us.</p> <p>Consult with customers</p> <p>Conduct customer satisfaction surveys</p>	<p><b>3.1 Relaunch our Customer Feedback policy.</b></p> <p><b>3.2 Implement computer software to ensure all complaints are captured and followed up.</b></p> <p><b>3.3 Develop a method of monitoring web content to ensure it meets customers needs</b></p> <p><b>3.4 Provided guidance on how to get involved at the Council.</b></p>

<p>✓ That customers should know how to get involved with the Council.</p> <p>✓ Customers should have a say in how/where savings are made.</p> <p>✓ That we should ask you what you thought of the service we provided.</p> <p>✓ That our own staff are also a valuable source of information</p>	<p>and follow up calls to make sure customers received the information or service they needed.</p> <p>Consult with staff about internal service provision.</p> <p>Look at best practice in other organisations and identify projects where better customer knowledge would help us to engage and consult better.</p> <p>Use customer insight data to inform and target publicity campaigns.</p> <p>Implement automated feedback technology.</p>	<p><b>3.5 Provide the public with the opportunity to get involved in our budget setting via the annual Budget Jury and on-line budget consultation</b></p> <p><b>3.6 Continue to consult with customers through public forums and customer satisfaction surveys</b></p> <p><b>3.7 Conduct Staff/internal customer surveys</b></p> <p><b>3.8 Implement a joint staff customer focus forum, to act as champions of customer service throughout the organisations.</b></p> <p><b>3.9 Maintain and develop individual service satisfaction surveys</b></p> <p><b>3.10 Implement a ‘follow up calls’ regime where by staff contact a sample of customers to ensure that a recent request for service has been properly dealt with.</b></p> <p><b>3.11 Implement GovMetric to capture real time customer feedback on their experience.</b></p> <p><b>3.12 Develop a joint Consultation Strategy? Is this planned?</b></p> <p><b>3.13 Use customer insight to inform decision making and communications</b></p> <p><b>3.14 Include Customer Impact assessment in decision making process .</b></p> <p><b>3.15 Improve the quality of data held about customers on our customer relationship management system.</b></p> <p><b>3.16 Carry out service consultation with users (and non users where appropriate) and use the results to inform service improvement.</b></p>
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## THEME 4 - OUR STAFF

Great customer service starts with our staff and they are key to ensuring we are a truly customer focused organisation. It is vital that all staff understand the value of great service and share the values and behaviours necessary to ensure we exceed our standards and our customer's expectations. Excellent examples should be celebrated and shared for others to learn from. Poor performance will be addressed and opportunities to develop will be provided. Many of our staff have little contact with external customers but this does not mean they don't have customers. The role of these staff is to support the front line services, who are therefore their customers and this strategy applies equally to all.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>✓ That all staff should be 'customer obsessed'.</li> <li>✓ Staff should be praised for good service and helped to improve if they sometimes fall short of our expectations.</li> <li>✓ That all staff should be sensitive to individual customer needs.</li> <li>✓ That only people who are committed to provided excellent customer service should join the team.</li> </ul>	<p>Make sure that all staff understand their role within the organisation and that the role of the Council is to provide customer service.</p> <p>Use customer feedback and our own observations of staff behaviour to evaluate performance and address issues through our performance development framework</p> <p>Make sure that every member of staff sees others points of view, is sensitive to people's feelings and acknowledge the customers concerns.</p> <p>Ensure our recruitment policies are clear about expected behaviours.</p> <p>Ensure that sufficient and appropriate training is in place</p>	<p><b>4.1 Performance development will include customer service development for all staff.</b></p> <p><b>4.2 Our Corporate Training Plans will include customer service training, to help staff deal with specific areas and general customer awareness.</b></p> <p><b>4.3 Core skills will be developed for all staff which will include customer service skills.</b></p> <p><b>4.4 Core Skills for managers will be developed which will include skills for managing a customer focused service and staff performance issues</b></p> <p><b>4.5 Maintain the Corporate Management Team (CMT) Back to the Floor initiative and develop this to encourage all managers to spend at least one half day per year working with a different team.</b></p>

<p>✓ That managers should ensure that their team provides the expected level of service.</p> <p>✓ Staff should understand who their customer is.</p>	<p>Ensure excellent service is recognised and poor performance addressed.</p> <p>Ensure that all teams, regardless of their function consider how they serve their customers whoever they may be.</p> <p>Remove blockages and challenge issues which create barriers to providing excellent service.</p> <p>Lead change positively throughout the organisations</p> <p>Create pride in the organisations and our achievements</p>	<p><b>4.6 Develop our Induction Packs and training to ensure customer focus is a key part of our instruction to new starters</b></p> <p><b>4.7 Maintain CMT Walk the Wards initiative</b></p> <p><b>4.8 Staff Awards (BAFTAs / Redditch Staff Awards scheme)</b></p> <p><b>4.9 Utilise Staff Ideas Schemes to capture staff ideas and suggestions</b></p> <p><b>4.10 Develop home working where appropriate to support staff in undertaking their duties.</b></p> <p><b>4.11 Develop the staff intranet to ensure that all staff have access to appropriate information.</b></p>
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## Appendix 1

### Our Customer Service Pledge

Our customers are important to us and we aim to provide high quality services, exceed customer expectations and delight our customers. We will treat you as individuals, listen carefully to you, be sensitive to your needs, and take ownership of problems so that you can be confident that someone is dealing with your issue.

#### What customers can expect from us...

We will:-

- be friendly, polite, helpful, attentive and considerate at all times;
- provide accurate and clear information;
- use plain English and avoid jargon or technical terms;
- be open and honest about what we can and cannot deliver;
- get back to you when we say we will, and advise you of our progress when we are taking longer than anticipated to address an issue.

We always aim to get it right first time, every time so that you don't have to keep contacting us about the same issue.

If the first person you have contact with cannot help you and they have to pass on your enquiry to someone else they will tell you who will be dealing with it.

If your enquiry cannot be dealt with at the time you contact us we will make sure you know what is happening and when you can expect to receive further contact from us.

Some services have to work to different standards because of laws that set out how they must operate and details these are available online or from the relevant service. Otherwise the following timescales will apply when you contact us.

We will always make our services, offices and information as accessible as possible to all our customers.

**Whilst our focus is on quality, we also aim to provide a quality response within an acceptable period. As a guide these are the timeframes we aim to work within:-**

#### Emails

When you **email** us we aim to respond to all customer enquiries requiring a response within **48 hours** of the time it was received by us. In most cases this will be a full response but if the issue will take longer to investigate or resolve we will tell you when you can expect a full response.

If the officer you have emailed is out of the office you will be advised when that officer will be available and who to contact in the meantime if your enquiry is urgent.

#### Letters

We aim respond to all customer enquiries made by **letter** within **7 working days** of the date it is received by us. In most cases this will be a full response but if the issue will take longer to investigate or resolve before we can get back to you we will tell you when we intend to get a full response out to you.

#### In person

If you visit one of our customer service centres in **person**, we aim to see you within 5 minutes of your arrival to find out the nature of your enquiry. If you need to see a customer service advisor we will then

see you as soon possible and wherever possible within 15 minutes. We will advise you of approximate waiting times if it will be longer than 15 minutes and advise you of alternative options if appropriate.

If the person you see cannot help you they will tell you who can and provide you with facilities to speak to them if they are within our organisation or pass on contact details if this is more suitable. If you need assistance with English a telephone interpreter can be provided at this time.

If it is appropriate for you to have an appointment with a specialist officer we will make the necessary arrangements for you to see them at the time that is most convenient to you (within normal office hours). If you need assistance with English an interpreter, or a British Sign Language interpreter (subject to availability) will be arranged for the appointment.

If you have an appointment with a member of staff they will see you on time.

## Telephone

If you call the customer services centre one of our customer service advisors aims to answer telephone calls within 20 seconds (6 rings) during opening times ([link to opening times](#)).

At times of peak demand we will advise you if you are in queue and will keep waiting times as short as possible.

Staff in all other offices aim to answer 100% of their 'phone calls within 20 seconds (6 rings) between 9am and 5pm.

If you need assistance with English a telephone interpreter can be provided at this time.

If voicemail is activated you will be told when the member of staff is going to be available and given an alternative number to call in the event the enquiry is urgent. Staff will respond to voicemail messages within 1 working day of the date of the call, or within 1 working day of the date the message tells you they will return to the office.

## Online

We will ensure all the information on our website is accurate, up to date and makes sense to customers.

## Complaints

We will acknowledge all complaints made through our complaints procedure within 2 working days and carry out investigations to enable us to respond to you within 15 working days of receipt of your complaint. If this is not possible we will tell you exactly when you can expect a response from us.

## Home visits

If we have an appointment to visit you at home we will:

- ensure you understand the reason for the visit;
- let you know if we cannot keep the appointment, or if we are going to be delayed;
- ensure you and your home is treated with respect; and
- let you know what we will do next if follow up action is necessary.

**We value the diversity of our communities and want to ensure that everyone has fair access to our services. We are therefore committed to equality and diversity in the way we respond to your needs and in the way we provide our services. We will not discriminate unfairly or unlawfully on any grounds and in particular the grounds of race, gender (including gender identity), disability, age, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. Different services may be offered, or services may be provided in a different way where it would be appropriate to do so (e.g. different services may be offered based on age or a service may be provided differently to include reasonable adjustments for disability).**

**Customer access points**

**Bromsgrove**



**Go online**

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



**Telephone enquiries**

01527 881288

Monday to Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed



**Telephone Payments**

01527 881474



**In Person**

Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre  
 School Drive  
 Bromsgrove  
 Worcestershire  
 B60 1AY

Monday to Wednesday	09:00 - 17:00
Thursday	10:00 - 17:00
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed

**Redditch**



**Go online**

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



**Telephone enquiries**

01527 534123

Monday and Tuesday and Thursday	09:00 - 17:30
Wednesday	10:00 - 17:30
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed



**Telephone Payments**

01527 534021.



**In Person**

Redditch Customer Service Centre  
 Town Hall  
 Walter Stranz Square  
 Redditch  
 B98 8AH

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday	09:00 - 17:30
Wednesday	10:00 - 17:30
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed

Batchley One Stop Shop  
 Batchley Shopping Centre,  
 183 Batchley Rd  
 Batchley  
 Redditch  
 B97 6JB

Monday, Tuesday and Friday	09:00 - 12:30
Wednesday and Thursday	13:30 - 17:30

Winyates One Stop Shop  
Unit 3 Winyates Centre,  
Redditch  
B98 0NR

Monday and Tuesday	13:30 - 17:00
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday	09:00 - 12:30

Woodrow One Stop Shop  
Woodrow Shopping Centre  
Studley Road  
Redditch  
B98 7RY

Monday and Tuesday	09:00 - 12:30
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday	13:30 - 17:00

Amanda de Warr  
Head of Customer Services

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council's

October 2010

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

7th February 2011

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **Redditch Borough Council endorse and support the need for a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in the West Mercia Police area;**
- 2) **the Council issue a letter to the Health and Wellbeing Board highlighting the level of uncertainty for future provision of a SARC within the West Mercia Police area and the apparent gaps in the NHS White Paper *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS*” in this regard; and**

**RESOLVED that**

- 3) **the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 17th November and 8th December 2010 be received and noted.**





# Overview and Scrutiny Committee

17th November 2010

## MINUTES

### Present:

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

### Also Present:

Councillors Brandon Clayton, Roger Hill, Derek Taylor and Mr M Collins (Standards Committee Observer).

### Officers:

D Bennett, H Bennett, J Bough, M Bough, S Hanley, S Horrobin, G Revans and L Tompkin

### Committee Services Officer:

J Smyth and I Westmore

### 130. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

No apologies for absence had been received.

### 131. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

### 132. MINUTES

#### RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 27th October 2010 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

.....  
Chair

# Overview and SCRUTINY

Committee

17th November 2010

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## 133. ACTIONS LIST

Members considered the latest version of the Committee's Actions List. Officers advised that, in relation to item 2 on the list, a report on options for public speaking at Overview and Scrutiny Committee meetings would be presented to the Committee at its meeting on 8th December 2010.

In respect of Item 1 on the Actions List, the Chair requested that Officers address the outstanding query on what courses would not be provided following the closure of the REDI Centre, as soon as possible.

### **RESOLVED that**

**the Actions List be noted.**

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

There were no specific call-ins relating to the Decision Notice of the Executive Committee meeting held on 10th November 2010.

It was noted that, whilst not all of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's recommendations on the Climate Change Strategy had been accepted, the Executive had agreed an additional recommendation on a policy being approved for all new public buildings to aim to exceed nationally set Building Research Establishment Environmental Assessment Method (BREEAM) standards. It was further noted that of the Committee's recommendations relating to the Review of the Dial A Ride Service had been accepted and incorporated in the Executive Committee's recommendations to Council.

There were no pre-scrutiny requests in relation to items scheduled on the Forward Plan for consideration by the Executive Committee.

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

There were no draft scoping documents for consideration.

## 136. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

It was noted that the final report on the External Refurbishment of Housing Stock Short-Sharp Review was to be presented later in the meeting under Item 9 on the agenda.



# Overview and SCRUTINY

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

a) Joint Worcestershire Hub

The Council's Co-opted representative, Councillor Roger Hill, reported that the report on the review of the Worcestershire Hub was due to go to the County Council's Cabinet for consideration on 25th November. Members further noted that an e-link could be provided to access the report on the County's website if they wished to view the report online.

b) Work Experience Opportunities

The Chair of the review, Councillor Peter Anderson, reported that investigations had revealed that an organisation, the Worcestershire Education Business Partnership had been set up to provide assistance and access to a substantial database that schools and young people could tap into to help them find work experience placements and which had, in the previous year, assisted with placing 6,000 students.

He further reported that some schools in Redditch were not, it would seem, taking advantage of this database or enabling their students to make use of it and the Task and Finish Group would be investigating if this was the case and why. He commented that, between this organisation, Careers Advisers and Connexions, there should be plenty of opportunities for work experience placements.

Members also noted that a planned visit by the Chair to a Student Council meeting on 16th November to consult with them on work experience issues had been postponed due to unforeseen circumstances and that he would be meeting with them at the end of January 2011 instead.

c) Promoting Redditch

On behalf of the Task and Finish Group Chair, Councillor Graham Vickery, Officers reported that the Group had held their first meeting on Friday 5th November, at which they received a presentation on the subject of the "Its My Place" Pride Campaign. The Group's next meeting would be held on 23rd November when the work of the Council's Economic Development Unit in promoting Redditch and opportunities for Redditch, given its close proximity, for tapping into Stratford's tourist market and providing places to stay would be discussed.

# Overview and SCRUTINY

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Members further noted that the Group had also organised an interview with a representative from North East Worcestershire Tourism (NEWT) on 30th November and was also organising an interview with Sir William Lawrence, former Chair of the defunct Heart of England Tourist Board which, it was hoped, would take place some time in December.

Councillor Derek Taylor, reported that he had received a few responses from Councillors on his research survey "What's good about Redditch", but would welcome more. Members suggested that other external groups, such as businesses, voluntary groups, young and older people should also be consulted on the survey.

## **RESOLVED that**

**the update reports be noted.**

### **137. CRIME AND DISORDER SCRUTINY PANEL - CHAIR'S UPDATE**

The Committee received a report from the Chair of the Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel which provided details on discussions held with Officers from the Worcestershire PCT on the possibilities for establishing a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in the West Mercia Police area and the impact the lack of funding and changes to the NHS and PCT's would have and were asked to endorse the Panel's request that the Council write to the Health and Wellbeing Board on the issues highlighted in the report.

The Deputy Chief Executive and Chair of the Redditch Community Safety Partnership reported that she had already received the Panel's letter on funding issues and that the matter would be taken to the full Partnership for consideration.

Members also noted updates on public consultation responses the Panel had received in relation to the Home Office White Paper "Policing in the 21st Century – reconnecting police and the people".

## **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) Redditch Borough Council endorse and support the need for a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in the West Mercia Police area; and**
- 2) the Council issue a letter to the Health and Wellbeing Board highlighting the level of uncertainty for future provision of a SARC within the West Mercia Police Area**

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and the apparent gaps in the NHS White Paper *Equity and Excellence: Liberating the NHS*” in this regard.

## 138. EXTERNAL REFURBISHMENT OF HOUSING STOCK SHORT-SHARP REVIEW - FINAL REPORT

The Committee considered the final report from the External Refurbishment of Housing Stock Short-Sharp Review Group on proposals for a number of actions to be taken to improve the appearance of properties in the Council’s housing stock and surrounding environment in Woodrow specifically, but also potentially for future implementation in other parts of the Borough, at a relatively low financial cost to the Council.

The Chair of the Review Group, Councillor Graham Vickery, reminded Members of the reasons behind the review, which was to address concerns about the appearance of some of the Council’s housing stock and the impact it had on local residents and their environment. He outlined the stages of the review namely a walkabout in Woodrow with Officers, during which various issues were identified, followed by a further meeting of meeting of the Group when a number of recommendations were formulated for the Committee’s consideration.

Supported by photographic evidence, Councillor Vickery briefly went through each of the proposed recommendations and the reasons behind them. He considered, however, that there were still a number of outstanding issues that needed to be considered, namely:

- a) the colouring of the rough cast pebble dash on houses in Ombersley and Rushock Close; what colours tenants might prefer and consideration as to what might be achievable within existing budgets;
- b) the condition of the road surface at the entrance to Rushock Close; and
- c) the demolition of under-used garages and potential use of some Section 106 monies allocated for use on capital landscape work on soft landscaping work in the courtyard area located in Wishaw Close.

In respect of the rough cast work to houses at a) above, Members were referred to Appendix 1 of the report, which provided estimated costs. Officers advised, however, that there was currently no budget available to undertake the work.

# **Overview and SCRUTINY**

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It was noted that the issue of the road surface in Rushock Close would be the responsibility of the County Council.

The Portfolio Holder with the responsibility for Housing, Councillor Brandon Clayton, advised that Wishaw Close was currently listed on the Council's Estate Enhancement Programme but he was not in a position to advise on timescales for works to be undertaken as the Close was one of thirty-plus in the programme.

Officers reported, in responses to a Member's query, that should tenants be interested in undertaking external redecoration of Council properties themselves, they would have to write to the Council as Landlord and that any requests would be judged on a case by case basis as appropriate.

## **RESOLVED that**

- 1) the report be noted; and
- 2) **Officers provide clarification on the three outstanding issues highlighted in the preamble above for Members at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee; and**

## **RECOMMENDED that**

**subject to Resolution 2 above and further consideration of the outstanding issues by the Committee, the following recommendations be approved:**

- 1) **light colour paints be utilised to decorate garage doors to improve their visual appearance;**
- 2) **the lintels featured on Council properties be decorated to improve the visual appearance of those properties;**
- 3) **the retaining wall to the rear of 1-12 Martley Close be redecorated as part of a Council arts project;**
- 4) **the Council assume responsibility for the maintenance of small strips of land located close to private properties and public spaces;**
- 5) **the Council ensure that, when replacing diseased and dead plants, different types of plants are introduced to ensure there is a variety of leaf colours and foliage in any given area;**

# Overview and SCRUTINY

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- 6) the remaining section 106 money available for use on capital landscaping work on the Greenlands Open Spaces be allocated to soft landscaping work in the courtyard area located in Wishaw Close;
- 7) in order to minimise the level of disruption experienced by local residents, there should be a holistic approach to the delivery of frontline services;
- 8) representatives of local schools be invited to participate in estate walkabouts; and
- 9) representatives of the local GP's Consortium be invited to participate in the estate walkabouts once the consortia have been introduced in 2012/13.

## 139. PORTFOLIO HOLDER ANNUAL REPORT - PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR HOUSING, LOCAL ENVIRONMENT AND HEALTH

Further to consideration of the Portfolio Holder for Housing, Local Environment and Health's written report at the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee on 27th October 2010, and Members agreed themed questions to be put to the Portfolio Holder, Councillor Brandon Clayton, in respect of his Annual Report to the Committee, the following responses were provided:

### 1. How are Government policy changes to housing benefit expected to impact on Redditch residents?

The Committee was advised that, as the Government's proposed changes to Housing Benefit policy was still being debated in the House of Commons, it was too early to gauge the impact on residents. Decisions on single payments to banks or rent accounts were also yet to be finalised but could potentially provide savings on administration costs and proposed changes in social housing could potentially help with housing figures.

### 2. What impact is expected of the Government White Paper *Equity and excellence: liberating the NHS* on local health provision?

Cllr Clayton advised that the White Paper was still being discussed and until the final outcomes were known it was difficult to know what impact the proposals would have on local health provision at this time.

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Members were informed, however, that the potential for some health funding to be transferred to the County Council from the PCT was already known and the proposed changes to PCTs could also potentially impact on services; discussions had taken place with the PCT and some GP's had also been approached for their views.

Some concerns were raised relating to the County Council having control of funding and whether it would be detrimental to Redditch. Whether GP's were ready and willing to take on a bigger role in local health provision and the potential changes to NICE and the allocation of drugs at a more local level was also highlighted with some Members concerned that local determination on drug allocation could lead to inequitable provision according to location.

Councillor Clayton reiterated that until final decisions had been made and all of the details were known on Policy proposals for local areas to determine their own needs in local health provision, it was too early to speculate on how it would affect the Borough.

### **3. What progress has been made on the 10:10 Climate Change agreement?**

Members were advised that the Executive Committee had already agreed an Action Plan, including those for CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. The Executive Committee had agreed the Salix funding, 100% of which would go into Climate Change. The Crematorium, Abbey Stadium and Council vehicles were also being looked at for potential improvements as was the use of solar panels to reduce usage at the Palace Theatre (with the potential for it to become an "A" rated building) and St David's House. It was also noted that all new buildings would have to comply with climate change requirements.

It was suggested that the Council was still using large quantities of gas and electricity and needed to be more proactive in reducing its basic energy usage. Councillor Clayton advised that long term solutions were being investigated and every effort would be made to continue reducing emissions and costs.

### **4. What have been the outcomes following the implementation of the Introductory Tenancies Service?**

Councillor Clayton advised that five hundred and forty new tenancies with good levels of security had been achieved since the implementation of the Introductory Tenancies Service, with only three tenants currently in notice of eviction and being reviewed. It was noted that no additional information had been received from the Government on Introductory Tenancies at present.

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**5. What effect has there been the switch of the Care and Repair service from a local service to the Worcestershire Care and Repair Agency?**

Councillor Clayton advised that he had attended a recent Agency Board meeting and understood that there had been a reduction of 2% in overhead costs. However, given the changes to the service had only recently taken place and that there were no figures to compare performance to at this time, this information could not be verified. Members were also advised that there had been no reduction in the number of people receiving help since the switch.

**6. What recent action has been undertaken to tackle health inequalities?**

Councillor Clayton advised that a number of actions had been taken to tackle health inequalities such as:

- a) Health Trainers being able to see more people as a result of contract changes;
- b) County Councillors in Redditch providing funding for projects to improve quality of life;
- c) action to promote smoking cessation within the Borough; and
- d) the Sustainable Community Strategy Plan was due to be considered by the Executive Committee in March 2011.

**7. What is your position regarding transition towns?**

Councillor Clayton advised that he considered transition towns to be a good concept and one that the Council supported.

**8. What costs does the Council accrue by ridding the roads of detritus?**

The Committee was advised that it was difficult to cost removal of detritus from the Borough's roads as it was not possible to separate the detritus from other debris picked up such as leaves. In response to a suggestion that removal of detritus be re-evaluated, it was reported that cleaning regimes had been revised to improve the situation at no additional cost.

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**9. What plans are there to work with partners to provide social housing during the next twelve months?**

The Committee was advised that, the Council had been working with other Social Housing providers for many years and would continue to do so, to provide different types of housing to meet its targets and Officers were in regular contact with the town's Social Landlords. Members also noted that the Council was willing to assist social landlords who were looking to formulate business plans.

In response to Members questions on the number of housing units currently in the planning process, Councillor Clayton advised that it was difficult to say, but in general terms, over a hundred new units had been provided in the previous year and it was hoped to provide similar numbers this year.

On redeveloping other areas of land for social housing, such as Church Hill District Centre, Councillor Clayton reported that all appropriate land, including Redditch Borough Council land, was considered and the Council was prepared to work in partnership with developers to provide as much social housing as possible.

In response to a Member's speculation that the Council was to be given funding to build Council homes and questioned whether the Portfolio Holder had been aware of this, it was noted that Officers had received an indication that there was something in the pipeline but that nothing had been confirmed.

**10. Will the Council consider selling off any of the existing housing stock?**

Councillor Clayton advised that the question was difficult to answer in so far as residents themselves would have to opt out of any whole sale voluntary transfer of the housing stock. The Council was, however, still selling housing stock through the Right to Buy scheme and, as appropriate, looking to dispose of specific housing stock like that at Upper Norgrove House.

Members were further advised that the matter was a HRA issue in that the Council had to consider how much debt it was able to take on. It was considered, however, that selling off stock would not be to the Council's benefit in the future as there was no funding available.

On behalf of the Committee, the Chair thanked Councillor Clayton for his Annual Report.



# Overview and SCRUTINY

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## 140. 2011/12 GRANTS POLICY

The Committee considered a report which detailed proposed changes to the Grants Policy 2010 to ensure the Council's voluntary sector grant funding provided value for money and increased access for voluntary and community sector organisations.

Members welcomed and supported the proposed changes which would also provide for more rigorous monitoring of how grants were being spent and assist organisations to move away from their dependence on the Council for funding.

### **RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) **the updated Voluntary Sector Grants Policy, as attached at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved;**
- 2) **the option for themes and percentages of funding being allocated for the 2011/12 voluntary and community sector grants process, as detailed in the report, be approved;**
- 3) **the option for funding being made available from the main Grants scheme to deliver a support programme to the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) organisations, be approved; and**
- 4) **the option for authority being delegated to the Head of Community Services, in consultation with the Grants Panel, to agree the allocation of community grants under the Local Strategic Partnership 'Stronger Communities' theme, be approved.**

## 141. CAMPAIGN TO DISCOURAGE DOG FOULING

The Committee considered a report which detailed results of the dog fouling awareness campaign that had been running since late August 2010.

Officers reported on the work undertaken to draw the public's attention to the problem of dog fouling and the monitoring exercises that were undertaken in the targeted areas, which had been highlighted specifically as hot-spots. Members were referred to the before and after figures detailed in the appendix to the report.

Members noted the successful reductions in dog fouling incidents in all but one of the targeted areas, Brockhill Park and Officers

# Overview and SCRUTINY

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advised that further monitoring would be needed in the area initially to gather more evidence before any enforcement action could be carried out. Officers advised, however, that limited resources would not allow for constant monitoring of the areas at the same level but work with community support officers and taking enforcement action where appropriate would hopefully help to maintain the campaign which Officers hoped to refresh in the Spring.

Officers agreed to contact one of the Members on two other areas that she had previously reported, in relation to dog fouling issues, namely Terry Springs Field and the Redditch Rugby and Cricket Club.

Members welcomed the report and successful outcomes and congratulated Officers for their work on the campaign.

## **RESOLVED that**

**the outcomes of the dog fouling campaign detailed in the report; the ongoing work on raising awareness; and enforcement action being taken to tackle dog fouling, be noted.**

## **142. PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE SERVICES WITHIN THE CORPORATE MANAGEMENT PORTFOLIO**

The Committee received a written report which detailed the performance of services within the remit of the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management, Councillor Michael Braley. In response to the Chair emphasising that questions be based on the information contained in the report, Members requested that the following questions be addressed by the Portfolio Holder in his Annual Report to the Committee, which was scheduled to be delivered on 8th December 2010.

- 1) What is the current position in respect of sickness absence?
- 2) ICT Shared Services - how successful has Phase 1 been and how is Phase 2 proceeding?
- 3) What are the Options for the former Covered Market area?
- 4) What effect have the Shared Service arrangements for the Senior Management Team had on the lower levels of management at the Council?

# Overview and SCRUTINY

Committee

17th November 2010

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- 5) How can we improve Customer Services when the Council is beholden to the Worcestershire Hub which does not perform well and over which we have no control?
- 6) What has been done to sort out recent ICT and Phone system failures?
- 7) Please explain the “systems thinking” method introduced for 4th tier Managers.
- 8) What problems does he foresee in respect of services within his Portfolio and how will he deal with them?
- 9) How much has Bromsgrove District Council benefited from Shared Service arrangements?

**RESOLVED that**

- 1) **the Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management be invited to answer the questions detailed in the preamble above when delivering his Annual Report to the Committee; and**
- 2) **the report be noted.**

**143. REFERRALS**

There were no referrals.

**144. WORK PROGRAMME**

Members received an update on the programme for the forthcoming Budget Scrutiny Workshop on Monday 22nd November.

**RESOLVED that**

**the Committee’s Work Programme be noted.**

The Meeting commenced at 7.02 pm  
and closed at 9.20 pm

.....  
CHAIR



**Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel: Chair's report of Panel meeting held on Thursday 21st October 2010.**

Officers from Worcestershire PCT attended to respond to five questions which had earlier been submitted by the Panel regarding the possible establishment of a Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) in the West Mercia Police area. The responses to each question were followed by a question and answer session.

1) What is your provision at the moment for victims of sexual violence?

Worcestershire PCT officers informed the Panel that, in the absence of funding to establish a SARC, the Worcestershire Referral and Sexual Advice Centre (WRASAC), had been established. A paper was circulated outlining the current "patient pathways" which included a flow chart /diagram of the services available. Worcestershire PCT officers praised the WRASAC, although acknowledged the pathways to entry could be strengthened. The WRASAC is based at a confidential location in Worcester.

2) What funding could you provide to support a SARC in the West Mercia area?

No funding has been identified by any of the four PCTs in the whole West Mercia area however a "Certificate of Stakeholder Agreement" was signed by the four PCTs and by West Mercia Police in October 2010. This details key deliverables which clearly is progress and was welcomed by the Panel.

3) Please could you briefly outline what changes are due to be made to the NHS and in particular to local PCTs?

The release of the NHS White Paper *Equity and excellence: Liberating the NHS* outlined proposed changes to be made in the NHS and the local PCT. This included the establishment of NHS Commissioning Boards at a strategic level; and GP Practice teams working in consortia at a local level. It was presently understood that PCTs would remain in operation until 2012.

4) How are these changes to NHS and PCT provision of services likely to impact locally on potential support for a SARC?

Details of how the changes of the NHS would impact on the provision of a SARC for this area were not yet known. It was uncertain who would pick the SARC issue up although it was thought that this might fall to NHS Health and Wellbeing Boards.

5) Is there anything further which you would like to add on behalf of the Worcestershire PCT regarding SARCs?

Worcestershire PCT Officers said they had nothing particularly to add but took the opportunity again to say that any help we could offer to the support group would be appreciated.

The Panel thanked both Officers for their attendance and their help and advice.

## The Next Steps

The Panel decided to make several recommendations following discussion during the previous item.

- 1) To support Cllr Blagg, the Panel's co-opted representative, in her visit to James Brockenshire MP, Minister for Crime Prevention, where this matter will be raised in December;
- 2) To write to the Redditch Community Safety Partnership supporting the WRASAC whilst highlighting the "Certificate of Stakeholder Agreement", particularly paragraph 3 which discusses the aspiration deliverables in relation to improved health and forensic outcomes; and
- 3) To write to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee supporting the need for a SARC in the West Mercia Police area and to seek their support, and that of Council, with a view the Council issuing a letter to the Health and Wellbeing Board highlighting the level of uncertainty for the future provision and the apparent gaps in the NHS white paper.

The Panel were also updated on initial findings to public consultation responses of the Home Office White Paper "Policing in the 21st Century – reconnecting police and the people". The Panel had earlier issued its own response. Over 800 responses including 440 online had been received. Some of the early findings and ideas which came forward included:

- a) Local Policing Teams - to ask local people what information they want from the Police and to make the information more accessible via the internet;
- b) one stop shop - to develop a seamless one stop approach between agencies which are victim centred to encourage more people to come forward to report crimes; and
- c) encouraging more recognition of Neighbourhood Watch, victim support, Special Constable Volunteers and indeed to create a volunteer network to assist the Police in "back room" functions or even assist the paid Police Community Support Officers.

Members confirmed that the next Panel meeting would take place on 20th January 2011 at 6.30 pm (previously 7.00pm)

Bill Hartnett.  
Chair Redditch Crime and Disorder Scrutiny Panel.  
22nd October 2010.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**COUNCIL**

7th February 2011

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**SHARED SERVICES BOARD**

**PROGRESS REPORT**

**RECOMMENDED that**

**the improvements to performance management and monitoring of Shared Services, outlined at Section 15 of the Progress report, be endorsed.**

(During consideration of this item, Members considered matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. Given that there was no discussion of the exempt matters under consideration, exclusion of the public and press was not necessary. There is nothing exempt in this record of the proceedings.)





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

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**SHARED SERVICES BOARD**

**9th December 2010 at 5.30pm**

**THE TOWN HALL, REDDITCH**

Present:

Councillors Carole Gandy (Chair), Michael Braley, Bill Hartnett and Malcolm Hall (Redditch Borough Council)  
Councillors Roger Hollingworth, Steve Colella, Geoff Denaro and Stephen Peters (Bromsgrove District Council).

Also in attendance (Observers):

Cllrs Andrew Brazier, Adam Griffin (end of meeting only) and Jinny Pearce (RBC)

Officers: Hugh Bennett, Sue Hanley and John Staniland.

Notes: Steve Skinner.

1. **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Chief Executive, Mr Dicks.

2. **MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 14th October 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

3. **MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES**

There were no matters arising, other than as recorded under the separate agenda items below.

4. **PROGRESS REPORT**

Mrs Hanley presented the Progress report and took questions / provided clarifications on matters as they arose. Mr Staniland also spoke on several of the items.

During discussion, specific mention was made of the following key matters:

a) IT Services

Members noted the progress as reported and mentioned particularly the imminent implementation of the new '*bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk*' domain name and e.mail address. In response to questions, Officers confirmed though that Members' e.mail addresses would remain separate for Bromsgrove and Redditch, at very little additional cost, and that websites would remain their entirely separate identities.

b) CCTV / Lifeline

Members asked about the opportunity to further expand the CCTV / Lifeline service, noting the current relationship with the County Council. Officers agreed that reports would be brought back before the Board if any such opportunities arose.

c) Future Programme

Members noted that there was a potential to accelerate some services through the Shared Services and/or Transformation process as more became known about the developing economic pressures on local government, but always subject to Members' further decision.

d) North Worcestershire Economic Development (NWED) project

Mr Staniland advised that preparatory work was near to completion on this proposal and it had originally been hoped to bring a report to this meeting of the Board. A special meeting of the Board for the 4th January 2011 had recently been agreed to go through the Business Case in order to avoid slippage re a projected commencement date.

It was noted that staff consultation had finished only the previous week. However, staff were very much on board and participating fully. A report would hopefully be available for issue before Christmas.

e) Emergency Planning

Mr Staniland had met with Wyre Forest DC representatives earlier in the day. Officers would be looking further at the arrangements and at the present contract with Worcestershire County Council, in order to rationalise the levels of support provided by the County. It was noted that the County offered a critical link in circumstances where vulnerable people were involved.

f) Environmental Services

Members noted one unresolved matter in this area – a gap in transport business expertise within the Redditch Transport Section. Given that this was an area of huge spend, Officers would be looking further into what was required here.

g) WETT Regulatory Services

Amongst other matters, current levels of staff turnover were leading to some short-term capacity issues. However, plans were in place to manage this.

h) WETT Phase II

Members noted that a number of areas were presently under consideration, although no Business Cases had as yet been worked up. These areas included, Waste and Street Scene, Planning, Housing Strategy & Policy, and Youth & Community Services.

i) Waste & Street Scene

Members indicated that they did not wish to pursue these areas further at the present time.

ii) Youth & Community Services

Both Councils expressed a preference for taking on these services at District level, if this became possible, rather than considering a WETT solution.

iii) Potential Joint Museums Service

It was additionally noted that Worcester City and the County Council had a Joint Museums services and might be looking at an extension of shared service and trust arrangements over the whole of the County. Redditch had joined in these discussions. However, very little had taken place yet, other than initial exploratory discussions.

i) Financial Implications

The Board noted the ongoing savings delivered through the Single Management Team of £330,000 in 2010/11, rising to £450,000 in 2011/12 .

Some £964,000 was estimated to be in line to be delivered through shared services and joint working in 2010/11, of which some £450,000 accrued to Bromsgrove and £514,000 to Redditch. Officers' current estimates assumed that this would be achieved.

Members were reminded, however, that some Shared Service arrangements, such as the Electoral Shared Services had been set up with resilience, rather than savings, as the prime driver for change.

j) Performance Management

Members noted proposals which would provide the basis for a consistent reporting mechanism, which would enable them to spot exceptions and ensure projects were on track. A 'Red, Amber, Green' traffic light reporting system would be used.

Officers advised that this approach came straight from existing project management process shared by both Councils.

k) Joint Property Services WETT

A separate report on Property Services WETT is detailed below in the confidential section of the notes.

(The reports were deemed confidential in view of the fact that ongoing labour relations matters, and terms of contracts would be revealed, plus matters potentially affecting individual members of staff.)

**It was AGREED that**

- 1) **subject to Members' comments, the report be noted; and**

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 2) **the improvements to performance management and monitoring of Shared Services, outlined at Section 15 of the Progress report, be endorsed.**

**5. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS**

It was noted that the next meeting, an additional one, would be held on **Tuesday 4th January 2010 at 5.30 p.m. at Redditch Town Hall.**

It was also noted that the next scheduled meetings of the Board were those of 16th February and 29th March 2011.

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

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**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE****1st February 2011****HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT INITIAL ESTIMATE 2011/12**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Brandon Clayton, Housing, Local Environment & Health.
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources/ Liz Tompkin, Head of Housing.
Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

To present Members with the Initial Estimates for the Housing Revenue Account for 2011/12 and the proposed dwelling rents for 2011/12.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

- 1) **the draft 2011/12 Estimates for the Housing Revenue Account attached to the report at Appendix A, be approved;**
- 2) **the actual average rent increase for 2011/12 be 5.99%; and;**
- 3) **£1,000,000 be transferred to a reserve as a Revenue Contribution to Capital to fund the future Capital Programme.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This report only considers those items included in the Housing Revenue Account (HRA). General Fund items will be considered separately when setting the Council Tax.
- 3.2 The Council, through the system of Housing Finance introduced by the Local Government and Housing Act 1989, has been subject to reducing external support to the Housing Revenue Account, in the form of diminishing Housing Subsidy over the past few years. The Council now pays in excess of £6,000,000 to Central Government because it is in a negative subsidy position.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

**1st February 2011**

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- 3.3 Rent restructuring was introduced in 2002/03. The objective of this is set out in a Government policy statement "Quality and Choice: A Decent Home for All – The Way Forward for Housing". It is proposed that rent setting in the social housing sector should be brought on to a common system based upon relative property values and local earnings levels. The intention was for there to be rent convergence between sectors within 10 years. Briefly, the rent increase each year should be based on an increase for inflation, plus an adjustment of 10% of the difference between the formula rent and the actual rent on an individual property basis. The 10% adjustment, which is aimed at achieving the formula rent for all properties within 10 years, may result in an increase or decrease in rent. The current target date for rent convergence is 2016/17.
- 3.4. The Government has set out its proposals to allow Council housing services to be 'Self Financing'. The proposal is in the form of a financial settlement which will mean a redistribution of the 'national' housing debt. The final details of this proposal are not known, but it is anticipated that 2011/12 will be the last year of housing subsidy.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 This section of the report outlines the major issues which have an impact upon the Housing Revenue Budget Account setting process for 2011/12.
- 4.2 Based on the data included in the Housing Revenue Account Subsidy Determination for 2011/12, the actual average rent increase for 2011/12 will be 5.99%. The average rent on a 52 week basis will be £67.17, or £72.77 on a 48 week basis. This compares to the actual average for 2009/10 on a 52 week basis of £63.38 and £68.66 on a 48 week basis.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE****1st February 2011**

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4.3 Housing Subsidy

The amount of Housing Revenue Account Subsidy payable by the Authority is now calculated as follows:-

allowance for management and maintenance  
+  
allowance for major repairs (MRA)  
+  
charges for capital  
+  
other items of reckonable expenditure  
-  
a notional amount for rent  
-  
interest on receipts.

## 4.4 The constituent parts of this are as follows:-

- a) The management and maintenance figure is calculated by using the Department for Communities and Local Government (DCLG) target allowance, multiplied by the number of houses as at the 1st of April 2010.
- b) The major repairs allowance is an amount, notified by the DCLG, per property type, multiplied by the number of each property type, as at the 1st of April 2010.
- c) The amount of charges for capital are based on subsidy capital financing requirement, assumed debt management expenses, an allowance for premiums and discounts and the authority's consolidated rate of interest.
- d) Other reckonable expenditure is again, a notified figure from the DCLG based on expenditure on leasehold properties.
- e) The amount of notional rent income is calculated by using the national target rent income figure, notified by the DCLG, multiplied by the number of properties as at the 1st of April 2010.
- f) The interest on receipts is again a notified notional figure, based on an estimate of the Council's mortgage interest and the interest from Housing Revenue Account balances.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE****1st February 2011**

4.5 To exemplify the above, the actual subsidy figures are given below:-

Draft Subsidy Calculation

		2011/12
		Initial
		£
(i)	Management and Maintenance	9,546,532
(ii)	Other reckonable expenditure	84
(iii)	Major Repairs Allowance	3,843,949
		13,390,565
(iv)	Rent Income	(20,145,662)
(v)	Interest on Receipts	(55,616)
		(6,810,713)

Members will note from this, that the financial position with regard to Housing Revenue Account subsidy in 2011/12, is that the Council will again be in overall negative subsidy.

Capital Resources

- 4.6 From the 1st of April 2004 capital receipts from the sale of housing land and dwellings have been subject to pooling, (75% of Right To Buy (RTB) receipts have to be paid to the Government for redistribution). Officers have estimated that in the short term the number of RTB sales for this Council will be around 5 per annum, generating around £85,000 in usable capital receipts.
- 4.7 The introduction of the Major Repairs Allowance from April 2001 provided the Council with additional capital resources. This will continue for 2011/12. In 2011/12 £3,843,949 will be transferred from the Housing Revenue Account into a Major Repairs Reserve. This Reserve will then be available to fund capital expenditure for Housing Revenue Account purposes and to repay any Prudential Borrowing.
- 4.8 The Council has previously made transfers of monies from the HRA, when resources permit, to transfer sums to a reserve to fund future capital programmes. It is estimated that there will be sufficient resources in the HRA in 2011/12, to allow £1,000,000 to be transferred in this way.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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Housing Repairs Account

- 4.9 The budgeted contribution to the Housing Repairs Account, as shown at Appendix A, is £4,135,820 for 2011/12, including inflationary increases where appropriate.

Right to Buy Scheme - Rent Income

- 4.10 The 2011/12 figures at Appendix A allow for the sale of 5 Council homes. The full effect is an anticipated £17,465 loss of rent income.

Provision for Bad and Doubtful Debts

- 4.11 Members will be aware that the provision was reduced to £690,000. Appendix A reflects the need to maintain this provision for 2010/11,

Inflation

- 4.12 With the exception of those elements of the Housing Revenue Account fixed through the Housing Subsidy Determination, no increase has been applied for inflation.

Housing Revenue Account Balances

- 4.13 The Head of Finance and Resources has previously advised Members on the minimum level of revenue balances, to be maintained in lieu of unforeseen events affecting the Housing Revenue Account and the Council's housing stock. Members have previously approved the retention of a minimum balance of £600,000.
- 4.14 The figures shown in Appendix A indicate that the balance carried forward at the 1st of April 2011 will be £1,252,157, which will leave a working balance of £947,787.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The Financial Implications are as set out throughout the report.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

Section 76 of the Local Government and Housing Act 1989 requires that the Council sets its budget relating to the Housing Revenue Account such that the account does not plan to be in a deficit position.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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COMMITTEE**

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**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Council since 2002/03 has set its dwelling rents by reference to the rent formula, introduced as part of the Government Rent Restructuring Policy.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

The HRA provides the financial resources to enable the Council to meet its objectives with respect to the management and maintenance of its housing stock.

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

9.1 There are financial risks to the Council of not following Government Policy in terms of rent restructuring.

9.2 The Council needs to approve the rents in a timely manner, in order to allow Officer time to notify the tenants of the annual rent increase.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

The report contains implications for customers in terms of rent increases.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct equality or diversity implications.

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

The budget provides resources for the maintenance of the housing stock.

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

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

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct human resource implications.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE****1st February 2011****15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct governance or performance management implications.

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

There are no direct community safety implications.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct health inequality implications.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

None.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

None.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Environment and Community Services	No
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	No
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Finance & Resources	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	Not relevant

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

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COMMITTEE**

**1st February 2011**

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**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix A – Housing Revenue Account 2011/12

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Housing Subsidy Determination 2011/12 – DCLG

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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Tel: 01527 64252 ext 3295



**HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT**  
**2011/12 Initial Estimate**

	<b>2010/11 Initial Estimate</b>	<b>2011/12 Initial Estimate</b>
<b><u>INCOME</u></b>		
Dwelling Rents	19,827,780	20,924,790
Non Dwelling Rents	516,730	522,500
Charges for Services & Facilities	188,460	194,050
Contributions to Expenditure	0	0
Government Subsidies	0	0
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>20,532,970</b>	<b>21,641,340</b>
<b><u>EXPENDITURE</u></b>		
Supervision & Management	5,860,830	5,433,830
Repairs & Maintenance	4,017,150	4,135,820
Rents, rates, taxes & other charges	184,800	186,800
Depreciation	3,773,810	3,843,950
Item 8 Debit	215,100	259,600
Negative HRA subsidy payable	6,037,140	6,810,710
Provision for Bad Debts	125,000	100,000
<b>Total Expenditure</b>	<b>20,213,830</b>	<b>20,770,710</b>
<b>Net Cost of Services</b>	<b>-319,140</b>	<b>-870,630</b>
Revenue Contributions to Capital	0	1,000,000
Provision for Job Evaluation	190,000	190,000
<b>Net Operating Expenditure</b>	<b>-129,140</b>	<b>319,370</b>
Interest Receivable	-17,000	-15,000
<b>(Surplus) / Deficit on services</b>	<b>-146,140</b>	<b>304,370</b>
<b><u>HOUSING REVENUE ACCOUNT BALANCE</u></b>		
B/fwd Balance	1,106,017	1,252,157
Surplus/(Deficit) for year	146,140	-304,370
C/fwd Balance	1,252,157	947,787

APPENDIX A

**Independent Remuneration Panel for Worcestershire  
District Councils**

**Annual Report and Recommendations for 2011-12**

**Redditch Borough Council**

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**December 2010**

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Recommendations

**The Independent Remuneration Panel recommends to Redditch Borough Council the following:**

- (i) That the Basic Allowance for 2011/2012 remains unchanged from those recommended for 2010/11 as set out in Appendix 1.**
- (ii) That the Special Responsibility Allowances for 2011/2012 remain unchanged from those recommended for 2010/11 in terms of sums paid, but that allowances are not paid to Vice-Chairmen of Committees;**
- (iii) That travel and subsistence allowances for 2011/12 continue to be paid in accordance with the HMRC mileage allowance.**
- (iv) That the Dependent Carer's Allowance remains unchanged.**

**Basic Allowance 2011/12****Calculation of Basic Allowance**

This is based on:

- The roles and responsibilities of Members; and
- Their time commitments – including the total average number of hours worked per week on Council business.

In calculating the recommended Basic Allowance, the Panel has previously used the average hourly earnings for the West Midlands from the Annual Survey of Hours and Earnings (ASHE) based on place of residence, produced by the Office for National Statistics.

In 2009 the Panel reviewed the figure for weekly average hours and whilst this may be considered to be on the low side, is of the opinion that as a guide and a base figure it does produce allowances which are comparable to national figures for allowances for other similar authorities. The average Basic Allowance for shire districts taken from the 2008 IDEA survey of members' allowances being £4,194 compared to the Panel's recommendation in its 2008 report of £4,200. Therefore, the Panel saw no reason to alter the basis of the calculation.

The Panel acknowledges that many Councillors work for long hours on behalf of their communities, sometimes in excess of what might reasonably be expected. However, when arriving at the figure for the Basic Allowance we have applied a discount of 40% to recognise that an element of what Councillors do is public service.

The Panel, in view of the severe wider economic situation, considers that its overriding duty is to arrive at recommendations that are fair and reasonable. The Panel must always be aware of its responsibility to command public confidence in its decisions. For this reason the Panel considers that there should be no increase in the basic allowance for 2011/12.

The Panel noted that Redditch Borough Council has accepted the recommendations of its Independent Remuneration Panel in the last two years, whilst agreeing not to take the increases. The amounts of allowances shown in the appendix to this report takes account of this and shows the recommended amounts rather than what has been paid to Councillors.

**Special Responsibility Allowances (SRA) 2011/12****General Calculation of SRAs**

Appendix 1 to this report sets out the allowances for 2011/12. The Panel considers that because of the exceptional circumstances this year there is no justification for recommending an increase to these. The Panel will be reviewing the level of Special Responsibility Allowances during 2011.

The Panel considered requests from the Council that a Special Responsibility Allowance be introduced for two positions: Chair of the Audit and Governance Committee and Chair of the Crime and Disorder Panel.

**Chair of Audit and Governance Committee** – from the evidence presented to the Panel about the frequency of meetings of this Committee we recommend that there is sufficient additional responsibility and workload to justify a Special Responsibility Allowance at 0.25 of the basic allowance.

**Chair of the Crime and Disorder Panel** – the Panel was not convinced that the workload and responsibility justify a Special Responsibility allowance for this post. However, the Panel acknowledged that the Panel has not operated for long. We will consider the workload and review this position during 2011.

**Vice-Chairmen** – the Panel has previously been reluctant to recommend Special Responsibility Allowances for Vice-Chairmen unless it receives evidence of the position incurring significant additional responsibility above other members of the relevant Committee. We did not consider on the evidence we received that this was the case. We are therefore not recommending that allowances continue to be paid for Vice-Chairmen of Committees.

If there is a significant call on a Vice-Chairman then our view is that it is a matter for the Council whether they receive any payment. For example, if a Chairman is unable to act for a period of time and the Vice-Chairman takes on their responsibilities, then the Chairman may consider foregoing a proportional element of their special responsibility allowance to pay the Vice-Chairman.

**Deputy Leader of the Council** – the Panel considered the role of the Deputy Leader at Redditch very carefully. Generally, we consider that the work of a Deputy Leader does not involve substantial additional responsibility to that of the role of a cabinet member and we considered recommending that the Special Responsibility Allowance is reduced to the same as that for a cabinet member. However, in the case of Redditch we are satisfied that the Deputy Leader has portfolio responsibilities and for this reason recommend that the Special Responsibility allowance continues. We recognise that the formal position may be changing with the implementation of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act from May 2011.

**Group Leaders** – the Panel noted the amounts currently set for leaders of the opposition and of the political groups. The Panel was concerned at the payment of fixed fees. We favour the approach of payments on a per head basis, which allows for any changes to Group membership during the year.

Due to time constraints preventing detailed research into these payments, the Panel is not recommending changes to them in 2011-12. However, we will review them in more detail during the forthcoming year.

### **Mileage and Expenses 2011/12**

The Panel notes that Redditch Borough Council currently uses the HMRC rate of 40p per mile for payment of mileage for Councillors and recommends that this continues.

### **Allowances to Parish Councils**

The Panel notes its continuing role as Independent Remuneration Panel for Parish Councils within the Districts covered.

### **The Independent Remuneration Panel**

The Members' Allowances Regulations require Local Authorities to establish and maintain an Independent Remuneration Panel (IRP). The purpose of the Panel is to make recommendations to the authority about allowances to be paid to Elected Members and Local Authorities must have regard to this advice. This Council's Independent Remuneration Panel is set up on a joint basis with the other 5 District Councils in Worcestershire, the decision having been taken during 2010 to follow the principle previously established by having a joint Panel in the South of the County. Separate Annual Reports have been prepared for each Council.

Initially the South Worcestershire Panel has carried out the work for the 6 Districts, while the Councils reviewed the size and operation of the Panel. The members of the Panel have been:

- Rob Key, the Chair of the Panel – Rob has 42 years' experience of working in District Councils in a variety of operational and management roles, including senior positions at Worcester City, Wychavon District and Wyre Forest District. He is an Independent Chair for the Strategic Health Authority for Continuing Care and sits on County Council Appeals Panels for School Preference Appeals and Service Complaints.
- Elaine Bell, JP, DipCrim – Elaine has been a Magistrate for 14 years, Day Chair of Adult and Family Courts; Chair of the Bench Training & Development Committee; past member of the Magistrates Advisory Panel (interviewing and selecting for appointment to the Bench). She is also a Governor of the Lloyds Educational Foundation; Member of the Sytchampton School Appeals Panel; Hon Treasurer of Ombersley and Doverdale Tennis Club and a Past Governor of Ombersley Primary School.
- Bill Simpson – Bill spent 30 years in Further Education culminating in 11 years as Principal of Pershore College. He then entered the private sector as Director of two national Horticultural Societies. He served as a magistrate for 9 years until retirement. He is Chairman of several charities including *Thrive* between 2001 and 2008.
- Reverend Prebendary Michael Vockins OBE – Mike is Honorary Curate of three rural parishes, Rural Dean of Ledbury and one of the original members of the Independent Remuneration Panel. He is former Chief Executive of



Worcestershire County Cricket Club and currently Secretary of a sporting charity.

- Mel Nock OBE, BA Joint Hons, Dip IPD – Mel is currently Vice-Chair of the Lucy Faithfull Foundation and Chair of the Governance, Finance and General Purposes Committee. He is Executive Chair of EIL Malvern. Previously Mel was Chairman of a GKN division and Regional Director with a Regional Health Authority moving on to become Assistant Managing Director. Mel established his own HR consultancy in the 1990's specialising in remuneration and organisational change. He has also served as a member of the Lord Lieutenant's (South Worcestershire) Advisory Committee on the appointment of magistrates.

The Panel could not begin work on this year's report until the end of the summer. We appreciate that this has meant we have not been able to review each Council in as much detail as we would like. Our early understanding of the current situation across the Worcestershire Districts shows some differences between the level of allowances paid for similar roles. We have not been able to investigate the detail behind this in the time available to us this year. We have agreed that we will begin our research for our next Annual Report early in 2011 so that we can undertake an in depth review and complete our proposals by December in order to tie in with each Council's budget-making process.

The Panel has been advised and assisted by:

- Steve Taylor from Worcester City Council, who retired during the year, and was replaced by Chris Watkins;
- Sheena Jones from Wychavon District Council;
- Joanne Lowman from Malvern Hills District Council;
- Karen Firth from Bromsgrove District Council;
- Penelope Williams and Diana Glendenning from Wyre Forest District Council;
- Steve Skinner and Trish Buckley from Redditch Borough Council.

The Panel wishes to acknowledge its gratitude to these officers who have provided advice and guidance in a professional and dedicated manner.

**Rob Key**

**Chairman of Independent Remuneration Panel**

## Redditch Borough Council – Allowance Recommendations 2011-12

Appendix 1

-	Multiplier of Basic Allowance	Recommendations for 2010/11 and unchanged for 2011/12	Actual for 2010/11
<b>Basic Allowance:</b>		3,350 <sup>1</sup>	3,219
<b>Special Responsibility Allowances:</b>			
Leader/Chair of the Executive Committee	2	6,697	6,438
Deputy Leader/Vice-Chair of Executive Committee	1.4	4,687	4,506
Portfolio Holders/Executive Co Members (includes Exec Panel Chair role, includes Leader & Deputy as portfolio holders)	0.46	1,560	1,500
Other Executive Committee Members who are not portfolio holders (ie other political parties)	0.32	1,072	1,030
Chair of Executive Panel (if not a portfolio holder)	0.4	1,340	1,288
Chair of Overview and Scrutiny	0.6	2,009	1,931
Overview and Scrutiny members	0.32	1,072	1030
Chair of Audit and Governance Committee	0.25	838	none
Chair of Planning Committee	0.96	3,214	3,090

<sup>1</sup> This figure takes into account a public service discount of 40%

Chair of Licensing Committee	0.4	1,340	1,288
Independent Chair of Standards Committee	0.078	261	266
Independent Member of Standards Committee	0.06	202	103
Leaders of "Minority" Groups	0.62	2,080	1,000
Representative on Local Government Association and General Assembly	0.08	269	258
Representative on Local Government Association Rural Commission	0.08	269	258
Representative on Local Government Urban Commission	0.08	269	258
Representative on West Midlands Leaders Board <i>(being wound up)</i>	0.08	269	258



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

1st February 2011

**SHARED INFORMATION AND RECORDS MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Bromsgrove – Councillor Del Booth Redditch – Councillor Michael Braley
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole – Head of Business Transformation
Non-Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 This document sets out an overarching framework for implementing Information and Records Management initiatives at both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils.
- 1.2 The strategy gives a corporate approach to Information and Records Management to improve the quality, availability and effective use of information and records throughout the two authorities.
- 1.3 This will enable overall coordination of all information and records management and ensure alignment with the Councils' business strategies.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

**the Information and Records Management Strategy attached at Appendix 1 to the report be approved.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Information and Records Management Strategy itself is based on a vision and set of information management principles developed and approved by the county wide and regional Information Management Network Groups.
- 3.2 This Strategy will be supported by additional documents such as action plans, guidance notes, flowcharts, and process and procedure documents. This will allow for continuous review and updating of discreet elements of the Strategy.

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
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**4. KEY ISSUES**

For the Strategy to be successful:

- (a) There must be a strategic view of the way information is applied and used across both authorities. Information must be used effectively and technology may not be the only solution all options must be explored.
- (b) There must be a commitment to develop the right skills for all employees to manage information effectively.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

There are no financial implications.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The following legislation governs the information that we process as a Local Authority:

- (a) The Data Protection Act.
- (b) Freedom of Information Act.
- (c) Environmental Information Regulations.
- (d) Reuse of Public Sector Information.

6.2 The legislation gives the person rights of access to information that we hold and sets timescales by which a response must be made. To ensure both authorities meet the timescales, information must be managed proactively.

6.3 Both authorities can only comply with these Acts if recorded information is properly stored and accessible. The Information Commissioner has issued a code of practice for public authorities in line with Section 46 of the Freedom of Information Act on the practice they should follow for keeping, managing and destroying records.

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**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The Shared Information and Records Management Strategy will constitute a new shared policy and needs full Council approval.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 8.1 This strategy links to Bromsgrove's Council Plan's Objective Two Improvement.
- 8.2 This strategy links to Redditch's Council Plan which identifies and explains what the Council will be doing to keep its own house in order, to ensure we continue to be a well managed organisation.

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

Any risks associated with this strategy will be identified and included in the corporate risk registers.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 The aim of this Strategy is to help improve efficiency and effectiveness of Council Services through improved Information Management. These improvements include:
  - (a) Improve data quality.
  - (b) Information available at one point of access.
  - (c) Increased speed of access to information.
- 10.2 The Business Development Team will be working closely with all departments to ensure awareness and compliance with the Strategy.
- 10.3 The implementation of good Information Management will underpin service delivery and compliance to legislation that governs that service delivery.
- 10.4 Information Management Systems must enhance effectiveness, efficiency and the customer experience.

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**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

The Strategy will help both authorities to deliver equality of access to all information.

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

Future pressures on departmental budgets will require improved use of information resources to support the delivery of efficiencies.

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

13.1 Implementing the Strategy's actions, including measuring paper recycling, less paper records and more electronic records, will help provide a more efficient service.

13.2 Confidential waste recycling credits will be allocated.

13.3 Better use of office accommodation.

13.4 More electronic records storage prevents unnecessary journeys by staff to access physical records.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

None

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

Information will be managed as a corporate resource to support the operations and decision making process and will be managed throughout its lifecycle to ensure its quality and integrity.

Where it is feasible, information will be captured and stored only once and reused as many times as is needed. It may be duplicated provided there is a single authoritative source and measures are in place to ensure consistency.

Information Management will be used to improve the capture and use of knowledge across the organisation.



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

None.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

Advice has been taken from our district partner organisations and other authorities where Information Management has been introduced, and lessons learnt from those implementations have been included in the formulation of this Strategy.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

None

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**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

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

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards.

**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Shared Information and Records Management Strategy.

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**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

- (a) Local Government Act 1972
- (b) Data Protection Act 1998
- (c) Freedom of Information Act 2000
- (d) Re-use of Public Sector Information
- (e) Environmental Information Regulations
- (f) ISO 15489

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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Tel: (01527) 881295

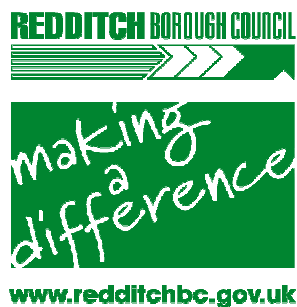


**APPENDIX A**

**Business Transformation Department**

**SHARED INFORMATION AND RECORDS  
MANAGEMENT STRATEGY**

**2010 - 2015**



**Bromsgrove**  
District Council  
[www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)

**Document History**

Title	Shared Information and Records Management Strategy
Purpose	Strategy
Owner	Business Transformation
Review Frequency	Annual
Consultation	Business Development
Permissions	Internally available

Version	Date	Author	Change	Approved	Next Review Date
1.0	25.08.09	K Jones	Final draft review		
1.2	2/9/2010	HKC/KJ	Joint strategy		
1.3	30/9/2010	HKC	Updated to include DP comments		
1.4	30/9/2010	HKC/ KJ	Updated		

**Published Documents**

Version	Date Uploaded to Intranet and link checked	Date Uploaded to website

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## **1 Introduction**

This document sets out an overarching framework for implementing information and records management initiatives at both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils. The strategy gives a corporate approach to information and records management to improve the quality, availability and effective use of information and records throughout the two authorities. This will enable overall coordination of all information and records management and ensure alignment with the Councils' business strategies.

The Information and Records Management strategy itself is based on a vision and set of information management principles developed and approved by the County wide and regional Information Management network groups. It is supported by an action plan, which will be reviewed and updated annually.

This strategy will be supported by additional documents such as action plans, guidance notes, flowcharts, and process and procedure documents. This will allow for continuous review and updating of discrete elements of the strategy.

### **1.1 Aims and Objectives**

The aim of this strategy is to outline a wide range of activities that will deliver on the key aspects of the management of information within both councils and cover information of all types, regardless of format or media.

When devising this strategy, it was important to look at the ways in which the councils currently store and use information, and to consult the output from the information audits conducted in 2006/7

### **1.2 Core Principles of Information Management**

The following set of principles were developed and approved by the Worcestershire Information Management Task Group and wider regional Information Management networks to underpin good information management and provide the focus of this strategy.

- The organisation will work towards an embedded culture that uses and promotes good information management practices
- Information will be managed as a corporate resource to support the operations and decision making process and will be managed throughout its lifecycle to ensure its quality and integrity.
- Information management systems must enhance effectiveness, efficiency and the customer experience.
- Information will be structured to facilitate information and knowledge sharing across the organisation and with other partner organisations
- The creation, storage and use of information will conform to legal and regulatory requirements as well as any guidelines and policies
- Where it is feasible, information will be captured and stored only once and reused as many times as is needed. It may be duplicated provided there is a single authoritative source and measures are in place to ensure consistency



- Access to the information will be as open as possible, subject to any security and legal restrictions
- Electronic storage and transmission is the preferred method of managing information
- Information management will be used to improve the capture and use of knowledge across the organisation
- Information will be managed in a secure way, ensuring the continuity of operations, and minimising the possibility of damage to service provision by limiting the impact of security threats or incidents.
- Information will be managed in a systematic way in accordance with the council's retention and disposal schedule
- Knowledge will be captured and re-used as a matter of process and procedure so that it can be shared across the organisation and with partners

## **2. Management and Resourcing**

### ***2.1 Sponsorship and Oversight***

This strategy will be sponsored by the Head of Business Transformation and Portfolio Holders.

For this Strategy to be successful:

- Information and Records Management must be accepted as an integral part of the Councils' business planning and a strategic view applied across the organisation.
- There must be a commitment to develop the right skills and capabilities for all employees
- There must be a real partnership between all those utilising information
- Ensure cost effective capture and maintenance of relevant data
- The risks associated with information management should be properly managed.
- The value of efficient management of information should be measured.
- The culture of information sharing and ongoing learning should become embedded in the Authorities at all levels.

### ***2.2 User Responsibility and Accountability***

The Corporate Management Team (CMT) has overall responsibility for implementation of this strategy. However, the corporate nature, scale and scope of the proposals will require the involvement of various stakeholders throughout implementation.

Effective Information Management cannot be acquired through technology alone. It requires people adopting good practice and building appropriate processes, to allow information and knowledge sharing.

Information Management relates to the storage and use of the physical resource and Knowledge Management relates to people, what they know, how they learn and how they share information and knowledge.

Information and Knowledge Management is explained in the table below:

<b>Data</b>	<b><i>As an organisation we have many processes which generate data, which we gather together and organise for its subsequent use.</i></b>
	↓
<b>Information</b>	<b><i>Data is transformed into information through appropriate dissemination and interpretation.</i></b>
	↓
<b>Knowledge</b>	<b><i>Information from both within and outside the organisation, when used appropriately, assists in knowledge generation and decision making processes.</i></b>
	↓
<b>Learning</b>	<b><i>If successful, this process of turning data into information and knowledge is how our Councils can accumulate learning, move forward and deliver the improvements we need to make.</i></b>

### 2.2.1 Joint Corporate Information and Records Management Group

A joint Corporate Information and Records Management Group will be formed to support the communication and implementation of this strategy with the specific purpose of:

- Identifying and defining records management responsibilities
- promoting best practice and standards on information management
- assisting in the communication of corporate file plan, naming and classification standards
- monitoring information performance measures
- identifying training needs
- providing additional support to services

This group will also have a critical role to play in developing an information management culture and embedding the new policies, procedures and working practices by acting as the focus for good practice and support within the service areas.

The joint Corporate Information and Records Management Group will report progress and any significant issues identified that may cause any major changes to

the scope of work, additional investment requirements and consideration of business cases to the Business Development Manager, who can take issues forward to CMT where appropriate.

### **2.2.2 Information Liaison Officers**

Information Liaison Officers (ILOs) will need to be identified within each service, with assigned roles and responsibilities for managing information and records.

- ILOs will be nominated for each service area.
- ILOs to receive specific records management training, to include: use of the Retention and Disposal schedule, naming conventions and document history pages. Records and e-records management advice and guidance for ILOs will be created, maintained and updated on the ORB by the Business Development Team in the form of FAQs.
- ILOs have responsibility for individual service systems and the quality of data processed within systems
- ILOs to ensure all new members of staff, through the appropriate induction procedures, receive initial basic procedural training
- ILOs to ensure staff understand and conform to records management procedures and policies which are available on the Information Management pages on The ORB
- ILOs to inform Business Development Team of any Health and Safety issues relating to records maintenance and storage
- ILOs to communicate changes in Information Management policies, procedures and good practice to staff in their service teams.

### **2.2.3 Involvement from Teams**

The Business Development Team will work with teams in all services to roll out this strategy. There will be a project plan to support this work. Teams will be expected to complete agreed actions within a specified timeframe to implement and embed the improvements.

## **3. Local Context**

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils are in a period of change. The following are currently being engaged:

- Shared service arrangements between Bromsgrove and Redditch councils.
- Worcestershire Regulatory Service, hosted by Bromsgrove.
- A Transformation Programme.
- Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier developed by Worcestershire County Council.

This strategy will support the information needs of teams involved in restructuring, relocation and change programmes. Areas of support will include:

- Accommodation resource and efficient use of office space
- Data transfer, merging and cleansing
- Secure disposal

The support work will be based on need – it can be included in the project plan or on an ad hoc basis.

### **3.1 Links to other Initiatives**

This strategy also recognised that there are strong linkages and dependencies between this strategy and other initiatives in the following areas:

- The need to develop, implement, support and maintain an ICT infrastructure to ensure staff, members, the public and where necessary partnership organisations have quick and ready access to the information they require
- The adoption of common standards that are essential for effective information retrieval, both on the internet, intranet and other internal networks
- Ensuring that land and property information remains corporately managed – putting the Local Land and Property Gazetteer at the centre of all property based data
- To promote the use of the ORB as a resource for team information and document store
- Encouraging improved web contact by making as much information as possible freely available and accessible by the public while remaining compliant with legislation.
- The need to work towards the use of common identifiers, in particular for customers and properties, to enable matching of records that are held in disparate information systems
- The need for information security to protect information from a wide range of threats in order to ensure business continuity, minimise business damage and maximise value and business opportunities

Equally these priorities and the Information and Records Management Strategy are central to achieving the objectives formulated in other key Council documents including:

- Corporate Plan
- Joint ICT Transformation Strategy
- Corporate Equality Strategy
- Corporate Communications Strategy
- HR Policies and competency frameworks
- Corporate Risk Register
- Service Business Plans

- Climate Change Strategy
- Data Quality Strategy
- Corporate Performance Framework

## **4 Legal Obligations**

### **4.1 Information Governance**

The following legislation governs the information that we process as a Local Authority:

- The Data Protection Act - sets out eight principles governing personal information about data subjects
- Freedom of Information Act - gives a general right of access to the information that we hold as a public authority
- Environmental Information Regulations - gives a right of access to information concerning the environment and elements
- Reuse of Public Sector Information - the public have the right to request to re-use the information that we hold

The legislation gives the person rights of access to information that we hold and sets timescales by which a response must be made. If the authorities are to meet the timescales, information must be managed proactively.

### **4.2 Supporting Compliance in other Areas**

The implementation of good information management will underpin service delivery and compliance to legislation that governs other service delivery.

## **5 Efficiencies**

The aim of this strategy is to help improve efficiency and effectiveness of council services through improved information management. These improvements include:

- Reduce storage requirements
- Save energy and paper
- Improve data quality
- Information available at one point of access
- Increased speed of access to information

Objectives are to standardise the use of information to improve performance and reporting processes and reduce costs. There will be ongoing monitoring and reporting of space saving and service efficiency.

Metrics will be captured to and used to benchmark how the Councils are managing information and measure the effectiveness of improvements. File duplication across services can be identified by running a software application.

More efficient methods of storing physical records will maximise office space and lead to a better working environment.

## **6. Information Systems Infrastructure**

### **6.1 Internet and Intranet (ORB)**

Information posted on the websites is readily available to the public on our websites. Services will review their web pages to ensure information is up to date and available.

The Orb has been developed to provide an information portal across both authorities. During the next phase of the development, services use the Orb as a file store for their working files. The ORB will replace the existing method of file storage on traditional drives.

### **6.2 Middleware and Integration**

Microsoft's BizTalk and Visual Studio.Net framework are proposed as the middleware and integration solutions, which are based on open, industry standard Extensible Mark-up Language (XML) interfaces using technology that is flexible, modern and relatively cheap to implement.

Middleware is a communication layer that allows applications to interact, share and exchange information between different systems, similar to a 'black-box' that passes information between front-end systems, such as Customer Relationship Management System (CRM) or the Web, to back office systems such as Planning, Benefits, Environmental Health etc.

It is recognised that not all opportunities for integration will be taken advantage of, for example due to limited budget, availability of application support etc., and in these cases the Authority will make use of products such as Smartpoint.

Any middleware or integration will be primarily used to support the CRM development, the Web and the Intranet development projects.

Key benefits to be obtained from the introduction of middleware:

- Improved quality of Council services achieved by integrating existing disparate systems
- Providing a consistent message to customers and system users
- Within the CRM providing a single up-to-date view of customer information (by bringing together back office information)
- Improved partnership working by enabling different service providers to share information
- Removal of data duplication and an improvement in data standards, retention and usage
- Generation of efficiencies – as listed above.

The use of an enterprise middleware environment can address identified issues with current working practices and information sharing, these include:

- Legacy issues – information held in silos
- Cultural issues – resistance to change
- Technical issues – incompatible proprietary systems and dependency on third party suppliers
- Ownership issues– who is responsible for the information?
- Data issues - poor quality of existing data

Each service team's information ownership, management and work processes need to be mapped and reviewed to ensure a suitable middleware solution is applied to include back office systems. If a requirement for middleware architecture is identified, it will develop as part of the implementation process.

### **6.3 Handling Information Requests**

The existing Customer Feedback system used by Bromsgrove Council will be upgraded to include a module to facilitate the handling of requests for information and record responses for both authorities including Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

## **7. Implementing the Strategy**

Our approach to implementation is based around building an information management culture and introducing good information management practices and procedures that should start to deliver clear benefits in improved efficiencies and savings.

### **7.1 Corporate Implementation**

Practical implementation is underpinned by action and project plans. It is an interactive process which will be reinforced by constantly consulting and involving all levels of the organisation.

- There will be a joint Information and Records Management Working Group
- Information Liaison Officers will be identified within each service.
- To ensure the embedding of this new culture, Information management will become an intrinsic part of all job requirements within the Authority.
- Develop a register of Policies and Strategies devised from corporate consultations, service consultations, relevant legislation, and the lists of Policies and Strategies,
- Information sharing protocols will form part of agreements with partner organisations
- The ORB will become pivotal as a business tool to assist roll out

There are already tools and guidance published on the ORB, to help staff start the process of organising and storing their information and records according to corporate requirements. Further tools will be developed and maintained and these may be service specific.

Any changes and additions to the above documents will be communicated to all staff and details will be made available via the ORB.

The implementation of this strategy will allow consistent and accurate information to be available for public access.

Technical forums and social networking will be investigated for making information available with increased accessibility.

There will be a trial implementations and the action plan and checklists will be amended to take account of learning gained. Following reviews, monitoring and assessment there will be a systematic roll out to each individual service.

## ***7.2 Individual Services Implementation***

To have a comprehensive and functional information and records management system, each department will have an implementation plan aimed at their specific needs. This will be led by the Business Development team and the service 'Information Liaison Officer' using shared project management framework.

The Implementation Plan will include the following actions:

- Identify all types of information held, where and how it is stored (paper, electronic, email, CD, microfiche, EDMS, databases)
- Data cleansing
- Identify information that is or should be in the public domain
- Identify ownership responsibility and location of information
- Implement the retention and disposal policy
- Deliver the Corporate file plan and related guidance
- Identify work processes to aid design for functional part of the file hierarchy
- Advise on best practice for use, storage and retention of email
- Review work processes to incorporate records requirements
- Regular monitoring by ILOs and auditing by the Business Development Team
- Identify where the Geographical Information is used as a resource

## ***7.3 Implementation Support***

Overall support and guidance will be provided by the Business Development team and the appointed ILOs within each service team. This will be ongoing to ensure that the Information and Records Management system is maintained and utilised in accordance with this strategy.

All new staff will receive training on their responsibilities for information legislation compliance followed by routine training updates.



Information and records management will also form an intrinsic part of their on the job training. There is Information and Records Management guidance available on the intranet.

## **8 Monitoring and Review**

As the implementation rolls out across the two authorities, metrics will be captured to measure the effectiveness of the actions included within this Strategy.

These metrics will be reported to the Joint Information and Records Management Group and used to benchmark how the Authority is managing its information and that the improvements and outcomes are being delivered.

## **9 Risk Assessment**

Any risks associated with this strategy will be identified and included in the corporate risk registers.

## **10 Equality & Diversity**

In order to ensure that our information and communication technology systems are delivering our equality and diversity needs in terms of service delivery and monitoring of information, it is essential that any project gives adequate consideration to customer access issues when scoping or developing the project.

The Council will seek to make reasonable adjustments to standard ICT services and facilities offered to its customers and employees where there is an identified need to enable access to our services or carry out their duties as effectively as possible.

## **Glossary**

### **Information**

Whenever the term 'information' is used in this strategy it is used to define any information used by the Councils whether stored in electronic form, on paper or any other media.

### **Intranet (The ORB)**

The ORB will be a vital tool in the implementation and use of the new Information and Records Management Strategy. Information on the ORB will hold the most up to date information available for all to see without duplicating any documentation. The intranet will be a place all staff log onto regularly to search for information as well as receive updates and news. Each service will update the content of their area.

### **Internet (The web)**

The website will be a vital tool for services to make available information for public access.

### **Corporate Fileplan**

The corporate file plan is intended to make information easy to access by all staff and Members, eliminate the need for duplication of information and ensure that all the information that is held by the council complies with the relevant legislation.

The file plan consists of three main folders, Corporate, Corporate Working Groups and Services. The corporate folder will contain information such as policies, procedures, standards, practices as well as all information that is available to the public. By having all this information in one place it eliminates the need for individuals to save their own copy locally, it eliminates the need to email large documents and it allows for an easy assessment of the corporate documentation held by the council.

The Corporate Working Groups pages provide a platform for larger, cross departmental working. Information on these pages is then stored centrally, again eliminating the need to duplicate or email, it is easy to set the permissions and access to the folders and ensures that no part of the project gets lost.

The service pages and folders are dedicated for each service. When initially set up there will be generic folder structures, however these can be adapted and updated following consultation with the service. The generic file structure allows staff to see that there is a place for documentation and there is a system to storing it. This will reduce the instances of 'lost' documentation, as well as duplication of documentation and will assist in information sharing within the service.

Although the filing systems have been designed to be intuitive to use, there are guidance notes and flow charts available on the ORB to help staff in the decision making process when saving documents. Eventually the flow charts will no longer be needed, however initially they will help ensure that all staff understand the file system.

### **Retention and Disposal Schedule**

The retention and disposal schedules provide a list of record classes, the retention period and the authority for retention. The retention period may be specified in legislation, by government guidelines, an audit requirement or there may be a business need for keeping the record.

The retention and disposal schedule will allow all staff within the council to know when documents should be disposed of.

### **Duplication and Folder Analysis**

A series of duplication identification scans will run on all the council's servers. These scans will pick up on information that is either identical or very similar and stored in multiple locations.

Part of the implementation process will be getting staff in each department to migrate their own files to the new file structure, including putting things forward that should be saved in the corporate file.

Once this has been completed by each department, a whole system scan can be run. This should show no duplications due to the new system of centrally storing information.

### **Policies and Strategies Table**

The table lists policies, strategies and standard documents in use by the councils and its partners. Information on current version, date written, review dates, ownership and audience is included.

Services are responsible for keeping their documentation and the policies and strategies table up to date and any changes to documents or additions need to be recorded in this table.

### **Standard Naming Conventions**

Standard Naming Conventions are a set of rules designed to help and advise people when naming documents and files. These conventions are designed to ensure documents and files are named in such a way that the names are meaningful, sensible and not too large. The ultimate aim is that anyone looking for a document they do not know the name of should be able to find it quickly. The Standard Naming Conventions are available on the ORB.

### **Document History Page**

The inclusion of document history will provide summary information about the document including purpose, ownership, version history and review timescales.

There are guidance notes available on the intranet.

## Appendices

### Reference Documents

#### External Documents

- Local Government Act 1972
- Data Protection Act 1998
- Freedom of Information Act 2000
- Re-use of Public Sector Information
- Environmental Information Regulations
- ISO 15489

#### BDC and RBC Documents

- Corporate Plan
- Redditch Community Strategy
- Corporate Equality Strategy
- Medium Term Financial Strategy
- Corporate Communications Strategy
- Corporate Performance Framework
- Asset Management Plan
- Capital Strategy
- Directorates Service Delivery Plans
- Transformation Programme Plan
- HR Policies and competency frameworks
- Corporate Risk Register
- Climate Change Strategy (2009/10)

A number of related policies and procedures are also in existence. These include:-

- Internet and Email Policy
- Information Security Policy
- I. C. T. Equipment Use and Security Policy
- Policies and Strategies Table
- Retention and Disposal Schedule

- Standard Naming Conventions
- Document History Page
- Information and Records Management Guidance Notes
- Corporate File Plans
- Guidance on use of file plan
- Flow Charts
- Records management policy
- Email usage



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

1st February 2011

**CREMATORIUM ENERGY RECOVERY PROJECT**

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

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

Members' approval is sought to utilise waste heat which will be generated as a result of an equipment upgrade at the Crematorium. The upgrade is required to ensure the Council complies with new legislation concerning mercury emissions to the atmosphere. The process of mercury abatement requires heat to be removed from the flue gases before their treatment and this is then dissipated via a cooling water circuit. Members are asked to consider the re-use of this waste heat to offset the significant gas requirements required for the new Abbey Stadium development, rather than allow the heat to escape into the atmosphere.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

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

- 1) **£40,000, a proportion of the capital sum already approved for the installation of mercury abatement and cremation equipment, be redirected to the Abbey Stadium development project, to fund the engineering process associated with recommendation 2; and**

subject to which, to **RESOLVE** that

- 2) **any waste heat recovered as part of the flue gas cleaning process at the crematorium be used to supplement the heating requirement of the Abbey Stadium development; and**
- 3) **expenditure of up to the sum agreed by the Council at 1) above be approved in accordance with Standing Order 41, for the purposes defined in the report.**

**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**EXECUTIVE  
COMMITTEE**

**1st February 2011**

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**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 Bereavement Services has existing approval and funding to carry out a major equipment and buildings upgrade at the Crematorium in Redditch. Works include the installation of one new cremator with the associated mercury abatement equipment (required by new legislation) and the internal reuse of part of the waste heat from the flue gases.
- 3.2 In order to remove mercury from flue gases which are generated as part of the cremation process, the flue gases must be substantially cooled down, from over 800<sup>0</sup>C to around 140-160<sup>0</sup>C – which is a significant amount of heat energy loss. Once cooled, the flue gases are cleaned in the abatement plant to remove mercury, acids and particulate and are then evacuated to the atmosphere via the chimney. The heat energy recovered by this process is dissipated to the atmosphere via a separate cooling water circuit air blast cooler.
- 3.3 Operating a crematorium is a highly energy intensive process and in 2008, 170,000 kilowatt hours (kWh) of electricity and 1,516,000 kWh of natural gas was used. The energy needed for a typical 80 minute cremation releases to the atmosphere an average of 300 kW (high 400 kW, low 200 kW) of waste heat as part of the process. At present this heat energy is dissipated with the untreated flue gases via the chimney to the atmosphere and is lost.
- 3.4 With the mercury abated cremation there is an average of 280 kW of heat which must be removed from the flue gases as part of flue gas cleaning process. This lower figure is due to the fact that with the more efficient cremator fitted with mercury abatement technology, the operating temperature is lowered from 850<sup>0</sup>C to 800<sup>0</sup>C. In an abated system without any heat recovery, this energy would still be dissipated to the atmosphere via a separate abatement cooling system.
- 3.5 New cremators are far more technologically advanced and efficient than previous systems having shorter preheat times, greater heat retention and have the option to recover any heat from the secondary process (i.e. from the mercury abatement equipment – not from the cremator itself).



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**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 There are at least three existing examples in Hastings (East Sussex), Tameside Councils (Manchester), and Calderdale (West Yorkshire) who have already installed mercury abatement equipment, who are currently using a proportion of the heat energy in this way for internal use in their crematoria reusing the recoverable waste heat to heat their local buildings (although this only uses a small percentage of the waste heat available). This is not the preferred option for Redditch Crematorium, as this would involve a complete change of the heating system, which is currently run on electricity; secondly it would not utilise all of the available waste heat.
- 4.2 In Redditch the Crematorium is located very close to the Abbey Stadium development which could potentially utilise the waste heat. The new development is large enough to be capable of being utilised as a 'heat sink' for all of the waste heat energy recovered from the flue gas. As far as Officers are aware, it is believed that this specific and innovative project is unique in its nature within the United Kingdom.
- 4.3 Members should note that on the Continent, Planning Permission for new Crematoria often stipulates the requirement for an adjacent development which can utilise the waste heat.
- 4.4 It was late on in the Abbey Stadium development programme that the idea of using this waste heat was discussed with the project managers and it was decided that more research would need to be undertaken to provide an engineering solution.
- 4.5 This work has now been done and it shows that the waste heat recovered from the flue gas can be used with very little alteration to the existing Abbey Stadium plan, other than a change to a piece of equipment in the plant room. The technology currently exists to use and transport any recovered waste heat energy to the site.
- 4.6 In order to remove mercury from the flue gases, the reuse of waste heat, it is essential that the flue gases are cooled significantly to remove the mercury. The waste heat recovered from this cooling process can be used in the new Abbey Stadium by installation of a means of transferring the heat from the abatement plant water cooling circuit to the leisure facility and to accept the cool return flow.

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- 4.7 The additional equipment for the stadium would be a water circuit from the crematorium comprising a delivery and a return pipe circuit, a water pump and a simple plate heat exchanger.
- 4.8 The pipe circuit from the crematorium would be a simple insulated pipe run underground. This would not disrupt any existing cemetery or grave site.
- 4.9 The initial work completed shows that there should be significant savings both in capital and energy saving costs for the stadium project. If the scheme does not go ahead, there will be additional costs incurred to the Abbey Stadium project (see 5.9).
- 4.10 It should be emphasised that there is no direct contact between the flue gases and the water in the abatement plant cooling circuit. Nor is there direct contact between the water in the abatement plant cooling circuit and the water in the leisure centre heating circuit.
- 4.11 It is fully recognised that a subject of this nature associated with bereavement services, will need to be sensitively handled, to ensure that the full facts are made available to local residents in order to explain the process and ensure that the technology is not misunderstood.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 As part of the original Council decision to fund the mercury abatement and cremation equipment, it was agreed at Full Council (September 2009) to also set aside £70,000 for the internal reuse of recovered waste heat energy. A proportion of this funding could be re-directed to the Stadium side of the engineering requirements.
- 5.2 The capture of flue gas waste heat based on the current operation (250 operating days of 8 hours) of the crematorium would be the equivalent of 280kWth/hour. At current gas prices of £0.026\* per kWh (which is expected to rise in the future), this means that the Council reduces gas fuel charges at the Abbey Stadium by £14,560 per annum. Additionally this avoids the use of a significant amount of non-renewable fossil fuel, which has widespread environmental benefits.

\*The crematorium currently pays 1.97pence per kWh of gas used; however, when the current supply contract ends, due to gas wholesale prices rising significantly at the moment; the mean average of all RBC gas costs (2.6pence/kWh) has been used in these calculations.

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- 5.3 The additional equipment in the abatement plant system is likely to include two 3-way valves, two isolation valves and a small amount of electrical work. This should cost less than £1,000 in total.
- 5.4 Although exact figure have not yet been ascertained the maximum costs for installing both the circuit and plate heat exchanger should be of the order of £39,000.
- 5.5 The system to pump waste heat to the complex is a 15kW pump which costs £3,609.61 annually in electrical energy. Maintenance for one heat exchanger and one large pump set would likely cost around £800 per annum. The overall saving would therefore be in the order of £10,150.39 per annum.
- 5.6 The capital cost increase of the Crematorium system is estimated at less than £1,000 so the payback period is approximately 2 months. If the estimated capital costs of £39,000 for the additional heat delivery circuit to the leisure facility and the plate heat exchanger are added to this cost then the payback period is less than 6 years; and is certainly worthy of consideration.
- 5.7 The proposed system means that the current plan to install a CHP unit on site to heat the leisure centre would no longer be required, saving an initial £100,000 (the lifespan of a CHP unit is around 10 years maximum). Over the 25 year lifespan of the Abbey Stadium pool, not having a CHP unit therefore results in a capital saving of £261,000 and a maintenance revenue cost of £225,000. This system therefore compares very favourably with the proposed plan.
- 5.8 To conclude, the financial saving to the Authority by removing the CHP from the sports development and using the recovered waste heat from the mercury abatement process instead at the neighbouring crematorium would, over 25 years generate a cost saving to the residents of Redditch of £466,000, without even including the full energy saving costs over that timeframe.

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5.9 The 25 year savings are summarised in the following table (assuming today's fuel prices):

Costs over <b>25 years</b>	CHP unit	Waste heat technology	Saving
Capital cost	£300,000	£39,000	£261,000
Revenue cost	£225,000	£20,000	£205,000
<b>Total cost</b>	<b>£525,000</b>	<b>£59,000</b>	<b>£466,000</b>
Additional Gas cost*	£364,000	-	-
Electric cost	-	£90,225	-
Whole-life cost	£805,500*	£149,225	

\*Only the offset gas proportion is listed here, there will be significant natural gas costs even with the waste heat technology to supplement heating.

5.10. Based on these fuel costs the payback period for the waste heat technology is 4.05 years (£59,000/£14,560).

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

There may be a requirement to apply for a Bishops Faculty through the Church of England. There is currently no cemetery plan available to show if any of the cemetery has been designated as consecrated ground. A Faculty may be required if route which the insulated pipe work takes from the crematorium facility to the stadium project is to pass through any such areas. However, an alternative route outside the cemetery area is feasible.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

This work would assist in meeting the requirements of the climate change strategy and the air quality management strategy.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

This will specifically meet with the key priority of being clean and green – Officers estimate this scheme will reduce the organisations corporate carbon footprint by around 4-5% by providing the ideal outlet for recycling of

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the waste heat energy recovered through the statutory requirement to reduce mercury emissions to air.

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

9.1 The main risk associated with this report is:

- Misunderstandings about the technologies leading to potential adverse publicity.

9.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

By the production of detailed communications plan that will include documentation explaining the process and full engagement with key stake holders and customers of the service.

9.3 Currently the risks identified in 9.1 are not addressed by any risk register and will be added to the Environmental Services Risk Register.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 The Council is well aware of the sensitivities involved in Bereavement Services. It is important that the message which reaches customers is that although the heat is generated as part of the crematorium process, this heat is removed as part of the process to clean the flue gas and remove mercury. This heat is exhausted to the atmosphere in a totally independent system to the cremators and dissipated to the atmosphere through a separate route than the flue gases. The only difference is that instead of the heat being dissipated into the atmosphere, it is instead re-used in a way that benefits the community for this generation and those to come.

10.2 The significant increase of cremations undertaken in eco-friendly coffins is an indication of the general desire of many residents to limit their impact on the environment.

10.3 There is no direct contact between the cremator and the taking of heat from the flue gases in terms of the process of re-using the heat.

10.4 Reducing the costs of gas/energy can support limiting the cost of funeral services which can be a concern to many families.

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**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

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

12.1 Value for money implications are detailed within the Key issues. The cremator and associated ancillary equipment will be procured using an industry recognised OJEU framework agreement as advised by Redditch Borough Council procurement team, for the provision of one cremator, mercury abatement equipment and associated works at Redditch Crematorium.

12.2 It is anticipated that the contract will be awarded in the 1st Quarter of 2011 and its implementation will commence forthwith.

12.3 Although the heat recovery technology will form part of the procurement, it is envisaged that a separate procurement process will be required to connect the two projects. This pipe work circuit and connection contract will run parallel with both upgrades.

12.4 Asset management have been involved from the start of the cremator and buildings upgrade and will continue to provide essential support through the installation project.

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

13.1 This work contributes significantly to the Council's objectives under the corporate priority of tackling climate change as it reduces our energy consumption and therefore our carbon footprint.

13.2 The reusing of waste heat, combined with reduced energy usage of the more efficient cremators together with energy recovery will significantly reduce the carbon footprint of both the Abbey Stadium and the Crematorium and will contribute to the Governments target of reducing carbon emissions by 80% of 1990 levels by 2050 under the Climate Change Act (2008).

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

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**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

None identified.

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

None identified

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None identified

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

We are not aware of any other cremation authority in the United Kingdom using waste heat in specifically this way.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

In addition to the communication plan and section 10, Members and Officers will be given briefing notes including FAQ. These guidance notes will be provided in association with technology providers and consultants, working on behalf of Redditch Borough Council. This will reduce the risk of any misinformation and will provide factual background for explaining and understanding the reasons and benefits of using the waste heat energy in this way.

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**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holders	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service (GR/JG)	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Project Development Manager (Abbey Stadium)	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No - but have been involved in procurement of cremation equipment

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All

**22. APPENDICES**

N/A

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

N/A



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**24. KEY**

N/A

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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**INTRODUCTION OF A PRIVATE HOME SUPPORT SERVICE**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Brandon Clayton – Housing, Local Environment & Health
Relevant Head of Service	Liz Tompkin – Head of Housing Services
Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The Committee is asked to consider the introduction of the Council's Home Support Service into the private sector.
- 1.2 The Home Support Service's primary function is to promote and encourage independence for older and vulnerable people to enable them to live in their own homes for as long as possible.
- 1.3 By operating the Home Support Service within the Private Sector we will; be able to meet the conditions of the Supporting People funding, offer a Home Support Service to all residents of Redditch and provide private customers of the Lifeline service with the emergency Home Support call out service.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

**The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that**

- 1) the Home Support Service be introduced to the Private Sector;**
- 2) an emergency Home Support call out service be introduced to private sector customers;**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Home Support Service was previously known as the Community Warden Service. Currently the Service provides a visiting, liaison and advocacy service to older and vulnerable Council tenants to enable them to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. This includes welfare maximisation, social inclusion and health and welfare advice.

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- 3.2 The Home Support Service works closely with Lifeline to provide an emergency Home Support to Council Tenants customers in an emergency 24 hours a day 7 days a week.
- 3.3 Currently the Home Support Service is provided to council tenants only and is partially funded through a contract with the County Council's Supporting People service. A condition of this funding is that we now make the service available to all who have a need for the service regardless of tenure.
- 3.4 The Service is part funded through Supporting People arrangements on a gross contract basis. If a customer meets all of the eligibility requirements they will have this service funded through the Supporting People contract. To qualify, customers have to be eligible for housing benefit and have a need for the service. The arrangements have been expanded to reflect that the service must be available for all vulnerable people regardless of tenure. For customers who own their own home, the eligibility criteria, has been extended, to include those in receipt of Guaranteed Pension Credits.
- 3.5 When supporting those funded through the Supporting People programme, the Home Support Service must be able produce a support plan for each customer with demonstrable outcomes. These form part of Supporting People's performance monitoring and feed into Worcestershire County Council's outcomes (Appendix 1).
- 3.6 Each service that is funded by the Supporting People grant must demonstrate that it is continually improving against the Quality Assessment Framework. At the last Supporting People inspection the service was awarded a high marking (level B) which very few providers have gained.
- 3.7 The pilot of the Home Support Service in the Private Sector had 17 customers receiving the service. See Appendix 2 for case studies.
- 3.8 Officers promoted the Service in the Town Centre by holding an event in the Market Square. Leaflets were given out and questionnaires completed.
- 3.9 Meetings have been held with Social Workers, Occupational Therapists, both in the community and in the hospitals, Age Concern, Older Persons Forum, GP surgeries and District Nurses. The overall opinion was that they felt there was a need for the Home Support Service in the Private Sector. See Appendix 3 Trial of Home Support Service and feedback from clients.

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- 3.10 Referrals for the Service have been made through the event in the Town Centre, the Home Support Supervisors, and the hospital.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The Supporting People contract changed from an accommodation based contract to an hourly rate contract. Further discussions have taken place with the Supporting People Team who agreed that the hours should be used to provide this service to those who meet the eligibility criteria regardless of tenure.
- 4.2 The Council's Lifeline Service is provided in the Private Sector, it would be seen as an enhancement to this service if the Home Support Service was also available.
- 4.3 Currently Council Tenants who receive the Lifeline Service and Home Support Service are provided with an out of hours cover where the Home Support Officer will attend in an emergency. Those Lifeline customers in the Private Sector are currently unable to access the Home Support call out service.
- 4.4 Discussions have also taken place at the Supporting People Forum to agree criteria for people in the private sector to access the Supporting People funding. The qualifying criteria agreed is anyone who has a support need and is entitled to guaranteed Pension Credits will be eligible for the Supporting People grant and incur no charge.
- 4.5 Although the majority of people who signed up to the pilot agreed the Service was invaluable when they needed it, some felt that they would not always require the regular support visit but would prefer and benefit from the Home Support emergency call out service.
- 4.6 The Home Support emergency call out service is very favourable with families who do not live close to their relatives and offers reassurance that, in the case of an emergency, someone would be with their relatives immediately.
- 4.7 The customer would be able to 'dip in and dip out' of the Home Support service dependent on their need.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 There would be no additional cost to implement the recommendations.

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- 5.2 The Supporting People Team at Worcestershire County Council have agreed to fund a post for 3 years to promote and develop the work of Supporting People funded services. We would be able to use this post to develop the Private Sector side of the business.
- 5.3 By expanding into the Private Sector and thus our potential customer base, we will be able to generate more income and identify any economies of scale.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The service is currently not available for all residents of Redditch and we could therefore be at risk of discriminating against customers in the Private Sector.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The recommendations are for an extension of the service currently provided to Council Tenants into the Private Sector. This is a new policy and will require Full Council approval.
- 7.2 This is not a Statutory Service however the service currently provides support to the most vulnerable of the Council's tenants and is a lifeline to living independently.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 8.1 **Enterprising Community**  
By extending the Home Support Service into the Private Sector extra income will be generated for the service. A service will be in place to enable older people and the most vulnerable to maintain independent living.
- 8.2 **Safe**  
Customers who use this service, especially if also in receipt of Lifeline, feel safe in their homes knowing they can contact the Home Support emergency call out 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.
- 8.3 **Well Managed Organisation**  
The Home Support Service has achieved a level B in the Supporting People Quality Assessment Framework. By extending service provision to all residents of Redditch, regardless of tenure, we will be able to further demonstrate the benefit this service provides to older and vulnerable people.

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

- 9.1 The main risk associated with the details included in this report is loss of income.
- 9.2 If we do not meet the new conditions of the supporting people grant it is possible that we could lose the funding. Worcestershire County Council Supporting People will be making budget cuts and will be looking to re-tender for services over the next three years. If we do not extend the service we will not be in a position to compete with other providers.
- 9.3 This risk will be managed through the risk register, the Service Plan and the Housing Performance and Database Team plan.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 All residents of Redditch will be able to access this service regardless of where they live. This will be communicated to all via a press release, posters in the Customer Service Centres, flyers in Doctor's surgeries, hospitals etc. Promotional material will also be available on the website, given to other services such as Lifeline to distribute and through various agencies such as the Home Improvement Agencies.
- 10.2 We will need to make sure all Council Staff and Services are aware of the Home Support Service and what it provides.
- 10.3 The Sundry Debtor Team will be responsible for the invoicing of customers which they currently do for private Lifeline customers.
- 10.4 The Housing and Performance and Database Team will need to extend the mechanism it uses to record private lifeline customers in receipt of supporting people funding to include private Home Support Service customers.
- 10.5 Finance will need to set up and communicate the relevant budget codes.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

If the recommendations in this report are not agreed then we will be discriminating against Private Sector residents.

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

12.1 Currently income is generated from Council tenants who do not qualify for the Supporting People grant. If we are able to extend this service into the Private Sector the potential to generate income will increase.

12.2 The fixed costs of the service will not increase however we will be delivering the service to more customers.

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

If the recommendations are approved there will be an increase in the mileage undertaken by the Home Support Service Officers and Supervisors who work on a geographical basis. However, when determining the days and times of visits, routes will be plotted to make them as carbon efficient as possible. It is not possible to do this job using public transport.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

The Service can be provided within current resources.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Housing Performance and Database Team will need to submit performance returns, details of outcomes achieved and case studies to demonstrate to the Supporting People Team at Worcestershire County Council that the Home Support Service is being delivered to private sector residents.

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

No direct Community Safety implications have been identified.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

The Home Support Service encourages their Council tenants to participate in gentle exercise classes, Tai Chi classes and swimming to improve their health. By not extending this service into the Private Sector, it is possible that some vulnerable people may not be supported to look after their health.



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**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

We have gained valuable experience from delivering this service to Council tenants and the pilot into the Private Sector. We have learnt that not all customers want a full hour of support but would like the piece of mind that they have access to the Home Support Service in an emergency. We have also found that customers would prefer to have the support when they need it, to 'dip in and out' of the service. We will therefore offer varying degrees of support dependant on the need of the customer.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Relevant Officers, Housing Advisory Panel, Borough Tenants Panel and Community Forum. Pilot conducted see Appendices for further information.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

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

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**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All wards.

**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Worcestershire County Council Supporting People Team outcomes.

Appendix 2 – Case Studies from customers of the Private Sector trial.

Appendix 3 – Feedback from the pilot.

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

12th January 2005 Executive Report.

Supporting People Contract Analysis.

**24. AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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APPENDIX 1

	<b>AREA OF SUPPORT Older persons over 60s</b>	Total number of service users <b>IDENTIFIED</b> as needing support in area of support	Total number of service users <b>STILL RECEIVING</b> support to achieve independence in area of support	Total number of service users who <b>ACHIEVED</b> independence in area of support and no longer require support	Total number of service users who did <b>NOT</b> achieve independence in area of support and is no longer receiving support to achieve it	<b>Additional Information Required</b> (Record when achieved)	<b>Comments</b>	<b>LAA Indicators</b>	
	<b>Economic Success that is Shared by all</b>								
<b>1</b>	Maximise income including accessing correct benefits	169	114	55		1: Pension Credits 2: Attendance Allowance 3: Disability Living Allowance 4: Grant or charity payment	L13: Successful pension credit, attendance allowance and DLA claims.	<b>169</b>	
<b>2</b>	Budget/reduce debt and achieve appropriate expenditure	0	0	0				<b>0</b>	
<b>3</b>	Obtained furniture & household appliances for their property	14	5	9				<b>14</b>	

## APPENDIX 1

Improving Health and Wellbeing									
<b>4</b>	Access to statutory services	74	53	21	74	1: Children services			<b>74</b>
						2: Learning disability services			
						3: Mental health services			
						4: Physical disability and sensory impairment services	39		
<b>5</b>	Understand/address health & hygiene within their home	770	349	421	770	5: Older people services			<b>770</b>
						6: Safeguarding services			
						1: Personal health & hygiene	42		
						2: Repair & maintenance services for their property	515		
						3: Access to non statutory care services	5		
						4: Maintain health and hygiene within their environment	42		
						5: Occupational health	155		
						6: Telecare & Tele health	2		
						7: Aids and Adaptation services (Home Improvement Agency etc)	9		
						1: Accessing a GP	255		
<b>6</b>	Develop and/or maintain physical health including:	269	128	141	269	2: Accessing a Dentist	0		<b>269</b>
						3: Has a better understanding of sexual health issues	1		
						4: Supported to stop smoking	13		
						5: Access a health visitor	0		
<b>7</b>	Access preventative mental health services	149	67	82	149				<b>149</b>
<b>8</b>	Support around bereavement issues	171	114	59	171				<b>173</b>

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<b>9</b>	Access drug & alcohol services (for some services more specifically continue to be engaged)	12	9	3		1: Alcohol Services 2: Drug Services	8	NI39: Alcohol related harm	<b>12</b>
<b>10</b>	Access appropriate accommodation	49	19	30		1: Register with Choice Based Lettings	9		<b>49</b>
						2: Supported Accommodation	3		
						3: Rent Deposit Schemes			
						4: Private Rented Accommodation			
						5: Access part or full ownership			

## APPENDIX 1

Communities that are Safe and Feel Safe										
<b>11</b>	Maintain and understand a tenancy, licence or occupancy agreement	67	42	25						67
<b>12</b>	Identify and manage risk including	96	66	30			1: Personal risks	6		96
							2: Environmental risk (within wider community)			
							3: Risks within the home	11		
							4: Fall and Trip hazards within their property	79		
<b>13</b>	Service users supported to address anti social behaviour	0	0	0			1: Support to perpetrators of anti social behaviour		0	NI 17 perceptions of anti social behaviour NI 21 Dealing with concerns over crime and anti social behaviour
<b>14</b>	Address and understand the dangers of self harm	45	28	17					45	
<b>15</b>	Supported through the criminal justice system	5	3	2					5	
<b>16</b>	Access specialist services in relation to being victim of crime	0	0	0					0	NI 17 perceptions of anti social behaviour NI 21 Dealing with concerns over crime and anti social behaviour
							2: Legal protection			NI 17 perceptions of anti social behaviour NI 21 Dealing with concerns

## APPENDIX 1

17	Comply with statutory orders	0	0	0	0	3: Child contact orders	0	over crime and anti social behaviour NI18 Adult reoffending rates for those under probation supervision	0
18	Manage stress and/or cope with a history of abuse	29	22	7					29
19	Attended the Freedom or other Domestic Abuse specific Programme	0	0	0					0
20	Access advocacy services	8	3	5					8
21	Access legal services	1	1	0					1

## APPENDIX 1

Stronger Communities																	
22	Access employment	0	0	0	0	1: Service users with a learning disability <u>in</u> employment: 2: Service users in contact with secondary mental health services <u>in</u> employment 3: Service users aged 16-18 year olds <u>in</u> employment		NI 146: Adults in LD in Employment NI150 Adults in contact with secondary mental health services in employment NI 117 16 - 18 year olds who are not in employment, education or training NI 152 working age people on out of work benefits	0								
										23	Access training/education	13	12	1	1: Service users aged 16-18 year olds <u>in</u> training/ education	NI 117 16 - 18 year olds who are not in employment, education or training	13
25	Access social, cultural, leisure activities	333	144	189	1: Sport and Active Recreation	NI 8 Adult participation in sport and active recreation	333										
								26	Access volunteering opportunities	0	0	0			0		
27	Developed and/or maintained relationships with neighbours	64	40	24		NI 2 Feeling part of the neighbourhood	64										
								28	Establish or maintain appropriate networks	296	113	183	1: Family networks 2: Social networks 3: Carer relationships 4: Community networks	NI 2 Feeling part of the neighbourhood	296		







**APPENDIX 2 ~ CASE STUDIES FOR HOME SUPPORT SERVICE  
PRIVATE SECTOR CLIENTS**

CASE ONE

Mrs H is an elderly lady living on her own in the Astwood Bank area, Mrs H has dementia.

Mrs H's son lives in Bromsgrove he used to be able to visit his mother daily to give her support, but due to his own ill health he is finding the constant journeys from his home a great strain. Mrs H has a care package but the son worries about the 'What ifs' of her daily life.

The Social Worker made contact with the Home Support service. The Home Support service visited this lady and with her developed an individual support plan, which required the Home Support Officer to support her in her home twice a week. These sessions would last between 20mins to 45minutes. Mrs H really enjoyed these sessions, which have given peace of mind to the family, who do not have to call as many times a week.

The Social worker has fed back to the Home Support service saying, 'the Home Support service has had a positive outcome for Mrs H and the family. The son feels the Home Support service has taken away the anxiety he felt on the days when he was too ill to visit his mother.

The Social worker feels that the Home support service is a truly valuable service to the private sector, and fills the gap that is always left in the community between social care services provision.

**APPENDIX 2 ~ CASE STUDIES FOR HOME SUPPORT SERVICE  
PRIVATE SECTOR CLIENTS**

CASE TWO

Mr & Mrs M live in the Headless Cross area in their own property. Mr M has poor mobility. They have no family support or other services going in to them.

Mr & Mrs M receive visits weekly for about 15mins, but sometimes they need more support time. When agreeing with them their support plan the Home Support Officer identified that they:

- were not claiming Attendance Allowance
- needed help cleaning their home
- would benefit from equipment and adaptations in their home
- were unable to go out independently
- needed assistance keeping the garden tidy
- had little information on bogus callers, falls prevention, delivery of medication, healthy eating and contacts for mobile hairdressers

The Home Support Officer was able to refer the couple to the Pension service and Mr M is now receiving Attendance Allowance. Through the signposting of the Home Support Officer Mr and Mrs M now have a cleaner and a gardener. Mrs M is now a regular user of Dial A Ride and is able to go out independently. They have also had a referral to the Occupational Therapist and have had the necessary equipment and adaptations to enable them continue to live in their own home with more independence.

Through the work of the Home Support Officer Mr and Mrs M have been able to achieve tangible outcomes. All of which are recognised by Worcestershire County Council Supporting People Team (see Appendix 1 for details of these outcomes).

**APPENDIX 2 ~ CASE STUDIES FOR HOME SUPPORT SERVICE  
PRIVATE SECTOR CLIENTS**

CASE THREE

Mrs T lives in Headless Cross area and is a wheelchair user.

When the Home Support service first started to visit Mrs T it was agreed to visit her just once a week. She had friends and neighbours who are very good to her and she employs a cleaner and a gardener.

A few weeks after the first visit, Mrs T was taken in to hospital following a fall. The Home Support officer kept in contact with the hospital to identify when she would be discharged.

Eventually Mrs T was discharged without a care package; she had slept in a chair all night, was very distressed and was finding it difficult to cope. The Home Support Officer was contacted and visited her straight away. The Home Support Officer identified that Mrs T should have an assessment and arranged for a Social Worker to visit the same afternoon. Following this assessment it was agreed that a care package would be put in place for Mrs T.

While waiting for a care package to be set up the Home Support Officer called daily to check on her well being. She continued these daily visits until Mrs T started to improve. Now that Mrs T health is better the support plan has been reviewed and the visits have now been reduced. However Mrs T knows how to make contact should she require any further support.



**Pilot of the Home Support Service.**

34 Referrals were received from various sources such as Age Concern, family, hospitals, social services and Lifeline. The Home Support Supervisors visited each person to assess the support needs of the potential customer.

Each customer had an individually tailored support plan which was developed with the Home Support Officer.

Upon assessment it was identified that some customers would benefit from the Home Support emergency call out service, in response to a lifeline call. In some instances a short visit or a phone call per week was also offered. The remaining customers were identified as having a support need that required more regular visits for a longer length of time.

**Feedback from Clients in the Private sector.**

All customers would continue with the service whether it is the Home Support Emergency call out service or an agreed support visit.

Customers found the telephone contact less successful, especially if they had a minor sensory impairment, as they cannot always hear correctly over the phone. Following this it was felt that a face to face visit is more conducive to developing a bond of trust with the Home Support Officer. This can be reduced to a telephone call if it meets the needs of the customer.

The pilot has identified the need for clients in the private sector require support in applying for alternative accommodation, more suited to their needs.

We have been able to achieve positive outcomes for all customers and this has included support and flexible visits and support, following hospital discharge and illness.

When asked most stated that they would be willing to pay for the service at around £8.00 per half hour. Those who were not willing to pay were on low incomes and they would be eligible for Supporting People funding.

**Comments received from those visited:**

Mrs W ~ I will need more support in the future due to deterioration in health, I hope the service does not stop.

Mr M ~ This is an excellent service and really required.

Mrs H ~ I think the service is excellent. I have had so much advice, treated as a person, help when needed, I can't put into words how much peace of mind and emotional help is given by all the Home Support Service. Even more so on bad days when I feel down, I shall miss very much the feeling someone does care.

Mrs F ~ The Home Support visits to my Mom have been very helpful to mom and myself and as a direct result of this mom's standard of living has improved and I feel more secure knowing that she is visited most days as I live 45 minutes away and cannot get over as often as I would like. Weekend visits would be good as well.



**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL****POLLING STATIONS - ANNUAL REVIEW 2011**

Responsible Portfolio Holder(s)	Cllr Carole Gandy and Cllr Michael Braley, Portfolio Holders for Community Leadership and Corporate Management.
Responsible Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

**1. SUMMARY**

To consider the outcomes of an interim review of Polling Places within the Borough of Redditch in compliance with the Review of Polling Districts & Polling Places (Parliamentary Elections) Regulations 2006.

**2. RECOMMENDATION**

The Council is asked to **RESOLVE** that

- 1) **the polling places detailed at Appendix 1 to the report be approved and adopted, with particular reference to proposed changes in respect of Abbeywood First School in Church Hill and the REDI Centre, which are to take immediate effect; and**
- 2) **with regard to the Methodist Church Schoolroom, Headless Cross, the change take effect only when necessary, once the date of closure of the current premises is known.**

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This review is not concerned with alterations to Ward or Polling District boundaries, only the situation of polling stations; and then only with proposed changes to three Polling Places.
- 3.2 The Electoral Administration Act 2006 requires all local authorities in England and Wales to undertake a full review of Polling Districts and Polling Places every 4 years this full review will take place later in 2011. An interim annual review of polling places is, however, also considered good practice.
- 3.3 This interim review has been prompted by issues relating to three specific locations in the Borough and the need to assure polling arrangements are in place.

- 3.4 In undertaking the review, the Council must seek to ensure that all electors have such reasonable facilities for voting as are practicable in the circumstances, and have regard to the needs of electors who have disabilities.

#### 4. **KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 All polling places and polling stations within the Borough have been evaluated in terms of suitability and accessibility. The law says that facilities for voting must be reasonable and practicable. What this means in practice is a matter of judgement, but there is certainly no duty on the Council to make an unreasonably high level of provision, or to provide facilities in locations where it is impracticable to do so.

##### Representations Received

- 4.2 A request has been received from Abbeywood First School to consider an alternative venue for use as a polling station for the Church Hill North Polling District (CHB) as current use of the school also includes closure of the Church Hill Middle School on the day of poll.
- 4.3 A request has been received from County Councillor Barry Gandy to look at use of St Augustine's High School as an alternative venue for the Hunt End Polling District (AFB), the Portable Building at Banners Lane.

##### Revisions Considered

- 4.4 Electors for the Church Hill North Polling District (CHB) currently vote at the Abbeywood First School, Wood Piece Lane which shares a site with Church Hill Middle School. There have been a number of requests from parents and the Head Teacher to relocate this polling station. A suitable alternative would be to use the St Andrew's Methodist Church, Upperfield Close which is currently used as a polling station for Marlfield Polling District (CHD). This polling place has accommodation for multiple polling stations; it is within the electoral Ward and only a short distance from Abbeywood First School.
- 4.5 Electors for the Smallwood Polling District (CEB) currently vote at the REDI Centre, South Street, which closed in Spring 2010. A suitable alternative location for a polling station has been identified at the Youthworcs Centre on West Street / Ipsley Street (Youth House). These premises have the required accommodation for multiple polling stations with access that meets the Disabilities Act recommendations and adjacent car parking.
- 4.6 Electors for the Highfield Polling District (HOB) currently vote at the Headless Cross Methodist School Room, Evesham Road.

Officers are aware of likely closure of these premises pending large-scale renovation work and, although no date has yet been set, it has been necessary to identify a suitable alternative should notification of closure be received at the time of an election. The only viable location available is the car park at the 'Headless Cross Triangle' off Birchfield Road / Evesham Road which could be used with for a portable building(s) with ramped access for electors with disabilities and have car parking facilities. Other identified local venues were considered but were either not suitable or else not available.

- 4.7 The polling station for Hunt End Polling District (AFB) is the Portable Building at Banners Lane. Following the Electoral Boundary Review in 2004 this polling place was allocated following visits to sites including St Augustine's High School which was considered unsuitable following a risk assessment. No other suitable alternatives have ever been identified.

The Council would not normally consider closing a High School, because of impact on education and examinations; and at the same time there would be a serious child safety issue arising from additional vehicles bringing voters to the school while it was open, particularly at 'school run' times.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The hire of a portable building costs considerably more than usual accommodation (some £1,000 - £1,200 as against £200 - £300). Overall costs should, however, remain within budget.

#### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

The report is in accordance with the requirements of Section 18C of the Representation of the People Act 1983. Polling Places are for the Council to identify, within which the Returning Officer identifies Polling Station(s).

#### **7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The proposed action is more statutory than Policy led, although it supports Equalities and public involvement in Democracy aims and objectives.

#### **8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

The proposals contribute towards the 'Well Managed Organisation' objective.

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

No significant risks have been identified.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

The proposals help to meet the needs of customers by seeking to reduce discrimination and promote equality. The change of polling stations will be identified to electors by a special note included on polling cards.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

By addressing Polling Station issues, the Council seeks to improve access to all areas of the Community.

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

Competitive quotes are sought in accordance with procurement requirements, but costs have to be weighed against location / accessibility / sustainability and general quality of accommodation issues.

There are no Asset Management implications for the authority.

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

None have been identified. However, Polling Stations are selected to be as accessible as possible both to pedestrians and, in view of distances, to people travelling by car.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

No direct HR implications have been identified.

**15. GOVERNANCE / PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The Electoral Commission monitors performance of Electoral Services with a view to ensure proper conduct of electoral processes at all times. The Redditch & Bromsgrove Shared Service has been judged to perform at, and often above, the required standards.

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

The proposed Polling Stations have been considered in Community Safety Terms and deemed to be appropriate.

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

Ease of access varies from station to station, but is always an important consideration in proposals for Polling Stations.

Other options are available for people who can not readily go to a Polling Station to vote in person, or to assist people with disabilities (postal or proxy voting for instance).

#### 18. **LESSONS LEARNT**

There continue to be very few suitable options available in any given area, so choices of venue are generally fairly simple, given the limited choices. Sadly, use of portable buildings often seems to be the only solution.

#### 19. **COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Local Borough and County Members have been consulted, together with various premises managers.

#### 20. **OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder(s)	YES
Chief Executive	YES
Returning Officer	YES
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	N/A
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	N/A
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	N/A
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	N/A
Head of Service	YES *
Head of Finance and Resources	N/A
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	YES *
Corporate Procurement Team	NO

#### 21. **WARDS AFFECTED**

Central, Church Hill and Headless Cross & Oakenshaw Wards.

**22. APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 List of Polling Districts and Polling Stations
- Appendix 2 Youthworcs, Ipsley Street location plan
- Appendix 3 St Andrew's Methodist Church location plan
- Appendix 4 Headless Cross Car Park location plan.

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Relevant Statutes and correspondence on file.

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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Tel: (01527) 881 462

## APENDIX 1

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL  
POLLING STATION LIST

Ward	Polling District	Polling Station	Recommendation
Abbey	Riverside (ABA)	Abbeydale Community Club, Sedgley Close	No Change
Abbey	Papermill (ABB)	Portable Building, Rush Lane	No Change
Abbey	St. Stephens (ABC)	Baptist Schoolroom, Easemore Road	No Change
Astwood Bank & Feckenham	Astwood Bank (AFA)	Church Hall, Church Road, Astwood Bank	No Change
Astwood Bank & Feckenham	Hunt End (AFB)	Portable Building, Banners Lane	No Change
Astwood Bank & Feckenham	St. Johns (AFC)	Village Hall, High Street, Feckenham	No Change
Batchley & Brockhill	Birchensale (BYA)	Batchley One Stop Shop, Batchley Road	No Change
Batchley & Brockhill	Brockhill (BYB)	Portable Building, Carthorse Lane	No Change
Batchley & Brockhill	Foxlydiate (BYC)	Batchley Community Centre Cherry Tree Walk	No Change
Central	Musketts (CEA)	Communal Room Bentley Close	No Change
<b>Central</b>	<b>Smallwood (CEB)</b>	<b>REDI Centre South Street</b>	<b>Youthworcs Centre, Ipsley Street.</b>
Central	Southcrest (CEC)	Southcrest Evangelical Church, Plymouth Rd North	No Change
Church Hill	Church Hill South (CHA)	Church Hill Community Centre Loxley Close	No Change
<b>Church Hill</b>	<b>Church Hill North (CHB)</b>	<b>Abbeywood First School Wood Piece Lane</b>	<b>St. Andrews Methodist Ch., Upperfield Close</b>

Church Hill	Church Hill West (CHC)	Marlfield Barn Edgeworth Close	No Change
Church Hill	Marlfield (CHD)	St. Andrews Methodist Church, Upperfield Close	No Change
Crabbs Cross	St. Peters (CCA)	Harry Taylor First School Evesham Road	No Change
Crabbs Cross	Walkwood (CCB)	Windmill Community Centre Rye Grass Lane	No Change
Crabbs Cross	Callow Hill (CCC)	The Gazebo Foxholes Lane	No Change
Greenlands	Throckmorton (GRA)	Greenlands Church Centre Greenlands Avenue	No Change
Greenlands	Woodrow (GRB)	Woodrow Community Centre Woodrow Centre	No Change
Headless Cross & Oakenshaw	Vaynor (HOA)	Vaynor First School Tennyson Road	No Change
<b>Headless Cross &amp; Oakenshaw</b>	<b>Highfields (HOB)</b>	<b>Headless Cross Methodist Schoolroom Evesham Road</b>	<b>Portable Building Car Park Headless Cross Centre</b>
Headless Cross & Oakenshaw	Oakenshaw North (HOC)	Oakenshaw Community Centre Castleditch Lane	No Change
Headless Cross & Oakenshaw	Oakenshaw South (HOD)	Portable Building Grangers Lane	No Change
Lodge Park	Arrowcrest (LPA)	Oak Hill First School Wirehill Drive	No Change
Lodge Park	Holloway (LPB)	Communal Room, Harry Taylor House Winstone Close	No Change
Lodge Park	St Georges (LPC)	Communal Room Beoley Road	No Change
Matchborough	Matchborough West (MBA)	Matchborough Day Services Clifton Close	No Change
Matchborough	Matchborough East (MBB)	Matchborough East Meeting Rooms Dilwyn Close	No Change
West	Webheath	Webheath	No Change



	(WEA)	(WEA)	
Winyates	Winyates East (WIA)	Tenacres Meeting Rooms, Quibury Close	No Change
Winyates	Winyates West (WIB)	Roman Way First School Colts Lane	No Change
Winyates	Winyates Green (WIC)	Winyates Green Meeting Rooms Furze Lane	No Change



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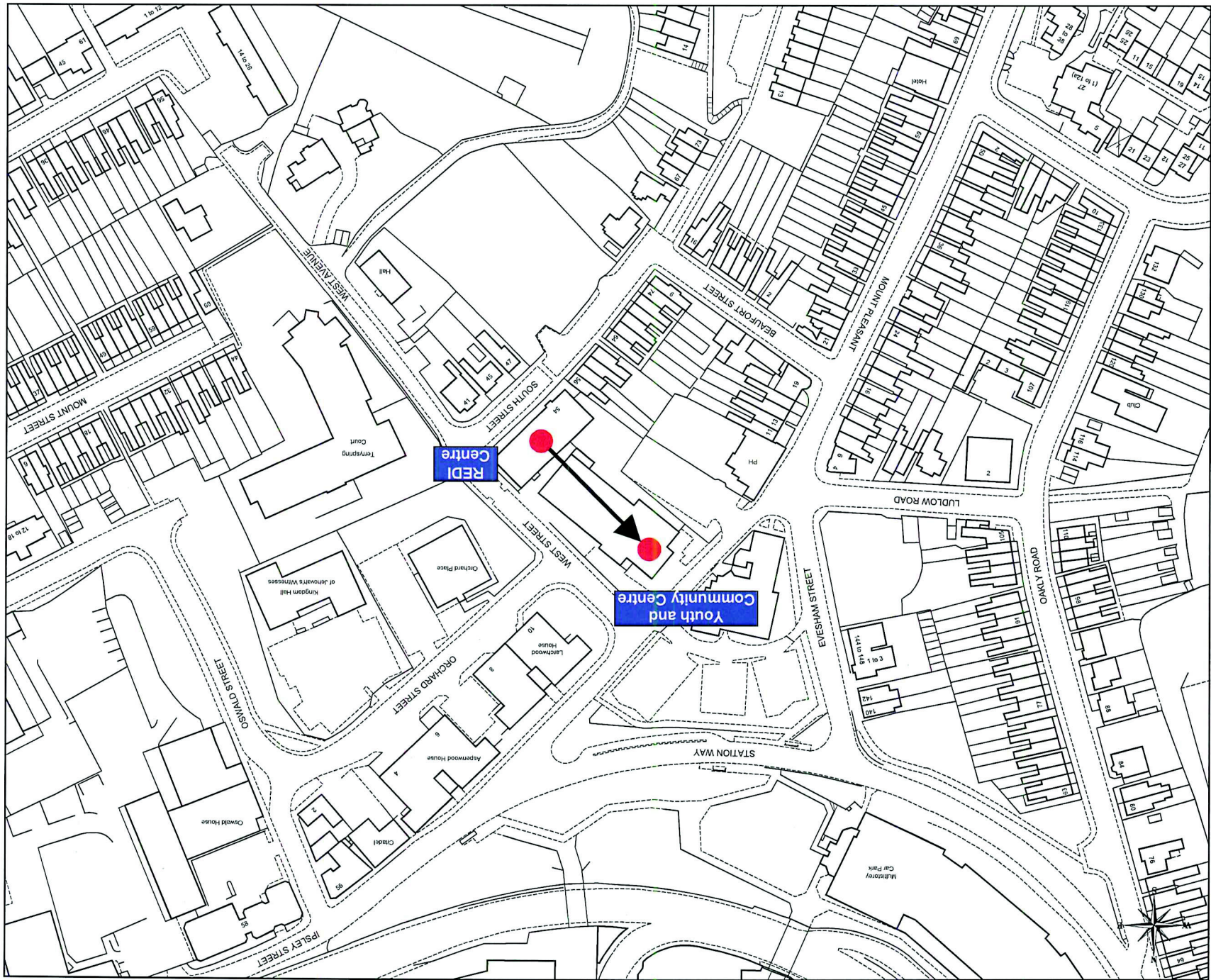
Drawn: PTL Scale: 1/1250  
 Surveyed: OS Date: Nov 2010

**Relocation of Station from REDI Centre to Youth and Community Centre**

**Redditch Polling Stations**

Date	Rev	Details

Notes:







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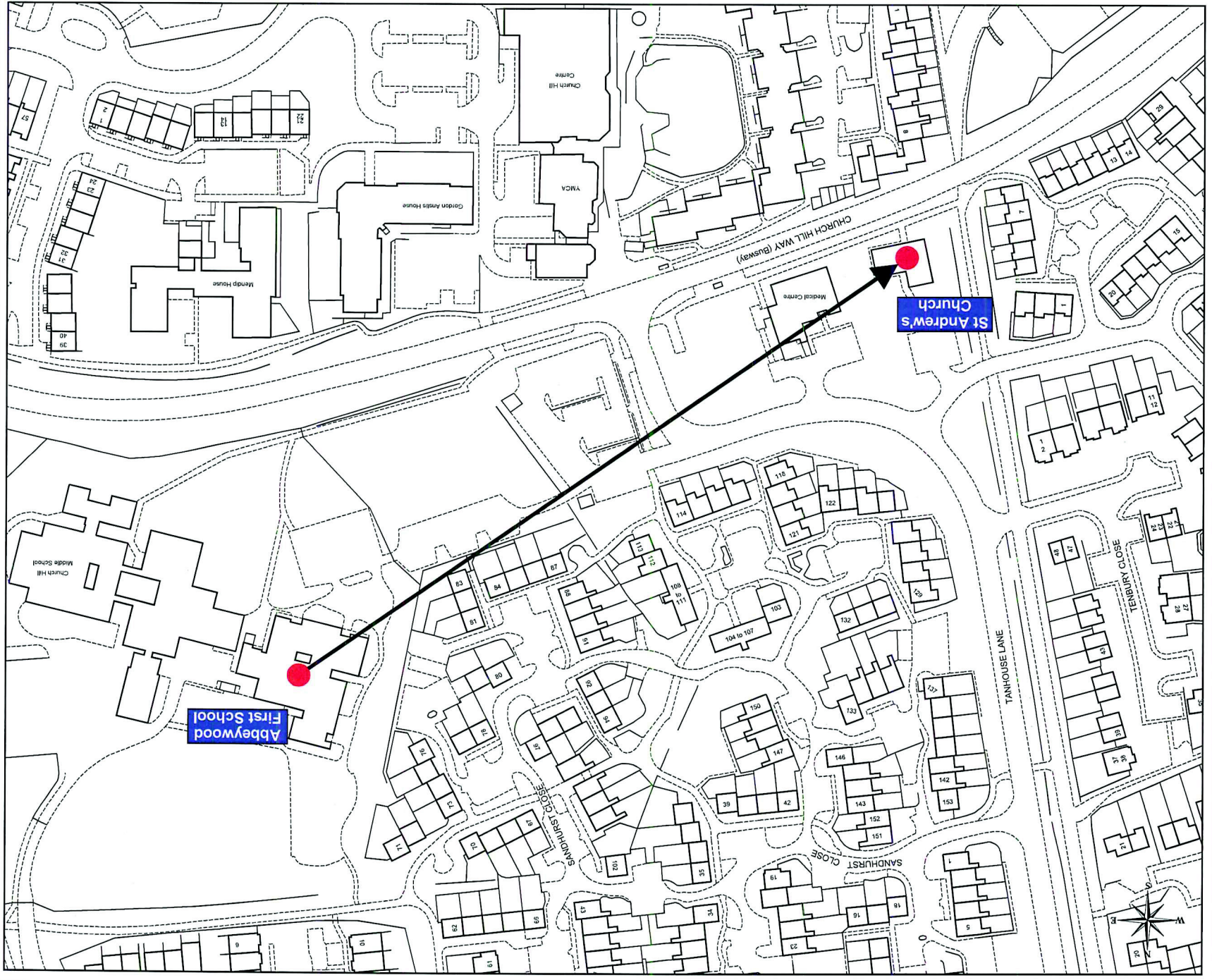
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Drawn: PTL Scale: 1/1250  
Surveyed: OS Date: Nov 2010

Project:  
Redditch Polling Stations  
Polling District CHB  
Relocation of Station from  
Abbeywood First School to  
St Andrew's Church

Date	Rev	Drawn

Notes:







Notes:  
 1. Temporary Portakabin to be supplemented with auxiliary lighting, generator and portable WCs

Date	Rev	Detail

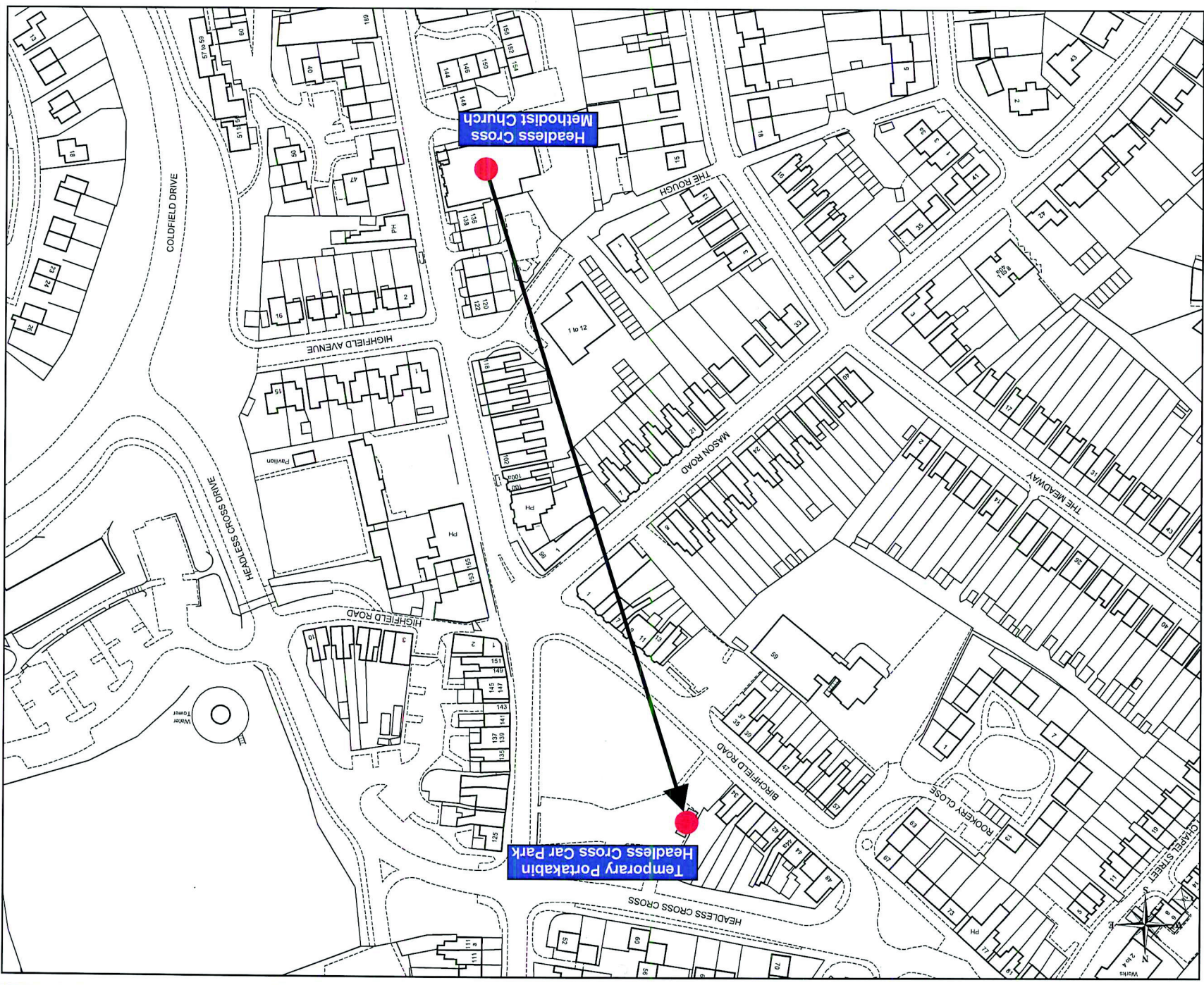
Project: Redditch Polling Stations  
 Drawing: Relocation of Station from Methodist Church to Headless Cross Car Park

Drawn: PTL Scale: 1/1250  
 Surveyed: OS Date: Nov 2010  
 Drawing No: P2037/9

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**SHARED SERVICES BOARD**

**11th January 2011**

**TOWN HALL, REDDITCH**

**Present:**

Councillors Carole Gandy (Chair), Michael Braley, Bill Hartnett and Malcolm Hall (Redditch Borough Council)

Councillors Roger Hollingworth, Steve Colella, Geoff Denaro and Stephen Peters (Bromsgrove District Council).

**Also in attendance (Observer only):** Cllr Jinny Pearce (RBC) – until 6.30 pm.

**Officers (RBC / BDC):** Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley, Teresa Kristunas and John Staniland.

**External Officers:** Mike Parker and Andy Taylor (Director of Planning and Regulatory Services and Project Support Officer respectively - Wyre Forest District Council); and Peter Parkes (Worcestershire County Council).

**Notes:** Steve Skinner.

**1. APOLOGIES**

There were no apologies for absence.

**2. MINUTES**

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on the 9th December 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

**3. MATTER ARISING ON THE MINUTES - TERMS OF REFERENCE**

In connection with Minute 4 k) (WETT Property Services), one Member asked whether this was appropriate business for the Board and asked to be reminded of the Board's terms of reference. Officers agreed to consider, and provide copies of, the Terms of Reference, but in the interim, given that leading Bromsgrove and Redditch Council Members were present and wished to pursue this matter; that it was related to a shared service, albeit involving other local authorities; that urgent attention was crucial in present circumstances, and that the Board had no decision-making powers in any case, it was appropriate for the Board to continue to consider the item.

There were no other matters arising, other than as recorded under the separate agenda items below.



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

Document is Restricted



REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

**COUNCIL**

7th February 2011

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**TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND  
MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY FOR 2011/12**

**RECOMMENDED that**

**subject to the comments in the preamble, above (*detailed in the minutes*),  
the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum  
Revenue Provision Policy for 2011/12 be approved.**



# AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE

24th January 2011

## TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY, PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS AND MINIMUM REVENUE PROVISION POLICY FOR 2011/12

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Michael Braley – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas Head of Finance & Resources
Key Decision	

### 1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To enable members of the Audit and Governance Committee to scrutinise the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and the Minimum Revenue Provision prior to approval by full Council.

### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** that

**subject to any comments, the Treasury Management Strategy, Prudential Indicators and Minimum Revenue Provision Policy for 2011/12, be approved.**

### 3. BACKGROUND

#### Treasury Management Operation

#### 3.1 Treasury Management is:-

“the management of the local authority’s cash flows, its bankings, money market and capital market transactions and loan management; the effective control of the risks associated with those activities; and the pursuit of the optimum performance consistent with those risks”.

#### 3.2 The approved activities of the Treasury Management operation are as follows:-

- a) Cash flow (daily balances and long term forecasting).
- b) Investing surplus funds in Approved Investments.
- c) Borrowing to finance cash deficits.
- d) Funding of capital expenditure through borrowing, capital receipts, grants or leasing.
- e) Management of debt (including rescheduling and monitoring)
- f) Interest rate exposure management.
- g) Dealing procedures with brokers, banks, building societies and the Public Works Loans Board.

## **AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

24th January 2011

- 3.3 On the 1st April 2004 the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Prudential Code was introduced to support the new system of capital finance embodied in part 1 of the Local Government Act 2003. This introduced a number of prudential indicators that impact on treasury management activity.
- 3.4 The revised guidance issued in draft on the 16th November 2009 makes it clear that investment priorities should be security and liquidity, rather than yield and that authorities should not rely just on credit ratings, but consider other information on risk.
- 3.5 The guidance requires investment strategies to comment on the use of treasury management consultants and on the investment of money borrowed in advance of spending needs.
- 3.6 The investment strategy for periods commencing 1st April 2010 are to be approved by full council and published.

### Prudential Indicators

- 3.7. The key objectives of the Prudential Code are to ensure, within a clear framework, that the capital investment plans of local authorities are affordable, prudent and sustainable; also, that treasury management decisions are taken in accordance with good professional practice and in a manner that supports prudence, affordability and sustainability.
- 3.8 To demonstrate that local authorities have fulfilled these objectives, the Prudential Code sets out the indicators that must be used, and the factors that must be taken into account. The Code does not include indicative limits or ratios, these are for the local authority to set for itself subject to the controls under [clause 4] of the Local Government Act 2003.

### Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP)

- 3.9. The requirement to make a MRP is contained within the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Amendment) Regulations 2008.
- 3.10 Following the publication of the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) Regulations issued on the 26th February 2008 local authorities are required to prepare an annual statement of policy for making a MRP. The annual statement should be submitted to Council before the start of the financial year.



## **AUDIT & GOVERNANCE COMMITTEE**

24th January 2011

- 3.11 MRP is the amount of revenue which an authority sets aside for the repayment of the principal element of any borrowing undertaken to finance capital expenditure. The interest cost of borrowing continues to be a direct charge to revenue. The new regulations that came into force on the 31st March 2008 impose a duty on the Council to make an amount of MRP which it considers to be a “prudent provision”.
- 3.12 The broad aim of “prudent provision” is to ensure that debt is repaid over a period that is either reasonably commensurate with that over which the capital expenditure provides benefits, or, in the case of borrowing supported by Government Revenue Support Grant, reasonably commensurate with the period implicit in the determination of the grant. This authority does not have any borrowing supported by Revenue Support Grant.
- 3.13 MRP is calculated in the financial year after the capital expenditure has been incurred and so the capital spend in 2010/11 informs the MRP set aside in the revenue account for 2011/12. The new regulations have added an exception to this in that if expenditure has been incurred on an asset which has not become operational then MRP does not need to be set aside until the financial year after the asset becomes operational. In effect authorities are entitled to a “MRP holiday” until the new asset becomes operational.

### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The failing of a number of Icelandic banks and the issue with Northern Rock has highlighted the risks associated with treasury management activities.
- 4.2 The strategy adopted by many local authorities has been to protect capital sums with minimal returns on investments. There are now only a handful of institutions with a F1+ credit rating.
- 4.3 The bank base rate has remained at 0.5% since 5th March 2009.
- 4.4 On 20th October 2010 HM Treasury issued an instruction to the PWLB to increase the interest rate on all new loans by an average of 1% above UK Government Gilts. The new borrowing rate for fixed loans increased by approximately 0.87% across all maturities, and variable rates by 0.90%.
- 4.5 The Council currently has £15 million which it invests for periods up to one year. These monies are currently invested with a number of banks and building societies at rates ranging from 0.40% and 2.00%.

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### Capital Resources

- 4.6 The Council's capital programme for 2011/12 shows a requirement for capital resources of £13.2 million. In order to fund the 2010/11 capital programme the Council will need to undertake further prudential borrowing of £8.1 million. The availability of capital receipts from asset disposals is limited because of market conditions.
- 4.7 The Council currently has £5.0 million of long term borrowing. The remainder of the Council's borrowing is currently undertaken on a short-term basis. Further long term borrowing will be undertaken when market conditions are favourable.
- 4.8 The decision on when borrowing will be taken up will depend on expenditure plans and market conditions. The Council only has the power to borrow to fund capital expenditure.

### Prudential Indicators

- 4.9. The Council is required to publish the following indicators introduced by the Code for the next and following two financial years:
- a) Actual and estimated capital expenditure.
  - b) Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream.
  - c) Capital financing requirement.
  - d) Actual limit for external debt.
  - e) Operational boundary for external debt.
  - f) Council tax implications of the incremental effect of capital decisions.
  - g) Treasury Management indicators.
- 4.10 The prudential indicators for the forthcoming and following years must be set before the beginning of the financial year. They may be revised at any time, and must be reviewed, and revised if appropriate, for the current year when the prudential indicators are set for the following year.

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Capital Expenditure

- 4.11 The estimates of capital expenditure for 2011/12 and future years included in the Council's approved capital programme are:

Approved Programme	2011/12 Estimate £'000	2012/13 Estimate £'000
HRA	6,500.4	6,220.0
General Fund	6,750.0	1,095.0
Total Approved Programme	13,250.4	7,315.0

The Council does not currently have an approved Capital Programme for 2013/14.

Ratio of Financing Costs to Net Revenue Stream

- 4.12 The financing costs include the amount of interest payable and receivable in respect of borrowing and investments. The Net Revenue Stream for the HRA is the amount to be met from housing subsidy and rents and for the General Fund it is the "amount to be met from government grants and local taxation". The estimates of the ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream for the current and future years are:

Ratio of financing costs to net revenue stream				
	2009/10 Actual	2010/11 Estimate	2011/12 Estimate	2012/13 Estimate
HRA	1.46%	1.37%	1.33%	1.10%
General Fund	(1.30)%	1.74%	1.44%	3.20%

- 4.13 The figures in the above table are shown as negatives where the interest received from temporary and long term investments is estimated to exceed the cost of temporary borrowing.

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Net Revenue Streams for 2010/11 and 2011/12

4.14 The Net Revenue Stream for the HRA is calculated as follows:

	2010/11 Estimate £	2011/12 Draft estimate £
Dwelling rents	19,827,780	20,924,790
Non-dwelling rents	516,730	522,500
Charges for services and facilities	188,460	194,050
Less		
Negative subsidy	6,037,140	6,810,710
Net Revenue Stream	14,495,830	14,830,630

4.15 The Net Revenue Stream for the General Fund is calculated as follows:

	2010/11 Estimate £	2011/12 Estimate £
Revenue Support Grant	818,847	1,040,000
Non-Domestic Rates	5,639,079	3,369,000
Council Tax	5,754,643	5,899,500
Collection Fund	10,200	0
Net Revenue Stream	12,222,769	10,308,500

Capital Financing Requirement

4.16 The capital financing requirement is a measure of the extent to which the Council needs to borrow to support capital expenditure. It does not necessarily relate to the actual amount of borrowing at any one point in time. The Council has an integrated treasury management strategy where there is no distinction between revenue and capital cash flows, and the day to day position of external borrowing and investments constantly changes.

	2010/11 Estimate £'000	2011/12 Estimate £'000	2012/13 Estimate £'000
HRA	17,576	20,576	22,876
General Fund	17,125	18,326	18,823
Total	34,701	38,902	41,699

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**4.17 Calculation of Capital Financing Requirement from the Council's  
Balance Sheet**

Extracts from Balance Sheet	2009/10 £'000
Fixed Assets	338,076
Less	
Capital Adjustment Account	266,763
Government Grant Deferred Account	1,011
Revaluation Reserve	44,681
<b>Capital Financing Requirement</b>	<b>25,621</b>

4.18 CIPFA's Prudential Code for Capital Finance includes the following key indicator of prudence:

4.19 "In order to ensure that over the medium term net borrowing will only be for a capital purpose, the local authority should ensure that net external borrowing does not, except in the short term, exceed the total of Capital Financing Requirement in the preceding year plus the estimates of any additional Capital Financial Requirement for the current and next two years."

4.20 As at the 31st March 2010 the Council's borrowing exceeded its investments by £17.3 million.

External Debt

4.21 In respect of any external debt, it is recommended that the Council approves the following Authorised Limits for its total external debt gross of investments for the next three financial years. The Authorised Limit for external debt for the forthcoming year is the statutory limit determined under section 3 (1) of the Local Government Act 2003: "A local authority shall determine and keep under review how much money it can afford to borrow."

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- 4.22 The Authorised Limits are consistent with the current capital programme and the proposals for capital expenditure included in the Medium Term Financial Plan and the Council's Capital Strategy. The limits are based on the most likely financial circumstances but with an allowance made for unusual cash movements. It is not anticipated that any borrowing will be undertaken except temporarily until further revenues are received.

Authorised Limit for External Debt				
	2010/11 Estimate £'000	2011/12 Estimate £'000	2012/13 Estimate £'000	2013/14 Estimate £'000
Borrowing	38,000	44,500	49,000	52,000
Other long term liabilities	0	0	0	0
Total	38,000	44,500	49,000	52,000

- 4.23 The Council is asked to approve the following Operational Limit for external debt for the same period. The Operational Limit is based on the same estimates as for the Authorised Limit but differs in that it does not take into account the allowance for unusual cash movements.

	2010/11 Estimate £'000	2011/12 Estimate £'000	2012/13 Estimate £'000	2013/14 Estimate £'000
Borrowing	35,000	41,500	46,000	49,000
Other long term liabilities	0	0	0	0
Total	35,000	41,500	46,000	49,000

- 4.24 The Council's actual external debt at the 31st March 2010 was £32,903 million (£27,807 million in short term borrowing and £5.1 million long term borrowing). It should be noted that the actual external debt is not directly comparable to the authorised limit and the operational boundary, since the actual external debt reflects the position at one point in time.

**Treasury Management**

- 4.25 The Council has previously adopted the CIPFA Code of Practice for Treasury Management in the Public Services. Interest rate risk management is a priority and therefore the Code identifies two indicators that will provide the Operational Boundaries to the exposure to interest rate risk.
- Upper limits for variable rate exposure and
  - Upper limits to fixed rate exposure.

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- 4.26 It is recommended that the Council sets an upper limit on its fixed interest rate exposures for 2011/12, 2012/13 and 2013/14 of 100% and on its variable interest rate exposures on 50%. This limit on variable rates is consistent with the current approved limit.
- 4.27 The medium term strategy is to undertake borrowing for capital expenditure. The timing of any longer term borrowing will depend on the profile of capital spend.
- 4.28 The Council's investments are held in a relatively flexible form and therefore fixed interest rate exposure is not considered to be a significant risk.

Maturity Structure of any Fixed Rate Borrowing (as a percentage of total projected borrowing that is fixed rate)		
	Upper Limit	Lower Limit
Under 12 months	100%	0%
12 months and within 24 months	100%	0%
24 months and within 5 years	100%	0%
5 years and within 10 years	100%	0%
10 years and above	100%	0%

- 4.29 The Council has recalled its externalised investments of £15 million, which originated in relation to the Council's reserved capital receipts. This sum is invested by the in-house team. The Code requires that authorities set out the total principal of sums invested for periods longer than 364 days and set an upper limit for each forward financial year for the maturity of these investments. The purpose of the indicator is to manage the investment portfolio within good treasury management practice guidelines and ensure there is a spread of investment maturities to reduce risks inherent in interest rate volatility. The following limits are recommended.

Total principal sums invested for periods longer than 364 days	
	£ million
31st March 2011	0.0
31st March 2012	0.0
31st March 2013	0.0

**Minimum Revenue Provision Policy**

- 4.30 For all unsupported (prudential) borrowing the Minimum Revenue Provision (MRP) will be based on the estimated life of the assets financed by borrowing in accordance with the MRP guidance.

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### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

The financial implications are contained throughout the report.

### **6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 Section 151 of the Local Government Act 1972, the authority has to make arrangements for the proper administration of its financial affairs. The Council has previously resolved to comply with the CIPFA Code of Practice on Treasury Management. Under the Code of Practice the Council is required to approve the Treasury Management Strategy and Annual Investment Strategy before the start of the financial year.
- 6.2. Guidance issued under Section 15 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to approve an Annual Investment Strategy before the start of the financial year.
- 6.3. The treasury management code of practice requires all organisations covered by it to have a treasury management strategy stating the policies and objectives of its treasury management function.
- 6.4. On the 16th November 2009 the Department for Communities and Local Government issued a consultation paper on various changes to the prudential Capital Finance system introduced by the Local Government Act 2003. The revised guidance impacted on an authority's investment strategy.
- 6.5 In order to comply with the requirement of the Local Government Act 2003 the Council needs to approve a range of prudential indicators as detailed in the body of this report before the start of the forthcoming financial year. At the same time the Council also needs to approve a Minimum Revenue Provision Policy.

### **7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Council's policy regarding borrowing and investments is contained in its Treasury Management Strategy.
- 7.2. This report will determine the Council's policy on making a MRP for 2011/12.

### **8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 8.1 The Council's Treasury Management activities support the achievement of the Council's objectives.



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

9.1 The Council needs to ensure that the risks associated with the treasury function have been properly identified and evaluated. The risks include interest rate exposure, counterparty or credit risk, liquidity (insufficient cash to meet liabilities) risk, funding (inability to repay or replace loans) risk, and the failure of internal controls.

9.2. The Council would be failing in its legal obligations under the Local Government Act 2003 if it failed to agree a set of Prudential Indicators for the forthcoming financial year and in its legal obligations under the Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (Amendment) Regulations 2008 if it failed to prepare an annual statement of policy on making a MRP

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

No direct implications.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

No direct implications.

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

No direct implications.

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

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

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no human resource implications.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

The performance management implications are detailed in the report.

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

There are no community safety implications.

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**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

There are no direct health inequality implications.

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

None.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

There has been no community or stakeholder engagement in the preparation of this report.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

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

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards.

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### **22. APPENDICES**

Appendix A - Treasury Management Strategy 2011/12.

### **23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Working papers held by Financial Services Team.  
CIPFA's Prudential Code – Fully revised 2nd edition.  
Local Authorities (Capital Finance and Accounting) (England)  
(Amendment) Regulations 2008.

### **AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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# AUDIT & GOVERNANCE **Appendix A** COMMITTEE

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## TREASURY MANAGEMENT STRATEGY 2011/12

### 1. Objectives

The main objectives of Treasury Management are:-

#### a) Borrowing

- To effect funding in any one year at the cheapest rate commensurate with future risk.
- To forecast average future interest rates and borrowing accordingly.
- To monitor and review the level of variable interest rate loans in order to take greater advantage of interest rate movements.

#### b) Investment

- To maximise the return on investments while maintaining capital security.

#### c) Cash Flow

- To either borrow on a temporary basis to cover shortfalls in funds or make temporary investments in order to manage the Council's cash flow in the most cost effective way.
- To maintain minimum balances with the Council's bankers.

### 2.0 Sources of Financing

The following list specifies which borrowing instruments can be adopted:-

- Market – Long Term - Loans available through the London Money Market.
- Market – Temporary (up to 364 days) – Loans available through the London Money Markets.
- Public Works Loans Board – the low risk source of longer term borrowing for the Council.
- Overdraft - Redditch Borough Council has an overdraft limit of £1million with Lloyds TSB Bank plc.
- Internal (Capital receipts and revenue balances) - including “set aside” capital receipts earmarked to repay debt used as a substitute for new borrowing.
- Leasing.

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### 3.0 Borrowing Limits

The prudential indicator for the Authorised Limit for external debt for the current year is the statutory limit determined under section 3(1) of the Local Government Act 2003: "A local authority shall determine and keep under review how much money it can afford to borrow."

### 4.0 Interest Rate Exposure

The Council will set for the forthcoming financial year and following two financial years upper limits to its exposures to the effects of changes in interest rates. These indicators will relate to both fixed interest rates and variable interest rates.

## **Annual Investment Strategy - 2011/12**

### Introduction

5.0 Guidance issued under section 15 (1) (a) of the Local Government Act 2003 requires the Council to approve an Annual Investment Strategy before the start of the financial year.

### 6.0 Objective

6.1. The objective of the Council's Investment Strategy is to prudently invest all surplus funds held on behalf of the authority. Priority will be given to security and liquidity but at the same time maximising yield.

6.2 The Council will not borrow funds to invest.

### 7.0 Types of Investments

7.1 The investments which the Council are able to use are categorised as 'Specified Investments' and 'Non-Specified' Investments. Specified Investments offer high security and high liquidity. They must be in sterling and have a maturity of less than a year. The Strategy is for the Council to restrict its investment activity to specified investments.

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## 7.2 Specified Investments

All short-term investments arising from the management of the Council's cash flow shall be invested with:

- the major British clearing banks, National Westminster, Lloyds TSB, HSBC and Barclays, also Coutts and Company, the wholly owned subsidiary of National Westminster,
- building societies and building society conversions that are F1 or F1+ credit rated for short-term lending'
- all other local authorities (non-capped)
- 'AAA' rated Money Market Funds.

The maximum amount placed with any single institution will be £2.5 million.

## 8.0 Credit ratings.

The Council's requirements in terms of credit ratings of lending parties are notified to the broker's. The Council principally relies on the credit ratings published by Fitch Ratings, to establish the credit quality of counterparties. Where a counterparty does not have a Fitch rating, the equivalent Moody's rating will be used.

## 9.0 External Fund Management

The Council has withdrawn from the use of external fund managers. Investments made or committed by the Council's fund managers have been returned to the Council and are now invested in-house. No new investments will be placed by external fund managers.

## 10.0 Reporting Arrangements

10.1 The Head of Finance and Resources will report on the prudential indicators as set out in CIPFA's Prudential Code for the coming year to the Council, at or before the start of the financial year and on the Treasury Management Strategy (including the Annual Investment Strategy) it is proposed to adopt for the forthcoming year.

10.2 The Head of Finance and Resources will produce an annual report for the Council by the 30th of September of the succeeding financial year.





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**COUNCIL**

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**HACKNEY CARRIAGE - FARE TARIFF**

**RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) there be an increase in the Hackney Carriage fare rates in line with the current Retail price Index as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report and advertised as required under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976; and
- 2) authority be delegated to the Head of Environment, in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee:
  - (i) to consider any objections received, following public advertisement; and
  - (ii) to modify the fare rates or confirm the fare rates unmodified, as appropriate; and
- (iii) to set a date when the fare rates shall come into operation in line with the statutory requirements as set out in paragraph 3.4 and 3.5 of the report.



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**HACKNEY CARRIAGE - FARE TARIFF**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Juliet Brunner
Relevant Head of Service	Steve Jordan – Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Non Key Decision	

**1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The Committee is asked whether or not to recommend a variation of the fares for the hiring of Hackney Carriages within the Borough. Any variations will need to be advertised and an opportunity given for objections to be made. Any objections duly made must be considered.

The Committee can recommend no increase to the Hackney Carriage Tariff for the year 2011-2012 as proposed by Officer's, an increase of 6% as shown in the report or it can recommend its own proposals if it wishes. However, any proposed variation to the Council's approved policy would have to be subject to the approval of the full Council.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS****2.1 The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that****EITHER**

- 1) **there be no increase in the Hackney Carriage fare rates for the year 2011 to 2012;**

**OR**

- 2) **there be an increase in the Hackney Carriage fare rates in line with the current Retail Price Index as detailed in paragraph 5.1 of the report and advertised as required under the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.**

**and, if approved, that****EITHER:**

- a) **authority be delegated to the Head of Environment, in consultation with the Chair of the Licensing Committee:**
- (i) **to consider any objections received, following public advertisement; and**

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- (ii) to modify the fare rates or confirm the fare rates unmodified, as appropriate; and
- (iii) to set a date when the fare rates shall come into operation in line with the statutory requirements as set out in paragraph 3.4 and 3.5.

**OR**

- b) any objections received following public advertisement be reported back to the Committee for consideration.

**OR**

- c) if no objections are received following public advertisement, the increase to take effect from the end of the consultation period.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The former Public and Entertainment Services Committee at its meeting on 21st September 1999, requested Officer's to present annual review reports showing the Hackney Carriage tariff increased in line with the retail price index.
- 3.2 This policy was amended on 1st November 2006 by the Executive Committee when members resolved that the Retail Price Index and other inflation indices be considered when setting new tariff rates.
- 3.3 This policy was again put before the Executive Committee on 22nd November 2008 when members resolved that petroleum products indices should be taken into consideration as a separate index.
- 3.4 The last fare increase was approved in September 2008 and took effect from 12th January 2009. The current rates are shown below.

**Mileage**

First half mile or uncompleted parts thereof	- £2.62p
Subsequent charge	- 10p per 135 yards or £1.31p per mile
Waiting time	- 10p per 40 secs. Or 15 per minute

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Each person exceeding one - 10p

Late Night and Bank Holiday Surcharge

Midnight to 6.00am every day and all  
Bank Holidays (excluding Good Friday) - £1.25p per journeyFrom 6.00pm Christmas Eve to Midnight  
Boxing Day - Double TariffFrom 6.00pm New Years Eve to 6.00am  
New Years Day - Double Tariff

Dogs (with the exception of guide dogs) - £1.35p

Any persons fouling the vehicle will be charged an excess of £75 per  
journey.**4. KEY ISSUES**

4.1 At its meeting on 22nd October 2008 the Executive Committee recommended that Officer's take account of petroleum products as well as other retail price indices and the Retail Price Index as resolved by previous Committees when preparing future reports.

4.2 The BIS (Department for Business Innovation and Skills) government website which shows retail indices; states that Petroleum products have increased in cost in real terms by 14.% since December 2009 and therefore petroleum indices have been taken into account for the Hackney Carriage Tariff for the year 2011 to 2012.

4.3 The average of the indices below represents a fair reflection of inflation in the year to November 2010 and rises to the nearest penny would produce the following amendments to the Hackney Carriage Fare table.

Consumer Price Index	4.7%
All Items RPI excluding interest payments	3.3%
Average Earnings (whole economy)	2.3%
Petroleum Products Index (Petrol)	14.0%

Average of above indices (including petroleum)	6.2%
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Effects to fare table:

Mileage

First half mile or uncompleted parts thereof - £2.78p

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Subsequent charge	10p per 128 yards - or £1.38p per mile
Waiting time	10p per 40 secs. - Or 15 per minute
Each person exceeding one	- 10p
<b>Late Night and Bank Holiday Surcharge</b>	
Midnight to 6.00am every day and all Bank Holidays (excluding Good Friday)	- £1.25p per journey
From 6.00pm Christmas Eve to Midnight Boxing Day	- Double Tariff
From 6.00pm New Years Eve to 6.00am New Years Day	- Double Tariff
Dogs (with the exception of guide dogs)	- £1.35p
Any persons fouling the vehicle will be charged an excess of £75 per journey.	

- 4.4 Consultation with the Redditch Taxi Association has taken place, they recognise that the inflation indices show a 6% increase, however, they are extremely concerned that any increase to the Hackney Carriage Tariff would not be tolerated by the public in the current economic climate and their businesses would decline in real terms as a result.
- 4.5 The Taxi Association have requested and are in agreement that the tariff is not increased this year and that this should be balanced with no increase in licence fees.
- 4.6 Within the Private Hire monthly magazine fares are now listed on a regional basis. Based on the most current figures we have the current regional average for a 2 mile journey is £4.96p. The Hackney Carriage Tariff for Redditch District falls slightly below this average at £4.85p.
- 4.7 Redditch compares favourably to other authorities in the area being cheaper than our immediate neighbours Bromsgrove, Stratford, Worcester and Warwick but slightly more expensive than Wyre Forest.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 If the proposed changes at recommendation 2 are agreed, it will be necessary for the increase to be advertised in a local newspaper, in accordance with the provisions of the Local Government (Miscellaneous

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Provisions) Act 1976. The cost of such advertisement can be met by the existing licensing advertising budget.

5.2 Hackney Carriage proprietors then choose whether their meters are updated to this higher tariff at a cost of approximately £30.00 per vehicle.

5.3 These fares do not affect the Council's budget in that they are fares paid by the travelling public to taxi drivers for taxi rides and are calculated by the taximeters installed in the taxis.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 Under Section 65 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976, the Council has the power to fix rates or fares within the district for the hire of hackney carriages. The rates or fares can relate to time as well as distance and can cover all other charges in connection with the hire of a hackney carriage.

6.2 Section 65 of the Act also requires the Council to publish a notice of the tables informing the public of the proposed changes and specifying the period within which objections may be made to the proposed fare increases. The period for objections can be no less than 14 days from the date of the first publication.

6.3 If no objections are made during this period the new fares will come into operation on the date of expiration of the specified period.

6.4 If objections are made and are not withdrawn, the Council has two months from the end of the period for objections to be made, to consider those objections and set a date for the table of fares, with or without modification, to come into force.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

The former Public and Entertainment Services Committee at its meeting on 21st September 1999, requested Officers to present annual review report showing tariffs increased in line with the retail price index.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

This item links with the Council Priority – Safe

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

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None

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

Any rise in the Hackney Carriage Fare Tariff will impact on the elderly/disabled or vulnerable groups of people who use taxis as their main mode of transport.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

None

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

None

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

None

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

None

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

None

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

None

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

None

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

It is noted by Licensing Officer's that the majority of Hackney Carriage Proprietors do not increase the charges set on their meters on a yearly basis. They wait until the increase is substantial over a period of years. The legislation states that a meter can show less than the agreed tariff



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(licensee choice); but no more than the agreed tariff and increasing the tariff by a few pence would not be cost effective to the drivers due to the £30.00 calibration charge.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

Any rise in the Hackney Carriage Tariff will need to be advertised and the period for objections must be no less than two weeks from the first advertisement. Any objections must be duly considered.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

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

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All wards are affected by this report.

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**LICENSING  
COMMITTEE**

**Date 17th January 2011**

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**22. APPENDICES**

None

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Private Hire Monthly  
Hackney Carriage Tariff Rate Card  
Executive Committee Report of November 2008

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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