

Executive Committee

Tuesday 4th October
2011
7.00 pm

Committee Room 2
Town Hall
Redditch



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- In addition, the public now has a right to be present when the Council determines “Key Decisions” unless the business would disclose confidential or “exempt” information.
- Unless otherwise stated, all items of business before the Executive Committee are Key Decisions.
- (Copies of Agenda Lists are published in advance of the meetings on the Council’s Website:
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**If you have any queries on this Agenda or any of the decisions taken or wish to exercise any of the above rights of access to information, please contact
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Welcome to today's meeting.

Guidance for the Public

Agenda Papers

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

Chair

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

Running Order

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

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

Decisions

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

Members of the Public

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

Special Arrangements

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Fire/ Emergency instructions

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

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

Do Not stop to collect personal belongings.

Do Not use lifts.

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

The emergency Assembly Area is on Walter Stranz Square.

Declaration of Interests: Guidance for Councillors

DO I HAVE A "PERSONAL INTEREST" ?

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

OR

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

you have a personal interest.

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

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

IS IT A "PREJUDICIAL INTEREST" ?

In general only if:-

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

and

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

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

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



Executive

Committee

4th October 2011

7.00 pm

Committee Room 2 Town Hall

Agenda

Membership:

Cllrs: Carole Gandy (Chair) Malcolm Hall
 Michael Braley (Vice-Chair) Jinny Pearce
 Juliet Brunner Debbie Taylor
 Greg Chance Derek Taylor
 Brandon Clayton

<p>1. Apologies</p>	<p>To receive the apologies of any Member who is unable to attend this meeting.</p>
<p>2. Declarations of Interest</p>	<p>To invite Councillors to declare any interests they may have in items on the agenda.</p>
<p>3. Leader's Announcements</p>	<p>1. To give notice of any items for future meetings or for the Forward Plan, including any scheduled for this meeting, but now carried forward or deleted; and</p> <p>2 any other relevant announcements.</p> <p>(Oral report)</p>
<p>4. Minutes (Pages 1 - 10) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To confirm as a correct record the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on the 13th September 2011.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p>
<p>5. Redditch Borough Council's Grants Programme 2012/13 (Pages 11 - 36) Head of Community Services</p>	<p>To consider changes to the Council's Grants Policy and the funding split and themes for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) grants process for 2012/13.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(All Wards)</p>
<p>6. IT Systems relating to Mapping and Planning - Request for Funding (Pages 37 - 42) Head of Planning and Regeneration</p>	<p>To consider a funding request for software upgrades to allow for the continued transfer of planning data from Redditch Borough Council to central Government, failure to do which could result in the Council incurring fines.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(All Wards)</p>

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<p>7. Hewell Road Pool - Disposal</p> <p>(Pages 43 - 48)</p> <p>Head of Finance and Resources</p>	<p>To consider the disposal of the site of Hewell Road Pool following the opening of the new pool at Abbey Stadium.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(Batchley & Brockhill Ward)</p>
<p>8. Learndirect - Options for Future Operation</p> <p>(Pages 49 - 64)</p> <p>Head of Leisure and Cultural Services</p>	<p>To consider an update on the future of the provision of the Learndirect adult learning service operated at Greenlands Business Centre following the withdrawal of funding from UFI for the forthcoming academic year 2011/12.</p> <p>[Appendix 3 to this report contains exempt information as defined in S.100 of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, as it contains information relating to the financial or business affairs of particular persons (including the authority holding that information).]</p> <p>(Report attached)</p> <p>(All Wards)</p>
<p>9. Overview and Scrutiny Committee</p> <p>(Pages 65 - 70)</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on the 6th September 2011.</p> <p>There are no recommendations to consider.</p> <p>(Minutes attached)</p>
<p>10. Minutes / Referrals - Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc.</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>To receive and consider any outstanding minutes or referrals from the Overview and Scrutiny Committee, Executive Panels etc. since the last meeting of the Executive Committee, other than as detailed in the items above.</p>
<p>11. Advisory Panels - update report</p> <p>(Pages 71 - 74)</p> <p>Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider, for monitoring / management purposes, an update on the work of the Executive Committee's Advisory Panels and similar bodies, which report via the Executive Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>

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<p>12. Action Monitoring (Pages 75 - 78) Chief Executive</p>	<p>To consider an update on the actions arising from previous meetings of the Committee.</p> <p>(Report attached)</p>
<p>13. Exclusion of the Public</p>	<p>Should it be necessary, in the opinion of the Chief Executive, to consider excluding the public from the meeting in relation to any items of business on the grounds that exempt information is likely to be divulged it may be necessary to move the following resolution:</p> <p>“that, under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matter on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in the relevant paragraphs of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.”</p>
<p>14. Confidential Minutes / Referrals (if any)</p>	<p>To consider confidential matters not dealt with earlier in the evening and not separately listed below (if any).</p>



Executive Committee

13th September 2011

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Carole Gandy (Chair), and Councillors Juliet Brunner, Brandon Clayton and Malcolm Hall and Derek Taylor

Also Present:

Councillor Andrew Brazier

Officers:

R Cooke, K Dicks, C Flanagan, S Hanley, M Hanwell, T Kristunas, J Pickering, D Taylor and A de Warr

Committee Services Officer:

I Westmore

74. APOLOGIES

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

75. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

There were no declarations of interest.

76. LEADER'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

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

- Hewell Road Pool – Disposal.

.....
Chair

77. MINUTES**RESOLVED that**

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee held on 23rd August 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair, subject to it being noted that Councillor Derek Taylor had been omitted from the list of those present and, in respect of Minute 72 (Shared Services Business Case – Car Parking), it being noted that recommendations 2) to 6) were matters properly for decision by Bromsgrove District Council.

78. ICT POLICIES

The Committee considered a number of documents supplied by central Government that would help to ensure that the Council was compliant with the Code of Connection. Compliance with the Code was essential to ensure that the Council could operate certain key services.

It was made clear that summaries of the documents would be available to Officers as it was recognised that the documents in their entirety were impractical for day to day use or reference. The obligations on Officers contained within these documents would also be communicated through the staff induction process.

Officers commented that they were already investigating or would investigate potential issues in the following areas:

- printing and access more generally through Citrix;
- the enabling of the use of personal lap-tops in the Town Hall through the installation of Wi-Fi;
- the forwarding of blocked e-mails to Redditch Helpdesk rather than Bromsgrove Helpdesk where appropriate; and
- the problems experienced by some Housing Officers over the locations of their telephones.

RECOMMENDED that

the documents, at Appendix 1 to the report, be approved for use and apply to all members of staff and Councillors.

79. QUARTERLY PERFORMANCE MONITORING - QUARTER 1 - APRIL TO JUNE 2011

Members considered a report highlighting key areas of the Council's performance over the first quarter of the 2011/12 financial year.

Officers reported on actions being taken to address two of the areas of concern. It was reported that a time limit on getting invoices paid by the Council signed off and payments made was to be instituted by Senior Management. The increase in the number of British Crime Survey comparator crimes had been brought to the attention of the Redditch Community Safety Partnership and was to be addressed through that body.

Members requested that, for those indicators where there was currently no data available, the indicators only be incorporated within the report at year end once there was data available. Members also suggested that the direction of travel for visits to the Arrow Valley Countryside Centre was misleading and should be removed and the commentary reflect that Officers were unable to accurately report attendance figures due to the automatic counting system being inoperable for a period of time.

Officers undertook to meet with Councillor Malcolm Hall following the meeting to discuss the programme of events provided at the Palace Theatre.

RESOLVED that

the update on key performance indicators for the period ending 30th June 2011 be noted.

80. QUARTERLY MONITORING OF THE BENEFITS SERVICE IMPROVEMENT PLAN - QUARTER 1 - APRIL TO JUNE 2010

A report was received which advised Members of the performance of the Benefits service during the first quarter of 2011/12. The Committee stated that staff within the Benefits Service were to be congratulated for the progress that had been made in the performance of the service.

RESOLVED that

- 1) the report be noted; and**
- 2) Officers be requested to provide updates on transformation and future measures of the service to reflect new processes that are being implemented within the service.**

81. QUARTERLY BUDGET MONITORING - QUARTER 1 - APRIL TO JUNE 2011

The Committee considered an overview of the General Fund budget situation, including the achievement of approved savings for the first quarter of 2011/12. Explanations were provided for

variances in the budget for the first quarter. Members were informed that there was a dispute over the payment of the rent for the grazing project at Papermill Farm and the need for a new agreement with the tenant to be signed was highlighted.

The over-ambitious income projection targets for the Pitcheroak Golf Course were noted. Officers reported that the good work being undertaken at the course by the Hereford and Worcestershire Golf Partnership was expected to demonstrate real benefits within a five year timescale.

Following a brief discussion of the Reddicard discount scheme it was noted that the scheme would benefit from the additional marketing support available through the new Leisure and Cultural Services management team

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the report be noted; and**
- 2) **Officers be requested to show the budgets at service level and reflect variations against the service budgets in future reports.**

82. QUARTERLY CUSTOMER SERVICES - QUARTER 1 - APRIL TO JUNE 2011

Officers presented a report which provided the Committee with key information in respect of customer services. Members were informed that the rise in recorded complaints was seen as a positive development and reflected more effective recording by staff. The increased volume of complaints would better enable the Council to identify those aspects of the Council's services which were not working well. It was also noted that a drop in the number of complaints responded to within 15 working days was within the context of customers receiving a fuller, better quality response to their complaint in the first instance. Members commended the report for being clear and comprehensive.

RESOLVED that

the update for the period 1st April 2011 – 30th June 2011 be noted.

83. WRITE-OFF OF DEBTS - MONITORING REPORT

Following a previous Executive Committee decision to amend the manner in which the Council authorised the write-off of debts, Members received the first monitoring report detailing those debts

written off during the first quarter of 2011/12 and the profile of the outstanding debt.

Councillor Derek Taylor was invited to meet with Officers to discuss the action that was taken by the Council to manage bad debt and Officers undertook to provide Councillor Carole Gandy with further detail on the liquidation / winding up write-offs for non-domestic rates.

RESOLVED that

the contents of the report be noted.

84. OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

The Committee received the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th August 2011. In respect of Minute 65 (Private Sector Home Support Service – Post Scrutiny) it was noted that consideration of the recommendations from the Committee was pending a further report and business case for the proposals outlined in the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Committee held on 16th August 2011 be received and noted.

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

There were no minutes or referrals under this item.

86. ADVISORY PANELS - UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an update on the work of the Council's Advisory Panels and similar bodies.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

87. ACTION MONITORING

The Committee received the latest Action Monitoring report.

RESOLVED that

the report be noted.

88. EXCLUSION OF THE PUBLIC

RESOLVED that

under S.100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended by the Local Government (Access to Information) (Variation) Order 2006, the public be excluded from the meeting for the following matters on the grounds that they involve(s) the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12 (A) of the said Act, as amended.”

- **Review of Lease – Unit 1, Matchborough House**
- **Park House (150 Evesham Street) Site - Disposal**

89. REVIEW OF LEASE - UNIT 1, MATCHBOROUGH CENTRE

The Committee received a report on the review of the lease for a unit at the Matchborough District Centre in the light of a report to a previous meeting of the Committee. Alongside consideration of the terms of the lease Members requested that a policy be developed to determine appropriate rents for voluntary sector organisations.

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information).)

90. PARK HOUSE (150 EVESHAM STREET) SITE - DISPOSAL

The Committee received a further report on the former Park House site, detailing the outcome of the consultation by Ward Members with local residents.

The outcome of the consultation had been a proposal that the site be used as a play area / open space. Officers confirmed that, although there was an overall over-provision of play areas in the Borough, the Town Centre area was relatively poorly served. However, Officers did not consider that this site was at all suitable for the proposed use as the footprint was extremely steep, the site was surrounded by residential properties and it was next to a busy road. Officers noted that the new Leisure and Culture Services management team was actively seeking longer-term solutions to the issue of the lack of Town Centre play area provision.

RESOLVED that

- 1) **the feedback from the Central Area PACT be noted, as detailed in the report; and**
- 2) **Officers be instructed to progress with the disposal of the land at 150 Evesham Street, formerly the site of Park House.**

(During consideration of this item Members discussed matters that necessitated the disclosure of exempt information. It was therefore agreed to exclude the press and public prior to any debate on the grounds that information would be revealed relating to the financial or business affairs of any particular person (including the authority holding that information) However, there is nothing exempt in this record of the proceedings.)

The Meeting commenced at 7.00 pm
and closed at 8.36 pm

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

Document is Restricted

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

4th October 2011

VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR GRANTS PROGRAMME 2012/12

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Carole Gandy, Community Leadership & Partnerships
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Angie Heighway, Head of Community Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The Executive Committee is requested to recommend changes to the Grants Policy 2011 to ensure the Council's voluntary sector grants programme funds applications from a wide range of organisations.
- 1.2 The Executive Committee is also requested to agree the funding split and themes for the Voluntary and Community Sector (VCS) grants process for 2012/13.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

- 1) the updated Voluntary Sector Grants Policy attached to the report at Appendix 1 be approved;
- 2) the following themes and percentages of funding be allocated for the 2012/13 voluntary and community sector grants process: see *appendix 3 for details on themes*

Enterprising Communities	-	43.5%	=	£105,000
Safe/ Clean & Green	-	8%	=	£20,000
LSP theme - Health and Wellbeing	-	8%	=	£20,000
LSP theme - Education & Learning	-	27%	=	£65,000
LSP theme – Stronger Communities	-	6.5%	=	£15,000
3 Year Training & Support Project	-	6.5%	=	£15,000; and

- 3) £1,000 (0.5%) be allocated from the Grants budget for the use by the Grants Team to deliver:
 - a) networking and promotional events;
 - b) advertising and communication support;
 - c) newsletters.

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3. KEY ISSUES**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 The total budget for grants to voluntary organisations for 2012/13 is £241,000. The proposed provision of £1,000 to deliver support and events throughout 2011/12 will leave £240,000 available to allocate as grant to outside bodies.
- 3.2 The 'Shopping' element is part of the Councils SIG framework and is delivered under the Councils procurement process. The Grants scheme should support and encourage the local VCS community to grow and become sustainable. To deliver the Shopping element of the funding framework the Council needs to ensure that it does not unduly encroach on the investing and giving elements from a monetary perspective.
- 3.3 The Council can deliver a Support Package to assist VCS organisations to become self sustaining / funding which in turn will build capacity and the skill base within the Sector, thus increasing the viability of well managed Voluntary Sector organisations. This can be achieved by ensuring that the VCS have access to quality training / workshops for their staff/volunteers.
- 3.4 It is proposed that £15,000 should be allocated from the 2012/13 grant fund to provide - 3 year training and support programme (£5000 per yr). In delivering this via the shopping element the Council can request expressions of interest from organisations that have the capacity to deliver, high quality training to the VCS, thus ensuring value for money and providing a fair and transparent process.
- 3.5 The Investing element of Redditch Borough Council's grant scheme may during the application process become undersubscribed. In order for the grant funding to remain a positive supporting scheme any remaining funding allocation is transferred into the Stronger Communities giving element which encourages project delivery by Local Community groups.
- 3.6 Officers are working with the Council's Economic Development and Procurement Teams to enable collaborative working to take place with external funders and our local VCS organisations / groups to provide the VCS with the skills and knowledge to become sustainable.
- 3.7 It is proposed that £1,000 should be allocated from the grants budget for the use by the Grants Team to enable delivery of:
- a) Networking and promotional events;
 - b) Advertising and communication support;
 - c) Newsletters.

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- 3.8 Officers are proposing the level of split between the relevant themes based on the current priorities and needs of the Borough.
- 3.9 Officers considered that the remaining themes and priorities had significant mainstream funding in tackling issues and there were fewer opportunities for the VCS to make impacts on the outcomes of these.

Legal Implications

- 3.10 Under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to incur expenditure which in its opinion is in the interest of and will bring direct benefit to its area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants. The direct benefit accruing must also be commensurate with the expenditure to be incurred.
- 3.11 There is a further power to make grants to voluntary organisations providing recreational facilities under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.12 The Council needs to continue to ensure that it has a transparent and fair grants policy.
- 3.13 To ensure that we continue to support the sector to move forward and deliver projects that provide value for money, Officers have suggested changes to the current policy (see Appendix 1) that will allow Redditch Borough Council's grant programme to ensure it funds a wide range of organisations.
- 3.14 To enable the Council to deliver its grants programme, Officers will need to continue to work closely with the Communications Team to ensure that a full and informative guide to the procedure is provided and that Officers are engaging with the full range of VCS organisations and groups within the local area.
- 3.15 By implementing a long term training & support programme via the shopping element, we can ensure that the sector will receive an agreed standard of training with the Council ensuring that we receive value for money. Delivering via the Shopping element will allow us to:
- a) Identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities;
 - b) Plan, organise and take action; and,
 - c) Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the project.

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- 3.16 Local Authorities will be expected under the “Big Society” banner to support and help build capacity and up-skill those organisations operating within the third sector.
- 3.17 The proposed timescales for the 2012/13 Grant programme are within appendix 2.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.18 The 2011/12 grants programme has supported 21 projects from 13 organisations under the main grant fund with 23 being funded via the Stronger Communities fund.
- 3.19 Following an Overview and Scrutiny Committee review in 2008, a more transparent and inclusive grants scheme was agreed. The 2011/12 Grants Programme received applications from over 50 different organisations, with the programme seeing a 38% increase in funding from the main grant fund to organisations not having applied to this fund previously.
- 3.20 Redditch Borough Council has helped facilitate the building of a robust VCS, by providing 4 workshops aimed at the up-skilling of those working within the sector. These workshops were attended by over 40 different organisations. By implementing a long term training and support programme via the shopping element, we can ensure that the sector will receive an agreed standard of training with the Council ensuring that we receive value for money. Delivering via the Shopping element will allow us to:
- a) Identify their needs, opportunities, rights and responsibilities;
 - b) Plan, organise and take action; and,
 - c) Evaluate the effectiveness and impact of the project.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

There is a risk that the Council could be criticised for failing to support the local Third Sector organisations or community groups in up-skilling and building the capacity to become self sustaining. To mitigate this risk, Officers propose to put into place a provision of a Training and Support programme delivered via the shopping element of the grants programme to help build capacity and skills in the Sector. In delivering this programme via the shopping element Redditch Borough Council can ensure that best value is achieved for both the Council and the VCS, thus strengthening the long-term future of this sector.

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5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Voluntary and Community Sector Grants Policy.
Appendix 2 - Proposed timescales for 2012/13 Grants programme.
Appendix 3 - Funding Themes Table.

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Policy for Award of Grants by Redditch Borough Council to Voluntary and Community Sector Organisations.

Worcestershire Compact: Link to Web-pages:

<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/community-and-living/vcs-unit/worcestershire-compact.aspx>

7. KEY

SIG - Shopping, Investing and Giving.

BME - Black Minority Ethnic.

LSP - Local Strategic Partnership.

VCS - Voluntary and Community Sector.

'Place-Shaping' - Local authorities are strategic leaders in place-shaping responding to residents' ambitions and aspirations and working with partners to deliver relevant services.

'Third Sector' - The voluntary sector or community sector (also non-profit sector) is the sphere of social activity undertaken by organisations that are for non-profit and non-governmental. This sector is also called the third sector.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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**VOLUNTARY AND COMMUNITY SECTOR
GRANTS POLICY**

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**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**

Appendix 1

4th October 2011

1. Introduction

- 1.1 Redditch Borough Council supports Voluntary and Community sector organisations because we believe that a vibrant Third Sector is vital to our community. The Council is committed to supporting organisations that deliver projects and activities which have a beneficial impact on the local community.
- 1.2 Under Section 137 of the Local Government Act 1972, the Council has the power to incur expenditure which in its opinion is in the interest of and will bring direct benefit to its area or any part of it or all or some of its inhabitants. The direct benefit accruing must also be commensurate with the expenditure to be incurred.
- 1.3 There is further power to make grants to voluntary organisations providing recreational facilities under Section 19 of the Local Government (Miscellaneous Provisions) Act 1976.
- 1.4 This policy is written in conjunction with the “Let’s Do It Smarter – Worcestershire Compact: Funding and Procurement Code of Good Practice”. The Compact is a commitment to improve relationships between public and voluntary and community sector organisations, with a mutual objective of ‘delivering high quality, good value services and support to the local community’.

2. Scope

- 2.1 This policy applies only to the allocation of grants to voluntary and community sector organisations. It does not apply to any other means of financial support from the Council that may be available under other schemes.
- 2.2 This policy applies to all grant funding from Redditch Borough Council to voluntary and community sector organisations. This includes grants made available from individual service budgets.

3. Funding Framework

- 3.1 The Council uses the ***Shopping, Investing and Giving*** funding framework

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COMMITTEE****Appendix 1**

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3.2 **Shopping:** refers to procurement and contractual arrangements that are legally binding, where Redditch Borough Council seeks bids from external organisations to provide a specified service that Redditch Borough Council either has to provide by law, or it has made a decision to provide within its legal powers' ***The technical differences between grants and contracts are as follows:***

• A public sector grant involves the provision of subsidy (capital or revenue) funding, by the relevant public sector body, in support of a charitable, or other public benefit, service, which the public body wishes to support, as part of fulfilling its own public benefit remit. A grant is provided on conditions aimed at ensuring the proper application of the grant funds, but not in return for anything.

• A public sector contract involves the provision of goods or services, to the relevant public sector body, directly in return for payment representing the price of the relevant goods or services. Terms and conditions of a contract regulate the exchange of services for payment.

The Council is committed to extending the opportunities available to voluntary and community sector organisations and are committed to actively encourage the VCS to be more involved in the design and delivery of more public services because of the 'added value' they can bring.. However, this policy does not apply to those arrangements which will be managed using a contract.

3.3 **Investing:** refers to the Council providing funding to develop the capacity of the voluntary and community sector. This may include making funding contributions to voluntary and community sector infrastructure support services, or making funding available for training or business development activities within organisations. ***This element of the funding stream will be aligned to the overall strategy of Redditch Borough Council, thus ensuring a strategic investment in VCS in order to skill up and strengthen front line VCS organisations to deliver value for money services and give a platform for the delivery of projects that strengthen and support the local communities. Themes and the percentage of funding allocated for this element will be set prior to November by the Executive Committee for projects commencing after the 1st April of the following year. If this element is undersubscribed at the end of the Grant application process the remaining funding will be transferred into the giving element in order to support the Stronger Communities priority.***

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- 3.4 **Giving**: refers to the Council providing funding to voluntary and community sector organisations to support work that contributes to the Council's aims, but which the Council does not have a statutory duty to provide. Awarding grants to the VCS is a key opportunity for the Council to reinforce its community leadership role. Small grants to local community groups (a maximum of £500.00 per application) can generate a significant amount of community activity and positive impact. Percentage of funding allocated for this element will be set prior to November by the Executive Committee for projects/events commencing after the 1st April of the following year. The percentage for this element may increase if the funding allocations from the investing element are undersubscribed through the Grant application process. These groups will not need to be formally constituted but will need to have a recognised role within the community they serve.

The giving element will consist of 3 rounds of grant making:

- *April*
- *July*
- *November*

with the total percentage of funding allocated to the giving element evenly distributed to each round. 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.

- 3.5 This policy applies to grants made to support the **Investing** and **Giving** elements of the Council's funding framework. For the purposes of this policy, a **grant** is a financial contribution to an activity designed and delivered by a voluntary and community sector organisation which the Council has chosen to support because it is broadly aligned with the Council's own objectives. A grant can be given either to contribute towards organisational costs, or to wholly or partly fund a specific piece of work. A grant is a financial contribution with an expectation of mutually agreed, clearly defined outcomes. These outcomes are specified in a grant funding agreement, and monitoring arrangements are commensurate with the value of grant given.
- 3.6 ***The giving element is regarded as sums of up to and including £500.00 and the investing element is regarded as sums valued at over £500.00. These limits will affect risk considerations (section 7), grant assessment criteria (section 9) and monitoring requirements (section 11).***

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4. Purpose of Grant Funding

The Council provides grants to assist the development of a vibrant voluntary and community sector that delivers projects and activities of value to the local community.

Funding will only be provided where it can be demonstrated that a defined impact will be made. Organisations should demonstrate an outcomes focus in applications for funding.

The Council will require that all grant awards support Council objectives. The specific objectives to be supported will be made clear in all publicity relating to each grant opportunity. Demonstrating support of Council objectives may include:

- a) ***linking grant awards to an approved list of Council priorities, the current priorities are Enterprising Communities, Safe, Clean and Green. With the option of including LSP or other priorities as identified by Redditch Borough Council***
- b) the Council choosing one or more specific outcomes in advance that will be achieved with the grant award. This will be particularly appropriate for individual departments wishing to make grants available to support the delivery of a particular service aim.

5. Which Organisations are eligible to apply for a Grant?

5.1 In order to be eligible to apply for a grant, an organisation must be able to prove that:

- a) it is voluntarily run, non-profit making and operated with no undue restrictions or limitations on membership;
- b) it has a democratic structure and can demonstrate effective management of the organisation's business;
- c) it has a bank account that requires the authorisation of at least two people who are unrelated to each other to make payments or withdrawals of any kind from the account;
- d) it operates in the Borough of Redditch on behalf of Borough residents;
- e) it can demonstrate the need for financial assistance. An organisation will not normally be eligible for grant assistance if it

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holds reserves in excess of six months' average expenditure, unless the Council is satisfied that this position is justified by the organisation's reserves policy. Reserves are defined as those assets in the unrestricted funds of an organisation that can be made available for all or any of the organisation's purposes, once known commitments and planned expenditure have been provided for;

- f) it can demonstrate the service it is providing by giving details of its activities and the number of people it is in contact with;
- g) it meets all applicable legal requirements;
- h) it actively promotes equality issues within its structure and operations;
- i) all previous grants received from Redditch Borough Council have been spent in accordance with the grant award conditions attached to them.

5.2 The Council will not make grants to any organisation that it deems to be a political party, has the nature of a political party, or is engaged in campaigning for a political purpose or cause.

5.3 The Council will not provide funds for the furtherance or propagation of a faith promoted by any organisation which is, or is deemed by the Council to be, of a religious nature. This will not preclude religious organisations applying for assistance to provide social or welfare work connected with their organisation and which do not directly promote a religious aspect.

6. What will and will not be funded by a grant

6.1 Grant aid will only be considered for work that will be undertaken in the Borough of Redditch, and/or will be wholly or principally for the direct benefit of residents of the Borough of Redditch.

6.2 Grants cannot be used for retrospective funding; that is to replace money that has already been spent, or to cover items or services that have already been bought, ***this will include consultancy and brokering fees.***

6.3 Any grant awarded must only be spent for the approved purpose, i.e. applicants must be able to demonstrate that the funding has been spent as outlined in the grant application form as amended by the final grant offer letter for example by providing receipts.

6.4 Full cost recovery will not be considered for any grant awarded for projects under £5,000.

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7. Risk considerations in grant giving

- 7.1 The Council has a duty to ensure that best use is made of its resources. This section considers risk in grant giving related to failure to achieve best use of Council resources. It does not consider risk assessment of, for example, items related to health and safety, which should form part of the grant assessment criteria as outlined in paragraph 9.6.
- 7.2 The Council acknowledges that the creativity and innovation of the voluntary sector can carry risks for non-delivery, for example where a new idea does not work out as intended.
- 7.3 The Council uses the general principle of requiring a lower level of risk the higher the amount of funding provided. Maximum levels of funding will only be provided where the risk of non-delivery is very low.
- 7.4 In order to achieve an appropriate balance between managing risk and supporting innovative ideas or new organisations, a grant limit of £5,000 will apply to:
- a) organisations that have been in existence for less than one year;
 - b) organisations that do not have audited accounts;
 - c) organisations that are not registered with either the Charity Commission or Companies House, or other appropriate government regulator;
 - d) innovative pieces of work testing a new approach to service delivery.
- 7.5 Assessment of all voluntary and community sector grants made by the Council will look more favourably on applications that:
- a) have a strong evidence base of need;
 - b) provide strong evidence that the proposed approach is likely to achieve the desired outcomes;
 - c) do not contain high revenue costs that cannot be sustained;
 - d) demonstrate how a lasting benefit will be achieved.
- 7.6 The higher the sum of money applied for, the greater the need for applications to:
- a) be from organisations with a good track record of delivery;

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- b) be from organisations with a range of funding streams;
- c) meet wider aims and objectives of the Council;
- d) support delivery of Redditch Sustainable Community Strategy or other appropriate document;
- e) demonstrate co-operative working relationships with other organisations.

7.7 Payment schedules will balance the need for the Council to ensure proper accountability for use of public money with appropriate recognition of cash-flow issues that may be experienced by voluntary and community sector organisations. The general principle will be that payment is made in advance of project delivery, with instalment frequency and size commensurate with the overall size of the grant awarded. General guidelines for payment schedules are:

- a) Grants of a total of £5,000 or less will be paid in full in advance of the project being delivered, payment will be made to successful applicants within 1 month of the submission deadline date, with monitoring information required following the project;
- b) Grants of between £5,000 and £10,000 will be paid in two instalments of 50% each. The first instalment will be paid in advance of the project being delivered. The second instalment will be paid after satisfactory monitoring information has been supplied on the progress of the project. For projects lasting one year, the second instalment will usually be due to be paid six months after the start of the project.
- c) Grants in excess of £10,000 will be paid by quarterly instalments in advance of project activity. Each instalment will only be released after satisfactory monitoring information has been supplied on progress of the project.

8. Grant Conditions

- 8.1 Information on the conditions that will apply to a grant will be made available to applicants before they apply.
- 8.2 Monitoring information will be required on all grants, as outlined in section 11.
- 8.3 All grant offers will be subject to the grant recipient accepting the grant conditions. A full set of grant conditions and monitoring requirements will

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be agreed with grant recipients before the final grant award is made. No changes will be made after this time.

9. Assessment Process

- 9.1 Themes and the percentage of funding allocated for the 'Investing' and 'Giving' elements will be set prior to November by the executive Committee for projects commencing after the 1st April of the following year.
- 9.2 All opportunities for Voluntary and Community Sector grant funding from Redditch Borough Council will be openly advertised using a minimum of:
- Notice of the opportunity on the 'Voluntary Sector Support' section of the Redditch Borough Council website;
 - Notice of the opportunity circulated among an appropriate network or infrastructure organisation.
- 9.3 In addition to the minimum requirements outlined in paragraph 9.1, other advertising may be undertaken to promote grant opportunities as openly as possible.
- 9.4 Information provided to grant applicants will include as a minimum:
- The amount of money that is available in total;
 - The minimum and maximum amount of money that is available to each applicant;
 - Clear information on the purposes for which funding is offered;
 - Clear information on eligibility criteria;
 - Details of the full assessment criteria against which applications will be judged;
 - A full list of conditions that will apply to the grant, including payment schedules and required monitoring information;
 - The deadline by which applications must be submitted;
 - The date by which applicants will be informed of the outcome of their application.

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Grant application forms will be made available in paper and electronic formats.

- 9.5 Applicants must complete a Standard Application form and provide relevant supporting documents. This is to ensure objective assessment of all grant applications. The Council will not award any grant to an organisation whose application has not been formally assessed.
- 9.6 All grant applications will be assessed using pre-selected assessment criteria. The details of the assessment criteria will be made available to all applicants before they apply for funding. The assessment criteria will be chosen as relevant for the funding opportunity, but as a minimum will include:
- Clear outline of how the purposes for which the grant is made available will be met;
 - The outcome(s) that the proposal will achieve;
 - The structure and delivery plan that will support the achievement of the stated outcomes;
 - The clarity of the proposal's financial outline;
 - The organisation's ability to successfully manage finance, evidenced by submission of accounts, bank statements and cash flow forecasts as appropriate;
 - The approach to health and safety, duty of care, and other appropriate best practice requirements, and the organisation's ability to successfully manage these on the project;
 - The sustainability of work after the period of grant aid.
- 9.7 All assessment criteria will be based on meeting need within the community. There will be no pre-determined demographic allocation of funds. Some funding opportunities may be restricted to a particular delivery area, e.g. to a specific ward, but only where this is to address a specific identified need.
- 9.8 Full cost recovery is the process of sharing an organisation's core costs proportionately between its projects and areas of work. The Council supports the principle of full cost recovery for all grants over £5,000. However, applicants must provide clear explanations and justification for all calculations related to full cost recovery, which will be judged on a case by case basis.

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- 9.9 All grant applications will be assessed by the Council's Grants Panel. The Grants Panel will consist of a minimum of five elected Members, with a minimum of three Members required to make decisions regarding grant awards. Conflicts of interest will be recorded, and members with a conflict of interest for a particular grant round will not participate in the assessment of any application in that grant round.
- 9.10 The Grants Panel will receive appropriate training in grant assessment, and will be supported by at least one officer with appropriate knowledge and expertise in the area for which the grant is being offered.
- 9.11 The Grants Panel will report its recommended decisions on grant applications to the Council's Executive Committee for approval.
- 9.12 Unsuccessful applicants will be offered feedback on the strengths and weaknesses of their application
- 9.13 Only 2 applications may be submitted by any one organisation under each theme of the grants programme.
- 9.14 Appeals against the process used to award a grant will be dealt with using Redditch Borough Council's complaints procedure. ***The Head of Community Services will handle the initial complaint.*** There is no right of appeal as to the decision itself.

10. Assessment Timescales

- 10.1 Other opportunities may be made available to apply for grants, for example from individual Council services seeking to deliver a specific objective. In all cases, there will be a minimum of three weeks from announcement of the grants opportunity to the closing date for applications, and a maximum of 12 weeks from the closing date for applications to applicants receiving notification of the outcome. The length of the bidding process will be proportionate to the type and value of the grant.
- 10.2 ***For the 2012/13 grants round Officers will ensure that the Grants process begins in August 2011. Advertising from September 2011 and approval by December 2011 for projects commencing 1st April of the following year – allowing successful applicants to place the project into their delivery calendar and to apply for match funding grants and giving unsuccessful applicants feedback and enough time to secure funding from alternative channels.***

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11. Monitoring

- 11.1 All grant funded projects will be regularly monitored with applicants obliged to submit details of how the project is progressing. Monitoring requirements that will apply to a grant will be commensurate with the amount of money awarded, and will be agreed with the funded organisation before final confirmation of a grant award is made.
- 11.2 ***All Grant panel members will be offered a training support package to ensure they are up to date with current trends and policies within the grant giving arena that affect the VCS.***
- 11.3 ***All grant recipients will be required to attend Quarterly monitoring workshops. These will be delivered to gauge the outcomes and effectiveness of the funding is consistent with the Funding application.***
- 11.4 ***A quarterly breakdown of the funding expenditure is submitted to the Grants team for review.***
- 11.5 Receipts and other monitoring information must be submitted to the Council as proof of spend within six months of the grant being received by the organisation (till slips, credit card vouchers, photocopied or altered receipts will not be accepted).
- 11.6 The Council reserve the right to withhold future payments and reject any further applications if they are dissatisfied with how grants funds have been used.

12. Collaborative Working

- 12.1 The Council recognises the potential benefits of working collaboratively with other funders. The Council will investigate all opportunities for working with other funders where this will provide a better use of Council resources.
- 12.2 ***Working with Economic Development the Grants Officer will work with the Local VCS to highlight and advertise all tendering and procurement opportunities available to the Sector.***
- 12.3 ***The Grants Officer will engage with the VCS to initiate partnership working with the Sector itself.***
- 12.4 ***To enable the collaborative working to take place with both external funders and our local VCS organisations/groups, it will be agreed on***

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a year on year basis for a fund of £2000.00 to be allocated from the grants fund for the Grants team to enable delivery of:

- *Workshops, Networking and promotional events*
- *Advertising and communication support*
- *Newsletters: and*
- *Support packages*

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Process for Main grants programme	Timescale
Launch of the 2012/13 Grant Process	Monday 24th October 2011 Update timetable per conversation
Application deadline	4.00pm Friday 2nd December 2011
Initial screening out of ineligible applications	W/c 7th December 2011
Full assessment of applications by Grants Panel	December 2011 – January 2012
Executive Committee	31st January 2012
Successful and unsuccessful applicants informed	W/c 6th February 2012
First instalment of funding released	1st April 2012

Process for Stronger Community Grant programme	Timescale
Launch - 1st Round	Monday 30th January 2012
1st Application deadline for projects to commence from April 1st (Funds Released)	4pm, Friday 24th February 2012
Launch - 2nd Round – Theme	Monday 30th April 2012
2nd Application deadline for projects to commence from July 1st (Funds Released)	4pm Friday 25th May 2012
Launch - 3rd Round - Theme	Monday 30th July 2012
3rd Application deadline for projects to commence from 3rd October (Funds Released)	4pm Friday 24th August 2012
Assessment of applications	Within 14 working days of deadline
Successful and unsuccessful applicants informed	Within 21 working days of deadline

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**43.5% allocated to Enterprising Communities -
Total: £105,000 for the Delivery of Projects under the “Enterprising
Communities” theme.**

85k – Investing Grant	To deliver: Financial and Debt advice within the Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Free, independent and confidential advice.
20k - Investing grants - Maximum grant of 10k for each project submitted	To deliver: projects under the Enterprising Communities theme preferably relating to:	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Providing supported employment, work experience and training. ❑ Promoting equality of opportunities for people from black, Asian or any other ethnic minority group. ❑ Supporting Volunteering within the town.

**27% allocated to Education & Learning Development -
Total: £65,000 for the delivery of projects under the “Education” theme.**

40k Investing Grant	To deliver: Childcare and Holiday schemes into the Town	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Discounted childcare for local children with specific criteria for discounted places to be allocated to ensure the full benefit is gained from those families who have the highest need. ❑ Discounted Holiday play schemes for local children that have outcomes linked into education and health and well being priorities.
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10k Investing Grant	For delivery of project that supports: Learning and Worklessness issues for those not in receipt of means tested benefits.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Access to learning for residents not in receipt of JSA <input type="checkbox"/> Supporting young people back into work
15k Investing Grants – Maximum grant of 3k for each project submitted	For delivery of projects that support: Participation of positive activities within Redditch	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Activities to encourage family participation

8% allocated to “Safe/Clean & Green” -**Total: £20,000 for the delivery of projects under the “Safe / Clean & Green” themes.**

20k Investing Grants Maximum bids for each project submitted of 4k	For delivery of projects that support: the Council's Safe / Clean & Green priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Reducing environment crime <input type="checkbox"/> Respect and responsibility activities <input type="checkbox"/> Support for Community clear up projects
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8% allocated to “Health and Well being” -**Total: £20,000 allocated for the delivery of projects under the Health & Well being theme – This can be linked to the LSP priorities.**

20k Investing Grants Maximum bids for each project submitted of 4k	For delivery of projects that support: the LSP's Health & Well being priorities.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> With focus on Adult/Childhood Obesity . <input type="checkbox"/> Increase in participation in Sport. <input type="checkbox"/> Health awareness initiatives <input type="checkbox"/> Projects that support Veterans to readjust within the community. <input type="checkbox"/> Focus on Mental Health and Support.
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**6.5% allocated to "Training and Support programme -
Total: £15,000 allocated for the delivery of projects under the Shopping
theme**

<p>15k Shopping Grant</p> <p>3 Year programme - £5k per year</p>	<p>For the delivery of: 3 year Training and Support Programme for the VCS</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Open programme of training covering key topics of relevance to the voluntary and community sector. With a minimum of 4 courses per year. ❑ Development support for new and small groups and for larger organisations facing change or challenge. ❑ Strengthening and enhancing volunteering ❑ Moving the VCS towards a learning consortium. ❑ Developing a centralised support service.
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**6.5% - Stronger Communities - Community Grant Fund – Total £15,000 -
For the delivery of grassroots community projects/events**

<p>£15k Giving Grants Maximum bid of £500 per project submitted in each round</p>	<p>For delivery of projects: Hosted by local community groups - these groups will not need to be formally constituted but will be required to have a recognised role within the community they represent</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ❑ Community participation projects ❑ Three Rounds at £5000 per round for community grants in 2012/13 ❑ Community groups invited to bid for up to £500 for delivery of community projects at each round.
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IT SYSTEMS RELATING TO MAPPING AND PLANNING - REQUEST FOR FUNDING

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Jinny Pearce, Portfolio Holder for Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development and Transport
Portfolio Holder Consulted	September 2011
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning and Regeneration & Deb Poole, Head of Business Transformation
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	Not Applicable
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

Changes to procedures and data transfer formats in communicating data between Central and local government mean that the urgency of upgrading Redditch Council IT software has increased, and therefore funding for this needs to be identified in order that the Council avoids the risk of defaulting on its contract and also paying a fine.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is asked to RECOMMEND that

- 1) a sum of £22,350 be allocated in the 2011/12 Capital Programme to enable the necessary IT upgrades and the Capital Programme be amended accordingly;**

subject to which, the Committee be asked to RESOLVE that

- 2) authority be given for expenditure of up to the sum detailed in 1), above, for the reasons summarised in this report.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1** As part of the budget bid process for 2012-13 these software upgrades were to be included in a bid for capital funding, however this need has brought forward the urgency of upgrading the software.
- 3.2** There is a potential financial risk to the Council of non compliance with the formal agreement. In addition there would be subsequent annual charges for using the Ordnance Survey derived electronic map data.

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- 3.3 The relevant Service Manager in Financial Services has been consulted with regard to the financial implications.
- 3.4 The Development Management Manager and officers in the business development team would work together on these proposals, with support from ICT services officers as necessary.

Legal Implications

- 3.5 There is no specific legislation relevant to this matter, although the PSMA (Public Sector Mapping Agreement) would be governed by contract law and data protection law as appropriate.
- 3.6 A solicitor in Legal Services has been consulted with regard to the legal implications, which are minimal in this case.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.7 Under the terms of the PSMA contract, mapping services are provided to local authorities free of charge, subject to conditions relating to the two way flow of information. This includes the now weekly provision of data back to the National Address Gazetteer centre from local authorities, which is an automated process. Currently, this data is automatically generated from within the Idox Uniform system and returned electronically. [The PSMA is an agreement that lasts for ten years, and replaces the previous MSA (Mapping Service Agreement) which negated the need for local authorities to pay approx £40-50,000 per annum (p.a.) for the electronic mapping data needed for use by the Council.]
- 3.8 Due to upgrades and changes to processes centrally, this weekly provision of data can no longer be carried out for Redditch Borough Council after the end of September 2011, as the version of the software used is too out of date, not supported and in need of upgrade.
- 3.9 Each new version of the software has to be purchased by the Council, and after a defined period from launching a new version, the software provider usually diminishes the amount of support until they cease to provide support for older versions when problems arise, which is the situation that now exists. The linked software for public access that feeds information from uniform will no longer work once uniform is upgraded to version 8 and so a new public access module would also need to be purchased, in order to maintain our existing customer service of making information available through the Council website.

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- 3.10 The upgrades required had previously been identified as necessary, and were due to be included in a capital bid for the next financial year, along with other software enhancements. However, this also relates to the risks identified below. Therefore this is an advanced request for funding that would have been made soon anyway.
- 3.11 It is imperative that the Development Management function can continue to operate in accordance with the statutory framework relating to the processing of planning applications, and therefore it is important that the software is well maintained, up to date and supported. This clearly assists the team in contributing towards a well managed organisation and all the other benefits that the service provides. It should be noted that other services also use the uniform software and so would also benefit from its upgrade and the benefits that brings to users. No other services would suffer any decrease in customer service provision as a result of these upgrades. These services include building control, local land charges, licensing and environmental health services currently. (Other services are also considering its purchase as part of their reviews.)
- 3.12 The data provided back by the Council to the Ordnance Survey also assists in the national compilation of statistics etc that help to inform our evidence base for policy making.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.13 As a result of the software upgrades, customers would experience a better way of accessing planning data online which would be more customer friendly.
- 3.14 In terms of central government being our customer, the upgrades would result in us being able to provide the service that they require and therefore clearly be of benefit to our customer.
- 3.15 The upgrade would simply replace an existing information source in an easier to use format, and therefore the range of methods of accessing data for planning would not change and therefore there is no perceived change or detrimental implication for diversity and/or equalities.
- 3.16 As a result of upgrading Idox Uniform from v7 to v8.1, the links between it and the web based software for viewing planning data online would also need to be upgraded, otherwise there would be a loss of service provision in this respect.

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4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The risk of not spending the money on upgrading the software is that the Council could incur a fine of up to £100,000 for not complying with the agreement, and then in a worst scenario case have to be removed from the contract for a period (subject to severity of non-compliance), which would result in an additional £100,000 pa charge. This would not negate the need to spend the funds identified in this report to cover the costs of upgrading the software and so would be in addition to the funds now being sought.
- 4.2 A two stage approach is in place in relation to these changes, whereby the request was that the changes required would be in place by 30 September 2011. However, if this was not technically possible, then having a plan in place that clearly demonstrated that the matter was in hand and identified that the new requirements would be met on or before 31 January 2012 was considered to be acceptable and sufficient to avoid the imposition of a fine. Therefore, the money needs to be allocated now in order that an order can be placed and the software upgraded, tested and made live before the end of January 2012.
- 4.3 The risk to service provision of using unsupported software is also quite high in planning, as the loss of information both for customers and for officers, as well as the loss of function, would render the service very difficult to perform, if it were to continue for a significant length of time (in excess of one day). In consultation with colleagues in the business development team, the risk of the software being unsupported had been identified and considered, hence the likely forthcoming capital bid for these funds that would have been made.
- 4.4 The risk to service users of losing a source of planning data if the online module is not upgraded alongside the main software is also of concern to officers, and this is why this element is included in this bid, in order that there is no loss of service provision, however temporary (other than whilst the software itself is being replaced).

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Break down of funds sought

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

PSMA

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AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Tel: (01527) 534064

Further technical information can be sought from

Name: John Knott, GIS Development Officer
E Mail: john.knott@bromsgroveandredditchbc.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881425

**EXECUTIVE
COMMITTEE**4th October 2011**APPENDIX 1: FUNDS SOUGHT URGENTLY**

Software	Upgrade required	Cost
Uniform	Upgrade to v8.1 test	£1900
	Upgrade to v8.1 live	£950
	Upgrade to oracle 11	£4500
Public access	Upgrade to v8.1	£15000
		£22350

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HEWELL ROAD POOL - DISPOSAL

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Michael Braley, Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources
Wards Affected	Premises – Batchley & Brockhill / Service – All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The Committee is requested to approve the disposal of the site of Hewell Road Pool following the opening of the new pool at Abbey Stadium.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Executive Committee is requested to RESOLVE that

- 1) the site of Hewell Road Pool be declared surplus upon the opening of the new pool at the Abbey Stadium;**
- 2) arrangements be made for the demolition and security of the site prior to disposal;**
- 3) Officers be instructed to identify options for disposing of the site for residential use;**
- 4) authority be given for expenditure for up to the sum detailed in 5), below, for the reasons summarised in the report; and**

RECOMMEND that

- 5) a sum of up to £210,000 be allocated in the Capital Programme to cover the cost of demolition and security of the site and the Capital programme be amended accordingly.**

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3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Members have previously agreed that the swimming pool at Hewell Road will cease to be operational once the new pool at Abbey Stadium is opened.
- 3.2 The building is a single storey traditional brick structure with rendered finish to external walls. The main building consists of a swimming pool with male and female changing rooms and wc facilities.
- 3.3. To the south of the property are two single storey extensions of flat roof construction consisting of the reception, office and break out areas. To the north there are two single storey extensions with timber framed pitched roofs with profiled asbestos cement roof coverings, both house the pool plant and electrical services.
- 3.4. The original swimming pool was constructed in the late 19th century with the single storey building enclosure constructed in approximately the 1930's.
- 3.5. The Council has experienced vandalism on a number of its recently void properties within recent months. Once vacated it is considered that the property would be at high risk from vandalism and break ins and would therefore require a significant level of security at considerable cost. It would therefore seem prudent that the property is demolished at an early stage. It would therefore be preferable to have arrangements in place for the demolition of the building to coincide, as far as practicable, with its closure to the public.
- 3.6. Although the site is of reasonable size (1.16 acres) and would likely have potential for residential development, its value may be restricted due to its narrow shape which may limit development density and therefore value. Further investigations would need to be undertaken to provide a site valuation.

Financial Implications

- 3.7 If the disposal does not go ahead the Council will forego a potential capital receipt. Any alternative in-house use for the site is likely to require investment which could be significant dependant upon the proposed use for the site. Estimates have been obtained for the demolition of the existing building. A formal tender exercise will be undertaken in order to award a contract for the works.
- 3.8 The Council will have to incur costs securing the site for the duration that the property remains empty. These are estimated to be in the region of £2,000 per week.

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Legal Implications

- 3.9. There is a Covenant restricting the use of the site to leisure land. Company searches have not enabled Officers to locate Earl of Plymouth Estates or their successors, so Legal Services Officers are employing a Search Agency to find this information, so we can seek to release the Restrictive Covenant on the land.
- 3.10. If the issue with the covenant is not resolved the Council will take out an indemnity policy to cover any future potential claims.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.11 There will be service/operational issues if the pool remains open for any significant period following the opening of the new pool.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.12 There are no direct implications.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

5. APPENDICES

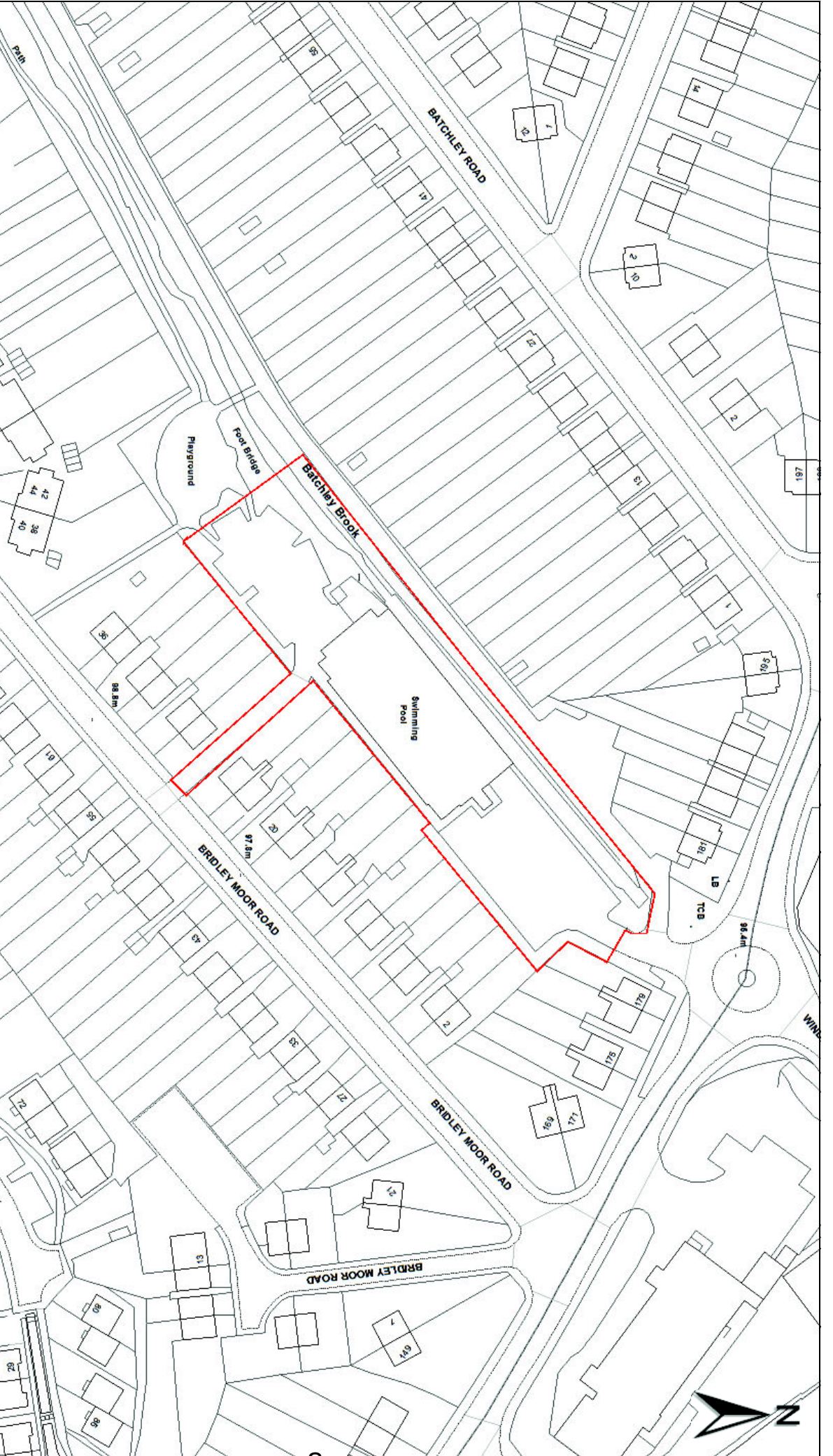
Appendix 1 - Plan of the site

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Previously published Council reports and Minutes.

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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 Ordnance Survey 100024230.

Scale: 1:1250 A1 A4

Date Printed: 25/8/2011

Hewell Road Swimming Pool Site Plan
 25/08/11
 Area: 4,690 sqms / 1.16 acres



Worcestershire County Council
 County Hall
 Spetchley Road
 Worcester
 WR5 2NP

**EXECUTIVE
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LEARNDIRECT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Derek Taylor, Portfolio Holder - Leisure and Tourism
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	John Godwin, Head of Leisure and Cultural Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To consider the future operation of the Learndirect adult learning service based at the Greenlands Business Centre following the withdrawal of funding from University for Industry (UFI) for the forthcoming academic year 2011/12 and subsequent negotiations with North East Worcestershire College (NEWC).

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

**1) the contents of the report be noted; and
to RECOMMEND that**

2) EITHER

Option 1 - funding be continued and the service maintained as currently provided; OR

Option 2 - the service be closed at the end of the extended contract period: OR

Option 3 – the funding agreement/contract proposed by NEWC is accepted and that the learndirect services are rebranded and run on a NEWC franchise basis. This option is subject to formal endorsement by NEWC Board.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 Following the withdrawal of funding by the UFI, the Council now needs to consider the options available and the viability of these options. As members will be aware in previous years the Council has been granted a contract from the UFI funding body to deliver basic skills and IT

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training which offsets the cost of operating the service and provides the customer with free or very limited cost for training.

- 3.2 At the Council meeting on 9th August 2010 Members approved option 4 of the recommendations to relocate the Learndirect element of the REDI Centre Service to another Council owned facility. The relocation was completed by the beginning of January 2011 with the service being maintained to its customers throughout the transition process.

Within the report Officers stated that the current contract with UFI may not be granted for another term as they were issued on an annual basis and the funding stream was not guaranteed

- 3.3 The Deputy Leader of the Council in the Leaders' Announcements at the Executive Committee held on the 12th July 2011 advised the Committee that the existing contract with UFI to fund the Learndirect service had not been renewed. It is important to note that the withdrawal of the contract was entirely due to the way that UFI wished to operate future contracts and not due to any quality or quantity issues relating to the delivery at the Centre. Customer online satisfaction rating returns to UFI scored the service at 100%.
- 3.4 The Centre is currently funded by University for Industry (UFI) through the brand name **Learndirect**, (Adult Responsive Learning). For the academic year 2010/11 we were contracted to deliver the following targets contained in the table below, which were all exceeded.

Description		Target	Actual
Skills for Life	Enrolments	152	165
IT – Level 2	Enrolments	46	58

- 3.5 An extension to the existing contract due to expire on the 31st July 2011 has been agreed with UFI which will provide funding until the 30th September 2011. The total number of individual learners that have attended the Centre up to the 31st July is 172. An additional 30-40 learners will attend the Centre during the contract extension period bringing the total number of learners to in excess of 200.
- 3.6 At the end of September 2011 the contract extension will expire which will see the total removal of all existing income streams from the Centre. The Centre can continue to deliver basic skills courses and ICT to customers. The costs of provision could be offset by a charging policy to all learners, but this would need time to be developed taking into account the needs of individuals on lower and higher incomes and the needs of local employers.

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- 3.7 Officers have been in contact with UFI to identify who has been granted a contract to operate the Learndirect Service in the Redditch area. It has been confirmed that the contract has been awarded to Pertemps People Development Group, a large recruitment and training company. Officers have discussed with the new provider whether there would be an opportunity for Pertemps to be able to use the Council's Centre to continue to deliver Learndirect courses and to be paid to do so on a sub-contract basis, but unfortunately their contract does not permit this. Pertemps will make access to Learndirect training courses available to the people of Redditch via two routes: 1) via referral from Jobcentre Plus for helping the long term unemployed back to work; or 2) via uptake from the general public. Pertemps premises are located in Empire Court, Redditch Town Centre.
- 3.8 Following discussions at the Local Strategic Partnership (LSP) on the funding issues faced within adult education services and the further education sector, senior officers have met with representatives of NEWC. These discussions have been extremely positive and productive and have resulted in an offer being made to the Council by NEWC to continue to offer services on a franchise basis. These services will be commissioned by NEWC to deliver basic skills and ICT provision to the same contract value level or higher than that provided by the Learndirect contract.
- 3.9 The NEWC offer is for funding up to £100,000. Based on the Centre's past achievements a contract value of £75,000 to £80,000 is realistic based on the number of staff, computers and venue capacity. The delivery is a mix of basic skills and ICT all leading to recognised qualifications. Customers will continue to be derived from links with Job Centre, Next Step Advisors, NEWC; SureStart Centres; local community groups and back to work programmes within the town. See confidential Appendix 3 for agreed delivery targets. The financial figures have been endorsed by the Principal of NEWC and a formal contract offer has been made (subject to formal endorsement by NEWC Board).
- 3.10 Should the council wish to enter into this agreement the service would be required to rebrand, as Learndirect is a registered trademark and could not be used. The service would be branded under RBC style guide however due to the funding arrangement all courses funded via NEWC will be required to carry their logos alongside side our own.
- 3.11 Under this proposal the service would also be allowed to generate additional funding streams and provision to further increase opportunities for residents whilst minimising Council funding.

**EXECUTIVE
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- 3.7 The impacts of the options contained in the report in this financial year are contained in the table below.

Option	2011/12 Current Budget	2011/12 – additional funding requirement	2011/12 – Revised Budget	2011/12 – Net (savings) /additional costs	Comments
	£	£	£	£	
1	33,150	45,000	78,150	45,000	The loss of contracted income of £45,000 is directly proportionate to the increase in revenue expenditure. No Redundancy or Pension costs would be liable
2	33,150	27,356	60,506	27,356	The budget requirement to operate until the 30 th September is £26,372 the balance from the total budget of £6,778 can be used to offset Redundancy & Pension costs of £34,134
3	33,150	0	0	0	The contract offer on this option would replace the learn direct funding on a like for like basis. Additional cost to establish the changes to the service will be met from existing budgets.
2012/13 budget requm't	33,150	75,000	108,150	75,000	The figures in this section relate to costs without any new income streams being available.

- 3.8 The impact of any approval on the Council's budget 2012/13 will be included in the up coming budget discussions for formal approval in February 2012 should option 1 be approved.

- 3.9.1 Relevant finance Officers have been consulted with regard to the financial implications and consider them to be sound.

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Legal Implications

- 3.10 No legal implications have been identified.
- 3.11 Relevant Legal Services Officers have been consulted with regard to the legal implications and the franchise agreement.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.12 Option 1 & 3 to continue to operate the current service, has no further service or operational impacts and the service will continue to offer the same qualifications as the learndirect contract. As highlighted earlier in the report Option 1 would also require a charging policy to be implemented following the loss of funded places on site. In Option 3, learner charges will also be made in accordance with the SFA funding guidelines.
- 3.13 Option 2 to close the service, will have an impact on the Business Centre as Units 4 & 5 that Learndirect currently occupy as paying tenants would have to be vacated. The current IT hardware located at the Centre could be put back into RBC ITC PC stock.
- 3.14 Presently there are four part time members of staff (2.1 FTE's) operating the Learndirect Service. On the 22nd July 2011, staff were briefed on the current position and formally put on notice of being at risk of redundancy until this report was brought to the Executive Committee for a decision on the future of the service. Staff will be briefed on the decisions taken by the Executive Committee following this meeting.
- 3.15 Option 1 & 3 contained in this report helps support the Council's priority of Enterprising Community in the support towards skills and learning. The cost of the service needs to be considered within a Value for Money framework if the cost of the service can be reduced via other alternative options.
- 3.16 Option 2 complete closure does not support the Enterprising Community priority of the Council.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.17 Option 1 - If this option were recommended there would be an impact on existing and new customers as Learndirect courses would not be maintained, but basic skills and ICT training could continue to be provided. As the contract income from UFI that was drawn down to

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fund the cost of learning has been withdrawn, customers would be required to pay a fee towards the cost of providing the learning service.

- 3.18 Option 2 - This would impact on all current and future users as the service would be closed. Customer comments on the relocated service and potential impacts on customers are contained in Appendix One.
- 3.19 Option 3 – Would not have an impact upon existing and new customers as the learning places/opportunities provided would be funded through the franchise agreement on offer with NEWC. In line with the SFA guidelines a limited number of courses would be charged for but these levels would be significantly less than those that would be required with option 1.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There is a financial risk to the Authority in varying degrees as the service is not funded at this stage beyond September 2011. Any future service costs dependent upon the option chosen will need to be funded from revenue balances and/or savings from other Council services/provision. Option 3 although negating the need to provide additional resources does carry a risk given that the financial performance of the site, is franchise based and linked to achieving agreed outcomes. However as part of the negotiation with NEWC and a review of current and past performance officers are confident that these figures are achievable. Due to the nature of the contract over performance is also rewarded to provide an incentive to succeed.
- 4.2 There is the potential for some reputational risk to the Authority for each of the options presented, either in respect of loss of service provision or value for money considerations.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Customer comments on existing service provision and impact views

Appendix 2 - Statistical information on Learndirect users

Appendix 3 - Franchise Agreement Income Projections (This Appendix is exempt by virtue of Paragraph 3 of Part 1 of Schedule 12A of the Local Government Act 1972.) – TO FOLLOW

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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AUTHOR OF REPORT

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**EXECUTIVE
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The service relocated to Greenlands Business Centre and began trading at the beginning of January 2011. Customers who were engaged on Learndirect at the REDI Centre were asked if relocating would be a barrier to their continued learning, 90% of respondents said it would not be a barrier.

Learner Satisfaction

Learner satisfaction reports from Learndirect show 100% on all areas. Clients found the new environment professional, welcoming and easy to access. Some of the comments received highlighted the need for an individual and flexible approach to learning which could be achieved outside of the Learndirect contract.

Customer comments include:

“Excellent experience. The tutors were super, knowledgeable and approachable. All round positive experience.

“Had a really positive learning experience for the first time ever. Never thought I would achieve but I did”.

“Really nice centre, very professional. I was able to talk about my long term goals and sort out the best course to start with”

“Great – easy way to learn, very flexible for me while I am working and looking after the children on my own. My tutors were always there to help and I only needed to attend at times suitable to my own schedule. Loved it – great tutors”.

It is considered that certain groups may be impacted upon but not excluded from access to training opportunities provided by others.

Lone Parents	Low self esteem and poor prior educational success and experiences prevents this group from going to college or places such as Pertemps Training Centres.
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Parents	Families with multiple and complex problems often wish to improve their educational chances to provide support for their children. This is a high motivating factor for many of our learners.
---------	---

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They found that the smaller, more individual leaning environment helped them to focus on their own development and long term aspirations. We know that this has a positive impact on the family life and helps to improve family cohesion and aspirations.

The individual learning programmes offered by our training centre help this type of learner to stay more focused and achieve, in many cases, their first qualification.

Unemployed:

Again, low confidence and self esteem suggest that this group of people often need more targeted one to one support than they get at a larger learning organisation.

Employed part-time/full time:

They are unable to access learning during normal college hours. Although there are night time courses, many work on shifts and lack of weekly attendance means they are often withdrawn from the learning programme. They also want a more individualised learning plan to meet their needs.

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The statistics show that the Centre mainly attracted people from the age group 25-59 who entered with qualifications at Level 1¹ or below. 72% of people achieved at least one qualification and have moved into part-time employment or have been accepted onto a range of further education Level 3 courses and apprenticeships (notably in nursing, child care and social/health care).

In this area the Centre achieved 109% of its target numbers in Skills for Life and 126% of its target numbers for IT Level 2 (ECDL). The only main concerns this year were timely completion of programmes. This was an area where the Centre made great improvements on the previous service delivery improving the target up from a low 25% to 74%. The success rate for Skills for Life was 81% and the IT rate was 76%.

Referrals

Statistics show that the majority of learners were referred by the Job Centre and word of mouth, however it was notable that the number of referrals from employers has grown significantly since last year. Also, this is the first year NEW College have actively referred learners to the Centre. This was because the Centre was able to offer courses all year round and had flexible start and end dates.

Job Centre	36	21%
Word of mouth	31	18%
Next Step Provision	24	14%
Learndirect website	21	12%
NEW College (Advice and Guidance)	15	9%
Employer	13	8%
Marketing Events	10	6%
JCP	10	6%
SureStart	8	5%
NHS	4	2%

REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

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Redditch Borough Council - Adult Training Centre 2010/11

Targets	Target	Actual	2009/10
Contract Value	£70,000	£65,800	
Sfl Programme Starts	152	165	
ITQ Programme Starts	46	58	19
Number of individual learners @31 July 2011			
		172	165
Achieved at least 1 qualification	124	72%	64%
No of learning programmes ending July 2010			
Skills for Life			
On a programme	139		
Passes	113	81%	79%
Withdrawals	26	19%	21%
Level2 - ECDL			
On a programme	45		
Passes	34	76%	66%
Withdrawals	11	24%	16%
No. of Qualifications achieved [OCR or BCS] by type			147
Literacy L1	17	12%	12%
Literacy L2	29	20%	18%
Numeracy E3	8	5%	9%
Numeracy L1	20	14%	24%
Numeracy L2	39	27%	19%
ICT Level 2 [ECDL]	34	23%	18%
Success Rate			100%
Skills for Life	81%		80%
L2 - ICT	76%		66%

Note: 172 individual learners is up to the end of July. There are still approximately 30-35 learners still in the pipeline that will bring the total learners to 200+ learners

Number of Individual learners **172 [210]**
2009-2010 165

Age Groups				
19-20	5	3%	5%	
21-24	18	10%	14%	
25-59	144	84%	75%	
60 over	5	3%	6%	

Gender			
Females	131	76%	82%
Males	41	24%	18%

Employment Status		
Employed - Full time	28	16%
Employed - Part time	27	16%
Unemployed Redundant	31	18%
Unemployed Other	61	35%
Economically inactive	5	3%
Other	20	12%

Ethnicity		
Asian or Asian British - Indian	3	2%
Asian or Asian British - Pakistani	17	10%

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Withdrawal Rate			
	Skills for Life	19%	21%
	L2 - ICT	24%	16%
Timely completion			
	Skills for Life	78%	64%
	L2 - ICT	70%	42%
Progress			124
	Further Education/Higher	31	25%
	Employment - Full Time	28	23%
	Employment - Part time	33	27%
	Unemployed	23	19%
	Other	9	7%
Prior Attainment			
	No qualifications	21	12%
	Entry level	18	10%
	Other qualifications below level 1	22	13%
	Level 1	63	37%
	Level 2	19	11%
	Level 3	19	11%
	Level 4	5	3%
	Level 5 and above	5	3%
Referrals			
	Job Centre	36	21%
	Word of mouth	31	18%
	Next Step Provision	24	14%
	Learndirect website	21	12%
	NEW College (Advice and Guidance)	15	9%
	Employer	13	8%
	Marketing Events	10	6%

Black or Black British - Caribbean	2	1%
Mixed - White and Asian	1	1%
Mixed - White and Black Caribbean	2	1%
White - British	132	77%
White - Irish	4	2%
White - any other white background	8	5%
Any other	3	2%

Learning Difficulties		
Moderate learning difficulty	22	13%
Dyslexia	21	12%
Dyscalculia	8	5%
Multiple learning difficulties	15	9%
Other	3	2%
No learning difficulty	68	40%
Not known /not provided	35	20%

Disability		
Hearing	2	1%
Disability affecting mobility	6	3%
Other medical	8	5%
Mental health difficulty	3	2%
No disability	117	68%
Not known	36	21%

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JCP	10	6%
SureStart	8	5%
NHS	4	2%

Document is Restricted



Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 6th September, 2011

MINUTES

Present:

Councillor Phil Mould (Chair), Councillor Mark Shurmer (Vice-Chair) and Councillors Peter Anderson, Andrew Brazier, Simon Chalk, Andrew Fry, Bill Hartnett, Gay Hopkins, Alan Mason and Luke Stephens

Also Present:

M Collins, (Vice Chair of the Standards Committee).

Officers:

C Felton, S Horrobin and J Pickering

Committee Services Officers:

J Bayley and M Craggs

70. APOLOGIES AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies were received on behalf of Councillor Brenda Quinney.

71. DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND OF PARTY WHIP

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

72. MINUTES

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Committee held on 16th August 2011 be confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chair.

73. ACTIONS LIST

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

.....
Chair

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 6th September, 2011

RESOLVED that

the Committee's Action List be noted.

74. EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MINUTES AND SCRUTINY OF THE FORWARD PLAN

The Committee was advised that its recommendation from the meeting on 26th July 2011 to incorporate the previous best value performance indicator (BV84) into future performance quarterly reports had been approved by the Executive Committee on 23rd August. Members were advised that due to the reporting timetable the measure would start to be recorded in the second quarterly performance monitoring report for 2011/12.

No items were identified from the Executive Committee's minutes from 23rd August as suitable for further scrutiny and no items were selected from the Forward Plan as suitable for pre-scrutiny.

RESOLVED that

the minutes of the meeting of the Executive Committee meeting on 23rd August 2011 be noted.

75. TASK & FINISH REVIEWS - DRAFT SCOPING DOCUMENTS

There were no draft scoping documents.

76. TASK AND FINISH GROUPS - PROGRESS REPORTS

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

a) Facilities for Disabled People – Chair, Councillor Alan Mason

Members were advised that the first meeting had taken place immediately preceding the Committee meeting. The group had identified a number of potential contacts to consult regarding disabled parking provision within the Borough. It was expected that a number of site visits to car parks would eventually be undertaken.

The next meeting was due to take place on 6th October 2011.

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b) Promoting Sporting Participation – Chair, Councillor Luke Stephens

Members were informed that the group had had a positive discussion with a representative from North East Worcestershire (NEW) College regarding the opportunities for sporting participation and volunteering that it provided. It appeared that the Council and NEW College could continue to work together to provide more opportunities.

The group was due to interview the Director of the Herefordshire and Worcestershire County Sports Partnership at its following meeting on 22nd September 2011.

c) Youth Services Provision – Chair, Councillor Simon Chalk

The Committee was informed that the group had recently discussed Worcestershire County Council's consultation on youth services with representatives from the County Council. The group was due to interview a number of young people in Redditch and also the Borough's own Student Council for their perspective and would be submitting a response before the deadline of 30th September 2011.

In relation to this item, Councillor Hopkins informed Members that she had met with young people in Church Hill to discuss youth services and the county consultation process. Another meeting had been arranged for 13th October. She would provide a summary of both discussions for the consideration of the group.

RESOLVED that

the update reports be noted.

77. FLY TIPPING AND PROGRESS WITH THE WORTH IT CAMPAIGN - UPDATE REPORT

The Committee received an annual update report on fly-tipping within the Borough and progress on the Council's *Worth It* campaign. Officers provided a verbal summary and clarified that the estimated cost for clearing fly-tipping in Redditch during 2010/11 was £41,375 and not £34,320 as stated in the report.

Members queried whether action taken through the enforcement process for fly-tipping represented a sufficient deterrent. It was suggested a stricter approach to enforcement could reduce fly-

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

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tipping. However, Members felt that the current practice of charging residents for disposing of certain larger scale domestic items was deterring them from doing so and was leading to increased fly-tipping. It was suggested that the issue should therefore be considered as part of the forthcoming review on improving rates of recycling in Redditch.

Having been informed that Redditch had the second highest number of fly-tips dealt with during 2010/11 of all the local authorities in Worcestershire, Members queried whether a consistent approach had been applied for identifying and reporting fly-tipping across the county. It was suggested that, if there was indeed a higher propensity for fly-tipping in Redditch, the Council should liaise with those neighbouring local authorities with the lowest rates to learn what further action could be undertaken to more effectively reduce fly-tipping and report to Members for further consideration.

Members noted that the locations in which there were higher rates of fly tipping were amongst the lowest socio-economic areas in Redditch. A number of actions had been targeted at these hot spot areas which officers agreed to circulate for Members' consideration. This included walkabouts in certain communities, which was described as being an effective method for identifying and resolving case of fly-tipping.

It was queried whether many fly-tipped items, particularly builders' rubble, had been left by a disproportionately small number of repeat offenders. No such patterns had yet been detected although the information required to form a clear picture was often difficult to obtain. It was suggested that residents should be further encouraged to report cases of fly-tipping and the build up of litter to help ensure that repeat offenders were penalised and that consideration should be given as to how reporting processes were communicated to the public.

Members commented that an amnesty could be held to give residents the opportunity to dispose of unwanted household items through the Council's collection service free of charge. This was likely to entail significant financial costs for the Council and would not correspond with targets for encouraging the reuse of household items and for reducing waste. However, Members suggested this might be a useful idea to revisit.

It was questioned whether a significant proportion of fly-tipping in the Borough may have been left by the travelling community, Officers explained that travellers' waste was dealt through another

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 6th September, 2011

route and would not have contributed to the Council's figures for fly-tipping.

A suggestion was accepted by the Chair from a member of the audience that Community Groups could be allowed to use the collection service to take items on behalf of residents. Members commented that this might help people on low incomes and could lead to a reduction in fly tipping.

RESOLVED that:

subject to noting Members comments and requests for further information, the report be noted.

78. **PERFORMANCE REPORT FOR THE SERVICES WITHIN THE REMIT OF 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.

Members discussed issues contained within the report, including procurement; energy supplies; property services; transformation; and the promotion of local democracy. Based on these discussions the following questions were proposed for the Portfolio Holder to address in his verbal Annual Report to the Committee.

- a) The Worcestershire HUB was the subject of a recent scrutiny review. Has the Hub service subsequently improved? If so, to what extent?
- b)
 - i) What is the current position of the shared Property Services and what, if any, improvements have been made to address earlier concerns?
 - ii) Would you consider it appropriate to follow Bromsgrove District Council in taking this service back in-house? (Please explain your answer).
- c) Do you feel that maintenance of the Council's website is adequately prioritised? If not, how should this be addressed?

RESOLVED that

the content of the written performance report be noted.

Overview and Scrutiny Committee

Tuesday, 6th September, 2011

79. REFERRALS

There were no referrals.

80. WORK PROGRAMME

Members were advised that the written performance report for services within the remit of the portfolio for Community Safety and Regulatory Services would now have been received at the Committee meeting of 18th October 2011. However, the Portfolio Holder would still be attending a meeting of the committee on 29th November, as arranged, to provide her response.

Members were also informed that the second meeting of the West Midlands Scrutiny Network had been scheduled for 17th November. Members were advised that another councillor from the authority could accompany the Chair.

RESOLVED that

the Committee's Work Programme be noted.

The Meeting commenced at 7.03 pm
and closed at 8.35 pm

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ADVISORY PANELS, WORKING GROUPS, ETC - UPDATE REPORT

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

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

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

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to RESOLVE that

subject to Members' comments, the report be noted.

3. UPDATES**A. ADVISORY PANELS**

	<u>Meeting :</u>	<u>Lead Members / Officers :</u> (Executive Members shown <u>underlined</u>)	<u>Position :</u> (Oral updates to be provided at the meeting by Lead Members or Officers, if no written update is available.)
1.	Climate Change Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> / Vice-Chair: Cllr Hopkins Hugh Bennett / Ceridwen John	Next meetings – 26th September 2011 / 22nd November 2011.
2.	Economic Advisory Panel	Chair: <u>Cllr Pearce</u> / Vice-Chair: Cllr Bush John Staniland / Georgina Harris	Next meeting – 7th November 2011.

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3.	Housing Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Brazier Liz Tompkin	Next meeting – 6th December 2011.
4.	Leisure Contracts Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Derek Taylor</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Anderson John Godwin	Last meeting – 16th August 2010.
5.	Planning Advisory Panel	Chair <u>Cllr Pearce</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr R Hill John Staniland / Ruth Bamford	Next meetings – 11th October 2011 / 21st October 2011

B. OTHER MEETINGS

6.	Constitutional Review Working Party	Chair <u>Cllr Gandy</u> / Vice Chair Cllr Braley Steve Skinner	Last meeting – 4th April 2011. To reconvene in the autumn.
7.	Member Support Steering Group	Chair <u>Brunner</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Braley Steve Skinner / Trish Buckley	Last meeting – 31st March 2011 To reconvene in the autumn.
8.	Grants Panel	Chair / Cllr Chance Vice Chair Cllr Braley Angie Heighway	Last meeting – 7th September 2011.

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9.	Procurement Group	Chair <u>Cllr Braley</u> / Vice-Chair Cllr Anderson Jayne Pickering / Teresa Kristunas	Last meeting – 8th September
10.	Church Hill District Centre – Members' Panel	Chair <u>Cllr B Clayton</u> Teresa Kristunas	Last Meeting 22nd June 2011

22. APPENDICES

None.

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ACTION MONITORING

Portfolio Holder(s) / Responsible Officer	Action requested	Status
27th January 2010		
Cllr Gandy / H Bennett	Single Equalities Scheme Members requested that a report/action plan be submitted to a future meeting of the Committee or Council detailing what the Council, as Community Leader, expected to receive in terms of education provision for the Borough and its children and young people.	Officers to update at future meeting.
21st May 2011		
M Braley / T Kristunas	Review of Lease - 21 and 21a Salters Lane Officers to prepare a report on a policy regarding the granting of concessionary rents.	Policy to be submitted to a future meeting for approval by Council by April 2012.
13th September 2011		
D Taylor / R Cooke / J Godwin	Quarterly Performance Monitoring - Quarter 1 - April to June 2011 Officers undertook to meet with Councillor Malcolm Hall following the meeting to discuss the programme of events provided at the Palace Theatre.	Meeting being arranged with the relevant Officers.
M Braley / T Kristunas / D Taylor	Quarterly Monitoring of the Benefits Service Improvement Plan - Quarter 1 - April to June 2010 Officers be requested to provide updates	In the next

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	on transformation and future measures of the service to reflect new processes that are being implemented within the service.	quarterly report.
M Braley / T Kristunas /	Quarterly Budget Monitoring - Quarter 1 - April to June 2011 Officers be requested to show the budgets at service level and reflect variations against the service budgets in future reports.	In the next quarterly report.
M Braley / T Kristunas	Write-Off of Debts - Monitoring Report Councillor Derek Taylor was invited to meet with Officers to discuss the action that was taken by the Council to manage bad debt and Officers undertook to provide Councillor Carole Gandy with further detail on the liquidation / winding up write-offs for non-domestic rates.	
B Clayton / L Tompkin / E Cartwright	Overview and Scrutiny Committee In respect of Minute 65 (Private Sector Home Support Service – Post Scrutiny) it was noted that consideration of the recommendations from the Committee was pending a further report and business case for the proposals outlined in the report to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	Report to be submitted to the Committee in due course
M Braley / T Kristunas	Review of Lease - Unit 1, Matchborough Centre Alongside consideration of the terms of the lease Members requested that a policy be developed to determine appropriate rents for voluntary sector organisations.	See note for Review of Lease - 21 and 21a Salters Lane
<u>Note:</u>	<i>No further debate should be held on the above matters or substantive decisions taken, without further report OR unless urgency requirements are met.</i>	Report period: 13/01/09 to 13/09/11

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