

Suggested Items for Scrutiny: Ideas Proposed During the Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Planning Afternoon, Friday the 20th June 2008

The following items were proposed during the recent Overview and Scrutiny Work Programme Planning Afternoon. The title of the review, the name of the Councillor proposing the item and some initial draft objectives for the exercise have been incorporated into this report.

All Members were also keen to ensure that Overview and Scrutiny skills, for both Councillors and Officers, continue to be developed.

**1. Title: Adult Participation in Sport
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor P Mould**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to identify ways to tackle decreasing adult participation in sporting activities;
- to identify ways to tackle obesity in the adult population by encouraging adults to participate more regularly in sporting activities;
- to identify barriers preventing adults from participating more regularly in sporting activities;
- to identify how to make sporting activities and services more accessible; and
- to identify the different needs in relation to sporting activities of the various social groups living within the Borough.

**2. Title: Carbon Footprint
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor J Pearce**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to investigate the work already undertaken to address the subject by the Council's Environment Advisory Panel;
- to review any work already undertaken by the Council's IT Steering Group to address this issue; and
- to review the work undertaken by other local authorities to address this issue and the implications of their conclusions for Redditch.

**3. Title: Communication
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor M Chalk**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to review communication arrangements between the Council and the Council's partner organisations and other outside bodies; and
- to determine whether any improvements could be made to these arrangements.

**4. Title: Economic Development
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor J Field**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to review the implications of the A38 Technology Corridor for economic development in Redditch;
- to review the conclusions contained within the Jobs, Employment and the Economy report, published by the Council's Leisure, Tourism and Economy Overview and Scrutiny Committee in 2006 and 2007; and
- to scrutinise the issues raised in relation to economic development at a meeting of the Committee on the 27th March 2008 (this topic has already been recorded on the Overview and Scrutiny Committee's Work Programme, though the date for consideration of this item remains to be determined by the Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

**5. Title: Fishing Tackle Heritage
Councillor Proposing the topic: Councillor D Hunt**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to review ways to promote the Borough's fishing tackle heritage;
- to determine whether Forge Mill Needle Museum currently promotes the town's fishing tackle heritage to a level deemed satisfactory by Members;
- to determine whether there should be a Fishing Tackle Museum in Redditch;
- to determine how much it would cost to establish a Fishing Tackle Museum in the Borough; and
- to identify financial sources that could be used to establish a Fishing Tackle Museum.

6. Title: Fuel Poverty
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor D Taylor

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to identify what the Council currently does to address the impact of fuel bills on people living within the Borough;
- to identify what the Council's partner organisations are currently doing to address the impact of fuel bills on people living within the Borough;
- to investigate ways in which the Council can help local people to reduce their domestic (fuel) bills (in addition to any work already being undertaken);
- to investigate ways in which the Council's partner organisations can help local people to reduce their domestic (fuel) bills (in addition to any work already being undertaken);
- to identify whether any other local authorities have addressed this issue and to review the implications of their conclusions for Redditch;
- to review the particular energy requirements for of older properties within the Borough, particularly in relation to energy efficiency ratings and domestic fuel bills;
- to identify the impact of fuel bills on vulnerable groups living within the Borough; and
- to determine the particular actions that need to be taken by the Council and its partner organisations to address the needs of the most vulnerable groups living within the Borough.

7. Title: Housing Mutual Exchange
Councillor Proposing the topic: Councillor D Smith

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to scrutinise the Council's present policy on Housing Mutual Exchange;
- to compare the Council's policy to the policies of other local authorities; and
- to identify if and how the Council's policy on Housing Mutual Exchange could be improved.

**8. Title: Illegal Drugs and Alcohol
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor M Chalk**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to establish the current scope of drug and alcohol abuse within the Borough;
- to engage relevant partner organisations, such as the Crime and Disorder Reduction Partnership (CDRP), in the provision of accurate and appropriate information for the consideration of Members;
- to engage relevant Officers from the Council to ensure that accurate and appropriate information is provided for the consideration of Members;
- to determine the role and responsibilities of Redditch Borough Council in relation to tackling illegal drug and alcohol use; and
- Members suggested that this topic might be suitable for a Short Sharp review, to be held during a couple of focused, Overview and Scrutiny Seminars, which all Members could attend.

**9. Title: Improving Access to public Transport for People Without Cars
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor D Taylor**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to identify whether any other local authorities have attempted to address the public transport needs of people who do not have access to cars and to review the implications of their conclusions for Redditch;
- to identify public transport options that have not been fully developed in Redditch and to determine the feasibility of introducing those public transport options in the Borough;
- to discuss the public transport needs for people without access to cars with relevant partner organisations; and
- to identify where there are currently gaps in the provision of public transport services and how to fill those gaps.

(Please note that Members may want to consider combining this proposal with the other proposal relating to public transport below).

**10. Title: Improving the Health of People in Redditch
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor K Banks**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to determine how frequently people access their GPs in Redditch; and
- to identify ways to encourage particular groups who have traditionally tended to avoid visiting their GPs (such as men) to make greater use of those services.

(Please note: Members may wish to consider whether to refer this proposal to the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee).

**11. Title: Improving Public Transport
Councillors Proposing the Topic: Councillors D Taylor and D Thomas**

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to determine whether this exercise would be suitable for joint scrutiny work with Worcestershire County Council and / or other local authorities;
- to scrutinise the accountability of local bus companies;
- to investigate current arrangements for the provision of taxi-bus services and to determine whether any improvements in provision could be made;
- to scrutinise provision of public transport services within the Borough during the evening and to determine what improvements in provision could be made;
- to scrutinise provision of public transport services that enable people to access leisure activities and to determine what improvements in provision could be made; and
- to scrutinise provision of public transport services that enable people to access the Alexandra Hospital and to determine what improvements in provision could be made.

(Please note that Members may want to consider combining this proposal with the other proposal relating to public transport above).

12. Title: Pavements
Councillor Proposing the Topic: Councillor A Clayton

Objectives of the Exercise:

- to investigate whether this would be a suitable subject for joint scrutiny work with Worcestershire County Council and / or other local authorities;
- to identify ways to improve the condition of the pavements in Redditch; and
- to consider the contents of a report on a related subject recently produced by Worcestershire County Council and the implications for the condition of pavements in Redditch.

13. Title: State of Council Flat Properties
Councillor Proposing the Item: Councillor D Taylor

Objectives of the exercise:

- to identify ways to improve the general condition of the communal areas within the vicinity of Council flat properties;
- to scrutinise the cleaning arrangements for the communal areas and to identify any improvements that could be made to those cleaning arrangements;
- to identify whether and how Resident Groups / Neighbourhood Watch Groups / the Borough Tenants' Panel could be involved in developing improvements to the general appearance of the communal areas;
- to scrutinise security arrangements in the communal areas and to identify whether any improvements could be made to these arrangements; and
- to identify ways to encourage residents to ensure that their communal areas remain in a good condition.