JOINT ARRANGEMENTS

This section sets out the joint arrangements the Council has entered into with other local authorities, and is divided into the following parts:-

- Shared Services with Bromsgrove District Council
- Other arrangements

[Further information in relation to Joint Committees that the Council participates in are referenced in Part B of the Committee Terms of Reference]

1. Shared Services with Bromsgrove District Council

The Council operates shared services with Bromsgrove District Council. Whilst both councils are politically independent, they have a joint chief executive and a joint management team. The shared services arrangement is facilitated primarily by the Local Government Act 1972 and the Local Government Act 2000, and operates in accordance with service specific agreements and the Overarching Framework Agreement between the two councils.

In 2009 Redditch Borough Council and Bromsgrove District Council took the decision to work in partnership. The first step was the appointment of a joint chief executive and in 2010 this was followed by the appointment of a joint management team. The co-operation between the Council was formally recorded in a legal agreement known as the “Overarching Framework Agreement” which was signed in 2011.

The overall aim was to introduce collaborative working, bringing teams together to provide services jointly across the two councils, and delivering savings and efficiencies for both councils. From the outset both Councils chose to remain politically independent, with separate processes for decision making and operating independent budgets and spending.

Working practices have been put in place through the Overarching Framework Agreement and under the relevant local government legislation, and officers employed by one Council may carry out functions for the other in accordance with the Councils’ respective Schemes of Delegation.

Since the introduction of shared services savings and efficiencies have been found by the reduction in senior management posts and subsequent re-structures as teams have been brought together. All services are now delivered by joint teams across the Council save for Housing Services, which are provided by Redditch Borough Council only.

Other benefits have included increased resilience for teams, cultivation of greater expertise and specialism amongst staff and economies of scale. As collaborative working has developed over time, further savings and

efficiencies have been achieved from procurement initiatives, services reviews and service re-designs.

2. Other arrangements

The Council has agreed to enter into other arrangements for sharing services with local authorities. These are summarised below: -

a. Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service

The Council operates a shared service arrangement with Malvern Hills District Council, Bromsgrove District Council, Worcester City Council, and Wychavon District Council under which the authorities collaborate and provide one shared Internal Audit Service for all the authorities. The service is hosted by Worcester City Council and is regulated by a formal agreement.

b. Payroll Service

The Council has entered into an arrangement with Bromsgrove District Council and Wyre Forest District Council for the authorities to collaborate and provide one shared service for Payroll services across the three authorities. The service is hosted by Redditch Borough Council and regulated by a formal agreement.

c. North Worcestershire Building Control Service

The Council has agreed to enter into an arrangement with Bromsgrove District Council and Wyre Forest District Council for the authorities to collaborate and provide one shared service for building control services across the three authorities. The shared service is hosted by Bromsgrove District Council and is regulated by a formal agreement.

d. North Worcestershire Water Management

The Council has agreed to enter into an arrangement with Bromsgrove District Council and Wyre Forest District Council for the authorities to collaborate and provide one shared service for land drainage service across the three authorities. The shared service is hosted by Wyre Forest District Council and is regulated by a formal agreement.

e. North Worcestershire Emergency Planning

The Council has agreed to enter into an arrangement with Bromsgrove District Council and Wyre Forest District Council for the authorities to collaborate and provide one shared service for emergency planning across the three authorities. The shared service is hosted by Wyre Forest District Council and is regulated by a formal agreement.