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(Review 2012 – bold elements contain changes)

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Notes

- 1) Any reference to specific legislation, or statutory provisions in the attached Constitution shall be automatically deemed to refer to any relevant aspects of any successive legislation or statutory provisions, pending formal updating of the Constitution.
- 2) Reference to specific Officers, Directorates, Departments, Teams, Sections, Units, etc. in the attached Constitution shall be automatically deemed to refer to any successor Officer(s), Directorates, Departments, Teams, Sections, Units, etc. who is/are charged with the same responsibilities, following any future re-organisation / restructuring, save that, for the sake of clarity and proper control, in the case of any ambiguity about who shall exercise a particular delegation of authority, the delegation shall refer to the higher ranking Officer(s) / administrative units.
- 3) Elements marked # are under construction or review and will be built in later, subject to further Council approval.
- 4) ATT = attached
N/C = No Change in this re-issue.

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OVERVIEW

The full Council of 29 Members meeting together is responsible for determining the budget and policy framework of the Council.

Political Balance - Municipal Year 2012/13

(New - updated since 3rd May 2012 Local Elections)

The Council comprises 29 elected Members, representing 12 Wards. Since the local Elections of **3rd May 2012**, the Council comprises **15 Labour and 14 Conservative Members. This means that the Council is controlled by a Labour Majority.**

Elections

Elections are held by thirds, three years out of every four (the fourth year being for “all out” County Council elections – next to be held in 2013). The next Borough Council elections will be in May 2014.

A change in Electoral arrangements (a possible move to all-out elections every four years) has been considered, but was rejected, at a special meeting of the Council held on 14th June 2010.

Democratic Arrangements

Some Council members are in full-time employment and therefore most Council business is conducted in the evening. The full Council meets approximately every 6 -7 weeks. Meetings are normally open to the public.

A body called the Executive Committee (often referred to as ‘the Exec(utive)’ and sometimes referred to as “the Cabinet” in other authorities) is responsible for implementing Council policies, taking decisions about them and spending the budget. The Executive is responsible for decisions on all matters which are not allocated to the Council’s “Regulatory Committees” or other Committees (for example, Audit and Governance , Licensing, Planning or Standards Committees); or decisions which are not reserved to be dealt with by the full Council. All Executive Committee meetings are held in public.

The Executive Chair is the Leader of the Council (who is elected by the Council) and the Executive has a number of other members, also elected by the Council. Following the Annual Council meeting of **21st May 2012**, the Executive Committee comprised 9 members, **including 2 Opposition Members.**

Seven Executive Committee Members each have responsibility for a “Portfolio” which comprises a themed group of Council services. The Portfolio Holders (=“Service Lead members”) are all members of the Controlling Group.

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The Portfolios are currently: “Community Leadership and Partnership”, “Community Safety and Regulatory Services”, “Corporate Management”, **“Housing”**, **“Local Environment & Health”**, “Leisure & Tourism” and “Planning, Regeneration, Economic Development & Transport”.

A change in Democratic Leadership arrangements (a move to a ‘Strong Leader’ model) was agreed at a special meeting of the Council held on 14th June 2010 and took effect in May 2011. Under this arrangement a Leader is appointed for a 4-year term, but the appointment may be reviewed annually.

The Overview & Scrutiny Committee (O&S) has been established to monitor the decisions of the Executive Committee and, via the appointment of Task and Finish Groups, to assist in policy development and review.

All matters that are due to go to the Executive Committee or full Council for decision may be considered by the O&S Committee (on which all political Groups are, by unanimous decision of the Council, not proportionately represented) or by an O&S Task & Finish Group.

The Council’s Directorates

The Chief Executive, as “Head of the Paid Service” is in overall charge of the services provided by the Officers of the Council.

Under the ‘Shared Services’ management arrangements with Bromsgrove District Council, the Council has appointed a Shared Chief Executive who is also Chief Executive of Bromsgrove DC. A Deputy Chief Executive has also been appointed and a new single shared senior management team for both Councils put in place, with effect from April 2010.

Officers are organised into three principal Directorates :

1. Finance & Resources Directorate
2. Leisure & Cultural Services Directorate
3. Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services Directorate

Additionally the following Services are led by the Chief Executive:

4. Business Transformation
5. Secretariat / Civic Support Services / Corporate Administration
6. Communications
7. Worcestershire Regulatory Shared Services

(Further information on Management Arrangements is to be found in Part 14 of this Constitution.)