



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY 18TH JUNE 2012
AT 6.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

MEMBERS: Councillors C. J. Bloore, J. S. Brogan, S. R. Colella,
Dr. B. T. Cooper, Mrs. R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce,
Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, R. J. Laight, P. Lammas, P. M. McDonald,
S. P. Shannon, Mrs. C. J. Spencer and L. J. Turner

AGENDA

1. Election of Chairman
2. Election of Vice Chairman
3. Apologies for Absence
4. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Arrangements
5. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 23rd April 2012 (Pages 1 - 8)
6. New Fly Posting Policy and Procedures - Presentation
7. Longbridge Statement of Principles Affordable Housing Provision - Presentation
8. Quarter 4 Customer Service Updates Report (Pages 9 - 24)
9. Planning Policy Task Group - Response to Cabinet Interim Report (Pages 25 - 34)
10. Forward Plan of Key Decisions (Pages 35 - 44)

11. Overview and Scrutiny Board Draft Annual Report 2011/12 (for information and comment) (Pages 45 - 80)
12. Quarterly Recommendation Tracker Report (Revised format for comment) (Pages 81 - 86)
13. Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme (Pages 87 - 92)
14. WCC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (For Information) (Pages 93 - 112)
15. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

7th June 2012



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Declaration of Interests - Explained

Definition of Interests

A Member has a **PERSONAL INTEREST** if the issue being discussed at a meeting affects the well-being or finances of the Member, the Member's family or a close associate more than most other people who live in the ward affected by the issue.

Personal interests are also things relating to an interest the Member must register, such as any outside bodies to which the Member has been appointed by the Council or membership of certain public bodies.

A personal interest is also a **PREJUDICIAL INTEREST** if it affects:

- The finances, or
- A regulatory function (such as licensing or planning)

Of the Member, the Member's family or a close associate **AND** which a reasonable member of the public with knowledge of the facts would believe likely to harm or impair the Member's ability to judge the public interest.

Declaring Interests

If a Member has an interest they must normally declare it at the start of the meeting or as soon as they realise they have the interest.

EXCEPTION:

If a Member has a **PERSONAL INTEREST** which arises because of membership of another public body the Member only needs to declare it if and when they speak on the matter.

If a Member has both a **PERSONAL AND PREJUDICIAL INTEREST** they must not debate or vote on the matter and must leave the room.

EXCEPTION:

If a Member has a prejudicial interest in a matter being discussed at a meeting at which members of the public are allowed to make representations, give evidence or answer questions about the matter, the Member has the same rights as the public and can also attend the meeting to make representations, give evidence or answer questions **BUT THE MEMBER MUST LEAVE THE ROOM ONCE THEY HAVE FINISHED AND CANNOT DEBATE OR VOTE.**

However, the Member must not use these rights to seek to improperly influence a decision in which they have a prejudicial interest.

For further information please contact Committee Services, Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 23RD APRIL 2012 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Colella (Chairman), P. Lammas (Vice-Chairman), C. J. Bloore, J. S. Brogan, Dr. B. T. Cooper, Mrs. R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce, Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, Mrs. H. J. Jones (Substitute for R. J. Laight, present from Minute No. 113/11 to Minute No. 117/11), P. M. McDonald, S. P. Shannon, Mrs. C. J. Spencer (present from Minute No. 113/11 to Minute No. 119/11) and L. J. Turner

Observers: Councillor C. B. Taylor

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Mrs. A. Heighway, Ms. S. Horrobin, Mr. C. Santoriello-Smith, Ms. A. Glennie, Ms. J. Bayley and Ms. A. Scarce

113/11 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor R. J. Laight.

114/11 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

Councillor Mrs. C. J. Spencer declared a personal interest as a member of the board of Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) and Councillor S. P. Shannon declared a personal interest as a member of the board of B.H.I. (A subsidiary of BDHT), in respect of item 5, pre-scrutiny of the Tenancy Strategy 2012-14.

115/11 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 26th March 2012 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

116/11 **PRESENTATION ON THE EFFECT OF THE GOVERNMENT HOUSING REFORMS AND IMPACT ASSESSMENT**

The Board received a presentation on the impact of Welfare and Housing Benefit Reform from the Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer, which the Board had requested following its meeting held on 27th February 2012. The presentation covered the following areas:

- Homelessness and the statutory duty of the Council.

- Welfare Reform and the work being carried out in conjunction with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) to evaluate who would be affected by changes to Local Housing Allowance rates (LHAs).
- The single room rate benefit changes – this would now only be available for those people over the age of 35 years.
- The under occupation housing benefit changes for social tenants (this would be a 14% reduction of benefits for 1 spare room and 25% for 2 spare rooms) and the work being carried out to assist people affected by the changes within the district .
- The anticipated demand in the Housing Options Service.
- Use of temporary accommodation and the budget for bed and breakfast accommodation.
- An overview of the benefit cap and associated risks prior to the introduction of Universal Credit.
- An overview of the introduction of Universal Credit in October 2013 and the risks associated with this, including direct monthly payments to applicants, budgeting and the loss of working relationships with the benefit teams.
- Areas which had been discussed by key partners at the Welfare Reform Conference in February 2012, including number of households affected, sourcing of alternative accommodation and budget advice, together with solutions to those issues raised.
- The establishment of a credit union within the area (research was currently underway to explore the options available) and work with other registered providers.
- The work of the Under Occupation Group set up between the Council and BDHT.
- The work of the Welfare Reform Steering Group in preventing homelessness and the use of bed and breakfast accommodation and the wider issues of the Welfare Reform.

The Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer informed Members that a report on the findings of the Welfare Reform Steering Group would be prepared for presentation to Cabinet in September 2012 and an update could be provided to a future Board meeting if required.

Members discussed the following areas in detail:

- Under what circumstances people would not be asked to downsize in respect of under occupation, for example where specific adaptations for a disability had been made to a property.
- The effect on children should they have to move to accommodation in a different area or bed and breakfast accommodation, for example moving schools.
- The cost of bed and breakfast accommodation if the Council did not take any action to address the forthcoming changes.
- The role of the Citizens Advice Bureau in providing money and debt advice and the funding of additional staff to assist with this support.
- Discretionary housing payment funding allocation, the available budget and any refund provided by Central Government.

- Preventative work and support to ensure that families were not evicted and made homeless due to rent arrears.
- The number of families affected by the benefit cap.
- The potential number of people with other Registered Providers that could be affected by the under occupation benefit changes.
- How the Council would operate and monitor the number of people living at a property in order to implement the Under Occupation benefit changes.
- The payment of removal costs for families who were required to “downsize” due to the Under Occupation benefit changes.

The Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer confirmed to the Board that the benefit cap and Under Occupation sanctions would come into effect from April 2013, however BDHT were already being pro-active in working towards mitigating the impact of the Under Occupation changes. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Board receive a progress report on the impact of the Welfare Reforms at the meeting to be held on 10th September 2012.

117/11 **TENANCY STRATEGY - PRE-SCRUTINY REPORT**

The Chairman invited the Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer to introduce this item. The Board was reminded that it had requested sight of the Tenancy Strategy at a very early stage and advised that there were several discrepancies within the report and draft Strategy which had since been amended. The document would go out for consultation shortly and the findings would be presented to Cabinet in July 2012. Under the Localism Act the Council was expected to produce a Tenancy Strategy by 15th January 2013, this was therefore a new document. The Tenancy Strategy related to the letting of all social and affordable rent housing within the district, including adapted properties and sheltered units, however it did not include temporary accommodation or specialist supportive units. The Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer provided the Board with details and answered questions from Members on the following areas:

- Guidance to Registered Providers in respect of tenancies that are granted.
- Flexible and fixed term tenancies and conditions under which the Council would want the Registered Providers to provide such tenancies.
- The circumstances under which a 2 year minimum period of tenancy would be provided.
- Circumstances under which Lifetime Tenancies would be provided and maintaining existing Lifetime Tenancies.
- The shortage of social housing in the District and how to make the best use of existing stock.
- Objectives of the Strategy – to ensure that affordable housing met local housing need.
- The Countywide Housing Strategy

- The conversion of tenancies to the Affordable Rent Model and ensuring that prospective tenants are fully aware of the cost of such units.
- The disposal of stock by Registered Providers.
- The allocation of stock under the Localism Act
- The development of a Homelessness Policy
- The risk of homelessness linked to the placing of more people into private rented sector housing and the Council's relationship with private landlords.
- The availability of properties within rural areas and the effect of this on young people's ability to remain in those areas.
- The flexibility within the allocation legislation for social housing and the interpretation of Localism.

Officers noted several suggested amendments by Members to the wording of the Draft Tenancy Strategy and confirmed that, where appropriate, these would be picked up within the consultation process. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Report and Draft Tenancy Strategy as detailed in Appendix 1 be noted; and
- (b) Officers provide the Board with details of any disposal of stock which has taken place by BDHT and details of any claw back clause still in existence through BDHT.

118/11 **ENFORCEMENT AND FIXED PENALTY NOTICES UPDATE REPORT**

The Chairman invited the Environmental Services Manager to introduce the report. Members were reminded that an update had been requested following implementation of the new scheme, details of which had been presented to the Board at its meeting on 5th April 2011.

Members were reminded that the strategy included a staged approach where the Enforcement Officer would use their discretion in taking the appropriate enforcement action and that the work was accompanied by a publicity and campaign programme to raise awareness of the work of the team. The particular areas currently covered by this were dog fouling, fly-tipping and littering. The service commenced following the Council's adoption of the strategy and publicity programme in October 2011 and was delivered by the Community Safety Team.

The Board discussed the following areas in more detail:

- The summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken – in particular the “no further action” statistics.
- The evidence gathering process in order to take and carry through enforcement action.
- Fly tipping - the circumstances and stage at which Enforcement action would or could be taken.

- Graffiti – in particular if this was on private land and the level of investigation involved.
- Publicity campaign, in respect of dog fouling and the difficulty in issuing fixed penalty notices for this offence.
- Development of the service – including processes (training and investigation) in order to carry out enforcement.
- The ability to issue penalties in respect of un-adopted roads.

In response to Member comment, the Executive Director for Leisure, Environment and Community Services undertook to feedback to Members in respect of whether the Environmental Protection Act 1990 was the relevant legislation which could have been used in taking action in respect of the ongoing issues at the Marlbrook Tip site. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the Board receive a quarterly summary of Environmental Enforcement action taken in order to monitor progress of the new service.

119/11 **BURGLARY AND VEHICLE CRIME IN BROMSGROVE UPDATE REPORT**

The Chairman invited the Senior Community Safety Officer to introduce the report. The Board was informed that all the information and statistics provided within the report had been provided by West Mercia Police. Members' attention was drawn to the 25.5% decrease in the number of burglary offences in 2011/12 compared to 2010/11 together with the detection rate of these offences. Attention was also drawn to the legal implications within the report and the Board noted that if it wished to take this matter further the most appropriate route would be through the Board's West Mercia Police Authority representative, Councillor Brandon Clayton.

The Board discussed the following areas in detail:

- Distraction robbery and if these were included within the statistics provided.
- Clarity as to at what point in the process a crime/incident was included within the statistics.
- Vehicle crimes and theft from unlocked motor vehicles in particular. (The Senior Community Safety Project Officer undertook to provide Members with details of the number of thefts from unlocked vehicles within each Ward.)
- The work of the Community Safety Team in supporting West Mercia Police in respect of the preventative work carried out.
- The link between known offenders being in custody or in the community which could lead to a decrease/increase in offences.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

120/11 **CABINET INTERIM RESPONSE TO THE PLANNING POLICY TASK GROUP REPORT - VERBAL UPDATE**

The Chairman had, as Chairman of the Planning Policy Task Group, presented the report to the Cabinet meeting held on 4th April 2012. After lengthy discussion Cabinet had requested clarification and further background information on Recommendations 1, 2, 3 and 6. All remaining recommendations had been endorsed. The Board agreed that the most suitable course of action was for the Task Group to hold a further meeting to discuss the points raised by Cabinet.

RESOLVED that the Planning Policy Task Group reconvene as soon as possible to discuss the points raised by Cabinet and report back to the Board meeting to be held on 18th June 2012.

121/11 **FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS**

The Forward Plan of Key Decisions was considered by the Board. As this was the final meeting of the Board for the current municipal year no further items were considered for pre-scrutiny.

RESOLVED that the Forward Plan be noted.

122/11 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board were informed that outstanding items on the Work Programme would be carried over to the 2012/13 Work Programme which would be discussed in detail at the meeting to be held on 18th June 2012.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted.

123/11 **WCC HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE (FOR INFORMATION)**

Councillor Dr. B. T. Cooper, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) informed Members that he had attended its meeting on 17th April 2012. A Member asked for clarification in respect of a point made in the minutes of the HOSC meeting held on 13th March 2012 "although Clinical Commissioning Groups (CCGs) would have differences which reflected local need, they would still work collaboratively". Councillor Dr. Cooper explained that there would be flexibility in how the CCGs were set up and differences in working practices for each individual CCG. This was still therefore very much a case of "work in progress" which would become clearer as the CCGs developed.

Councillor Dr. Cooper suggested that a representative from the CCG for Bromsgrove and Redditch be invited to attend a future meeting of the Board. He advised that the CCGs were required to be in place, in at least "shadow"

format by June 2012. The Board agreed that this should be included within the Work Programme for the September meeting.

Councillor Dr. Cooper informed Members that the HOSC had received 3 presentations at its meeting held on 17th April 2012, namely Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust Foundation Application, Salaried Dental Services and Worcestershire's Emergency Ophthalmology Service. The Emergency Ophthalmology Service was most relevant to residents in the District. At the moment the service was spread throughout the County and as there were major clinical concerns about the quality of this service, it had been agreed that it would be reviewed prior to the Acute Service Review. All acute eye services would therefore, during working hours and for the interim period, be based at Kidderminster Hospital.

The meeting closed at 8.37 p.m.

Chairman

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: 18th June 2012

MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT - QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Mark Bullivant
Portfolio Holder Consulted	√
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda de Warr – Head of Customer Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides the Board with customer feedback data for the fourth quarter of 2011/12.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to note the contents of the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 The Planning Policy Task Group recommended that Overview and Scrutiny Board receive a quarterly report giving details of customer feedback. This is the first report and details complaints and compliments for the 4th quarter of 2011/12, including Local Government Ombudsman complaints and information on how well we have handled these against our agreed timescales. There are no targets in respect of numbers of complaints and compliments as enforcing targets can lead to complaints not being recorded and compliments being solicited in order to meet targets which are have little meaning. Instead we will focus on learning from the feedback we receive.

Financial Implications

- 3.2 There are no direct financial implications.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no specific legal issues arising from this report. Any legal issues arising from complaints are dealt with on a case by case basis.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.4 The Every Customer Every Time Customer Experience Strategy was launched in March 2011 and sets out our vision for excellent customer

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: 18th June 2012

service provision and improve the customer experience when having contact with the Council.

- 3.5 Quarterly reporting is intended to ensure Members are aware of progress and updated in respect of customer feedback, especially complaints made in respect of service provision.
- 3.6 Good customer service improves value for money by reducing failure demand. Improvements to the way we handle complaints has resulted in less officer time spent chasing responses and re-investigating.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.7 It is important to monitor aspects of customer service to ensure that we are improving and developing. Customers need to know that we respond properly to complaints, act on the issues raised and report on them. Customer feedback is a valuable tool for understanding what is going well, and what not so well, within the organisation. These form vital information for all transformation reviews.
- 3.8 Measures provide us with useful information about what is happening in our organisation and help us to understand where changes may impact.
- 3.9 Although led by the Head of Customer Services, the customer experience strategy applies to all services and progress against the action plan involves offices from many services working together to the benefit of customers.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 It is important to analyse the Council's complaints or compliments and for the Council to identify whether there are any trends which need to be addressed and any lessons learned in order to improve the Council performance and service to the Customer. The Customer Service Centre data is important for monitoring service delivery and identifying areas for change or improvement.
- 4.2 Failure to monitor actions in respect of the customer experience strategy could result in failure to progress.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - **Making Experiences Count - Quarterly Customer Feedback Report Quarter 4**

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: 18th June 2012

The details to support the information provided within this report are held by Head of Customer Services

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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**EVERY CUSTOMER, EVERY TIME -
“Everybody Matters”**

**Making Experiences Count
Quarterly Customer Service Report to
Overview and Scrutiny**

1st January 2012 – 31st March 2012



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Introduction

This report provides Overview and Scrutiny Committee with information regarding the complaints and compliments received during this quarter and any other relevant feedback. We do not have targets in place to reduce complaints or increase compliments, but instead encourage all staff to ensure that all complaints and compliments are properly recorded as they are a valuable source of insight into how organisations are meeting customers needs.

Customer Feedback Analysis

Compliments and Complaints Received

The following table sets out the numbers of complaints and compliments received during the fourth quarter of 2011/12.

Dept	Compliments	Complaints	Complaint target met	Complaint upheld or partially upheld	Complaint not upheld	Still open
Community Services	5	0	0	0	0	
Customer Services	0	1	1	1	0	
Environmental Services	7	21	19	11	10	
Leisure and Culture	9	1	0	1	0	
Planning and Regeneration	6	2	2	0	2	
Resources	1	3	1	1	1	1
Totals	28	28	23	15	12	

These compare with the following statistics from last year:

	Total compliments	Total complaints	Dealt with in target time	Total complaints upheld as the Council made a mistake or could have done better
2010/11	123	186	133(71.5%)	82 (44%)
2011/12	109	146	111 (76%)	58 (39%)

This shows that there were less complaints in 2011/12. This was mainly due to problems with the garden waste service, which had resulted in an increase in complaints in 2010/11.

Work is continuing to support staff and managers to create a culture where complaints are used for positive effect and reporting complaints is not seen as detrimental.

What did we learn from the Complaints received?

The majority of complaints received this quarter had several factors in common which were:

- not keeping the customer informed;
- delays to services;
- not providing the service expected; and
- not treating the customer with respect.

These are all issues which we are addressing with staff through customer service training and the introduction of key behaviours for all staff which are monitored by managers through personal development reviews. The Systems Thinking reviews of service delivery will also bring positive change and will tackle most of these issues.

Time taken to respond to complaints

We aim to respond to customer complaints within 15 working days. 82% of complaints received during this quarter were dealt with within that timeframe. Where it has taken us longer to respond than expected, most customers were informed that there would be a delay. Staff have been reminded to keep the customer informed if the investigation is taking longer than expected and there will be a delay in responding.

An average of 76% of cases were responded to within the target time over the whole of 2011/12. Although this is a slightly higher than last year the actual number of complaints dealt with within this time has dropped. There does not appear to be a reason for this other than the nature of the complaints are variable and sometimes complex, and it can be difficult to predict the investigation time. Additionally failure to complete the necessary steps to close down the case can result in the case appearing to take longer than it might have.

Complaints Received	Number handled within target	1-2 days after target	3- 10 days after target	11- 21 After target
28	23	2	1	1
Reason		This is due to a user of the recording system not entering the correct date when closing cases. Further guidance has been provided to that person.	Complex and varied investigations- Benefits	Complex and varied investigations- Spadesbourne heating

Details of complaints and actions taken

It is important that we understand the scope of complaints received and what action was taken to address the issue.

We categorise complaints as:-

- ‘upheld’, where we are totally in the wrong, have made a mistake or could have done something better;
- ‘partially upheld’ where we can see that we were partly in the wrong but that there are also issues over which we either had no control or could not have acted differently; and
- ‘not upheld’ where our investigation shows that we have acted appropriately, or could not have done anything more.

The following table provides some detail on upheld or partially upheld complaints.

Service	Nature of Complaint	Action Taken/Improvement Action
Customer Services	Customer unhappy about the length of time it took to get through to CSC, very expensive, would have liked if there was a call back system, he wants a free system where he can call, should have been able to be transferred to other council numbers.	Apology given and advice given on what to do if line is busy.
Landscaping	Customer unhappy that the Tree Officer came onto her property, without introducing himself or stating his purpose why he was there. He did not speak to customer or leave a card at all. She saw a man arrive and talk to the tree surgeons.	Apology given – tree officer was checking the work of the tree surgeons.
Waste	Customer unhappy about the attitude of waste collector when she asked for help with her bins.	Apology given, waste collector advised about behaviour and performance to be monitored.
Waste	Customer rang to say that she is 91 and we keep missing her assisted collection.	Apology given, crew reminded to ensure this collection is made correctly.
Waste	Customer not happy bins are being left over driveway after collections, which is extremely dangerous, as her house is on a	Apology given and crew will monitor this situation.

	busy dual carriage way.	
Waste	Customer unhappy that the crew is leaving his bin at the next block of flats and he has to keep looking for them.	Apology given and crew will monitor this situation.
Waste	Customer originally contacted us to request a reduction in her Council tax bill as her bins are never emptied.	Apology given and arrangements made as to where she should put her bins for future collections.
Waste	Customer has an assisted collection and is unhappy that she has contacted us several times about the bin not being put back at side gate where they collect it from.	Customer visited and apology given, this collection will be monitored.
Waste	Customer unhappy that because a car was partially blocking access for the refuse vehicle, the crew purposely arranged the bins around the parked car so the driver would have to move them to drive away. She feels the behaviour was unnecessary and unprofessional.	Apology given and collection will be monitored as there are space problems on this road.
Waste	Customer has an assisted collection and is unhappy the last two weeks we have collected the bin but then left it on the kerbside.	Supervisor visited customer to apologise. This was due to an agency crew and will be monitored.
Waste	Customer told that bin would be emptied even if sticker had not arrived because they were allowing for cross over of people paying late. Then when advisor checked her details it was found that her payment had been entered in wrong - which meant she had not received a sticker.	Apology given and arrangement to collect waste.

Street Cleaning	Customer visited the toilets at 4.35pm with her 3 year old son. The toilets where closed and she pleaded with the attendant inside for her son to be able to use the toilet. The attendant advised that the toilets were closed! Customer explained that her son has only just been potty trained and he ended up wetting himself. The weather was extremely cold and he cried due to being cold and upset.	Apology given and the operatives will be told to keep toilets open to 5pm.
Street Cleansing	Customer unhappy that he has phoned service centre twice before about litter along the A38. He says the problem is still there and as far as he can see the litter has not been cleared.	Apology and explanation given about cleaning rotas.
Leisure	Dance & Bingo Club unhappy about the lack of heating in the Spadesbourne Suite for their dance sessions.	Apology given and heating will be monitored for these sessions.
Benefits	Customer unhappy that her confidential details regarding pensions and payments has been sent to someone else.	Apology given, this was a one off error but checks will be made in future.

Complaints recorded as not upheld are generally those where no error was found on the part of the Council, or there was nothing more that could have been done. Nonetheless the issue is still important to the customer which is why we record them and they can result in a change in practice where a trend can be identified.

In future we are planning to categorise complaints in greater detail. Here are details of some of the complaints reported as not upheld by the investigating officer.

Service	Nature of Complaint	Action Taken/Improvement Action
Waste	Customer not happy with rubbish collection over Christmas period had extra rubbish outside bin i.e.	Apology given and waste collected but no mistake made.

	4 bags and they were not taken away. Last year the extra bags left outside bin were collected.	
Waste	Customer paid by cheque for her garden waste collection two months ago, cheque has been cashed but she has now received a reminder. It would appear that the incorrect invoice number was entered when processing her cheque.	It would appear that the incorrect invoice number was entered when processing her cheque. <i>* This complaint should have been recorded as upheld and extra guidance has been provided to staff.</i>
Waste	Refuse sacks have been promised on two occasions and have never materialised. No call back from the depot when requested on Monday, and customer had to chase this herself again today.	Customer contacted and trade refuse collection explained. <i>* This complaint should probably have been recorded as upheld and extra guidance has been provided to staff.</i>
Waste	Customer unhappy that refuse vehicle was going at high speed and the driver completely cut the corner. She was able to brake and missed vehicle by a few centimeters Someone could have been crossing the road.	Waste supervisor has twice tried to speak to customer but she works away so he spoke to her husband. He apologised if the driving of the vehicle did not seem safe but the evidence from the on board camera does not support this claim.
Waste	Customer unhappy that we have changed the vehicles for waste collection and that this means a change to the weight of the bin.	Letter sent to explain why vehicles have changed after two home visits were not answered. <i>* This Complaint went to Stage 2 and was re-investigated</i>
Street Cleansing	Customer complained that the town centre toilets were closed at 430 last Thursday and this has happened several times now, They should be open until 5pm.	Problem with toilets so they had to be closed. <i>* This complaint should have been recorded as upheld and extra guidance has been provided to staff.</i>
Street Cleaning	Customer unhappy that the opening between Blunts and Card Shop in High Street - heavily splattered with pigeon	This is on private land but we have swept down the high street and jet washed the gate on the high street side.

	droppings.	<i>* Recorded as not upheld as BDC not responsible.</i>
Street Cleaning	Customer unhappy about the graffiti in his area.	Team have removed as much as possible and have now passed it on to Highways for further action. <i>* Recorded as not upheld as BDC as passed to another organisation for action but complaint should probably have been recorded as upheld and extra guidance has been provided to staff.</i>
Waste	Customer unhappy about change of vehicle collecting garden waste.	Explanation given about why changes have been made. No error on part of the Council.
Development Control	Customer concerned that we published all of their e-mails when we asked them not to after they discussed our concerns over application for planning on a plot next to them.	Customer was made aware that all comments made would be put on the public record, but chose to send comment anyway.
Development Control	Customer unhappy with behaviour of planning enforcement officer in connection with compliance of planning permission.	There was an error in the decision dates but it clearly shows that it refers to the amended plans. <i>* This Complaint went to Stage 2 and was re-investigated</i>
Council Tax	Customer unhappy that he has received a threatening letter despite doing everything he can to pay his arrears.	The customer owes three years of arrears and the team have tried to help making several payment arrangements. They have responded to this complaint twice asking the customer to meet with them to discuss what they can do to help but no response has been received.

** Comments of Head of Customer Services added after the complaint had been dealt with.*

“You said – we listened” – what did we change as a result of complaints?

We aim to use complaints to improve service delivery. They are also used in Systems Thinking transformation to inform the service of customer demand. Here are examples of how the service has adjusted service delivery as a result of complaints.

Waste Service - Communication with crews has been improved to ensure continuity and quality of service.

Town Toilets – Checks will be made to ensure that the toilets are available at the stated times.

Number of complaint escalated to Head of Customer Services

There were 2 complaints escalated to the Head of Customer Services, for further investigation or action.

Waste Collection – The customer was unhappy that we have changed the vehicles for waste collection and that this result in instructions to customers regarding the weight of the bin. After investigation it was found that the Council has not done anything wrong nor had we failed to meet agreed standards but the customer's expectations exceed what is possible

Development Control – The customer complained about the behaviour of a planning enforcement officer in connection with compliance of planning permission. After investigation no evidence was found to suggest that the initial complaint was not properly dealt with. A mistake made on the decisions notice was accepted and apologised for and there was no evidence that the Council had made further mistakes or not acted appropriately.

What did we learn from the compliments received?

From the compliments received we can see that customers appreciate the range of services the Council provides and when we deal with their requests in a timely and professional manner. Here are some of the compliments we have received.

Team	Compliment Detail
Shop Mobility	Thank you for your continued support and kindness, the help you gave us both in the past was very much appreciated. I'm sure without your help, my husband and I would have been housebound. You all make such a difference to people.
Leisure	Customer very happy with the way his event was organised in the Spadesbourne Suite.
Sports Development	Customer very happy with Paralympics clubs that have formed in Bromsgrove.
Sports Development	Disabled organisation phoned to say how happy they are with disabled sports facilities in Bromsgrove.

Leisure	Customer very happy about the range of activities available at the Spadesbourne for elderly people.
Landscaping	Thank you to the Tree Officer, following our site meeting. He was thoroughly calm and professional.
Waste	Customer very happy with way the Refuse supervisor sorted out his collection problems.
Development Control	Customer emailed to say that Bromsgrove's Planning Histories search is exemplary thanks to employees efforts.
Development Control	Customer very pleased with the prompt service he received.

Local Government Ombudsman (LGO) Complaints

There were no complaints referred from the Ombudsman this quarter.

A total of 24 complaints were made to the LGO during 2011/12. Of these 9 were considered to be premature complaints and referred back to the customer to contact the Council. In 7 cases the LGO gave advice but the complaint was outside their jurisdiction.

There were only 8 new matters received for formal investigation in the 12 months to 31st March and based on the 5 occasions first enquiry letters were sent the average response time was 19.8 days.

Of the cases passed to the Investigation Team, it was found that in 1 case the LGO had no powers to investigate and 1 was not taken any further because the LGO found that it was not justified.

The LGO made the decision in 4 cases there was some injustice but these were remedied during the course of the investigation. These related to Council Tax (1 case), Planning matters (2 cases), and Private Housing grants (1 case).

Case 1 related to Council Tax. The complainant had a long history of arrears and non payment dating back over several financial years. On one matter the customer had made an arrangement and was paying by installments. The customer moved away from the area and although continued to pay on the arrangement the customer failed to notify the Council of the change of address. The Council had instructed bailiffs on an earlier debt and the bailiffs traced the customer to his new address. The complaint to the ombudsman was that the Council was pursuing when payment was being made.

The Council put any further collection of the earlier debt on hold and investigated the matter. As a result of the investigations the Council agreed to write off part of the earlier debts on the basis

that the Council had provided confused information about what he owed and also re-referred the debts when it shouldn't have done.

Case 2 related to a home improvement grant administered by the strategic housing team in conjunction with care and repair (now replaced by Festival Housing). The home owners were dissatisfied over the length of the process to apply for a grant and have the work done, and the actual standard of workmanship carried out on behalf of the Council through Care and Repair. The LGO ultimately found that the work itself was of a satisfactory standard once remedial works had been done by care and repair to improve the original job but that the customer had been affected by delays. Care and Repair refunded their fees to the Council and as a local settlement the Council agreed to pass this back to the customer.

Cases 3 and 4 both related to the notification policy in respect of planning applications and the Council agreed to update the policy on neighbour notification, to have clearer processes in Development Control for dealing with our own applications and to meet with the residents to discuss any matters we can include in the build to address their concerns.

Customer feedback in respect of complaint handling

Since April 2011 we have been asking customers for feedback on how their complaint was handled. The response this quarter tells us that **50%** of customers that responded are satisfied with way we are handling their complaint.

Those were happy made the following comments:-

- I am satisfied but think it's quite poor that no one has actually spoke to me directly;
- Well handled, officer visited me at home to sort out problem; and
- Handled very well

Comments received from those who were unhappy about how their complaint had been handled include:-

- I was passed to two different departments before I could get a satisfactory response;
- The Council should deal with complaints more speedily and effectively; and
- The officer concerned didn't answer my questions - that is why I had to complain.

There are plans in place for further training and support for officers dealing with complaints, in light of the recommendations from the Planning Policy Task Group.

Amanda de Warr
Head of Customer Services
April 2012

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

18th June 2012

PLANNING POLICY TASK GROUP

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service for Overview and Scrutiny	Claire Felton – Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	All Ward Councillors were invited to join the Task Group
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To consider the findings and recommendations from the Scrutiny investigation undertaken by the Planning Policy Task Group.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are requested to:

- (a) consider and approve the revised recommendations attached at Appendix 1; and
- (b) submit the revised recommendations to the Cabinet for approval.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 These are detailed within the Planning Policy Task Group report previously submitted to the Board meeting held on 26th March 2012.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 These are detailed within the Planning Policy Task Group report previously submitted to the Board meeting held on 26th March 2012.

Service/Operation Implications

- 3.3 Overview and scrutiny is a key part of the Council’s democratic decision making process and enables non-executive Members of the Council to put forward recommendations for policy development, policy review and service improvement.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.4 N/A

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 N/A

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Response to Cabinet Interim Response

Appendix 2 – Cabinet Interim Response

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Planning Policy Task Group Report.

7. KEY

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Tel: 01527 881443

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

PLANNING POLICY TASK GROUP

REVISED WORDINGS IN RESPONSE TO CABINET INTERIM RESPONSE

Recommendation 1

That a mechanism be put in place to ensure that:

- (a) where conditions have been attached to a planning application and monitoring is required then the Planning and Enforcement team should allow for this to be discharged fully to the required level of detail that the condition(s) specify within their work. This should be carried out, irrespective of the cost, to ensure that the conditions are met and where appropriate, enforced.

(N.B. The lack of resources to enforce a condition on a planning application would not be sufficient to either refuse the application or to not include the condition if it was deemed a necessary part of the planning permission. It may be prudent to estimate the cost of monitoring or enforcement before a decision on an application is made, in order that a decision as to who meets that cost can be determined and to ensure that any monitoring is carried out effectively.)

Recommendation 3

It is recognised that on occasion there will be need for some form of community engagement for example a public meeting(s). This will act as a forum to improve lines of communication and is to be developed between senior officers and residents in respect of larger more complex planning applications. This would be a recommendation from the Planning Committee and reviewed periodically by that Committee.

Recommendation 6

That a mechanism be put in place to ensure that enforcement cases are recorded and regularly up dated with a audit trail of actions and documents and correspondence on the electronic system accessible via the Council's 'Orb'.

Planning Policy Task Group Members
11th May 2012

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Cabinet Interim Response to the Overview and Scrutiny Task Group Planning Policy Report

Introduction

At the Cabinet meeting on 4th April 2012 consideration was given to the report of the Planning Policy Task Group. The Leader welcomed the Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor S. R. Colella to the meeting and invited him to introduce the report.

Councillor Colella gave background information on the purpose of the Task Group and explained that it had been set up to investigate the effectiveness of planning conditions and the enforcement of breaches of these conditions. The Task Group had used existing case studies to look at the effectiveness of planning conditions and the Council's Enforcement Policy and to suggest where improvements could be made.

The Cabinet considered each of the recommendations in turn. The Cabinet's response to some of the recommendations would require further consideration from the Overview and Scrutiny Board and therefore a final response, including implementation dates, was deferred. It was felt appropriate however to provide this interim report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Response to recommendations

Please find below responses to the recommendations contained within the scrutiny report:

Recommendation 1

That a mechanism be put in place to ensure that :

- (a) where conditions cannot be monitored within existing resources, an estimate of the resources required to monitor those conditions be clearly identified ;
- (b) the applicant be made aware at the earliest possible stage of the need to ensure that these conditions are adhered to and properly monitored in line with the conditions applied; and
- (c) where the planning officer recommends refusal of a planning application and the Planning Committee go against the recommendation, sufficient time should be given within the Planning Committee Meeting to discuss conditions.

Cabinet Response

- (a) there was concern that it may often be difficult to decide what additional resources would be appropriate and therefore to estimate that cost. In addition, whilst an estimate may be made the Council may not then have the resources to meet that cost. It was therefore felt that that this part of the recommendation should be referred back to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for further consideration;
- (b) this was agreed;
- (c) this was agreed;

Recommendation 2

- (a) that a review of the Bromsgrove Standard Planning Conditions be carried out as soon as practicably possible, but within six months of this report being presented to the Cabinet; and
- (b) that Planning officer training be formalised to ensure appropriate conditions are identified for routine and non-routine applications.

Cabinet Response

- (a) this was agreed; and
- (b) this was agreed but in addition it was felt that a suitable level of Member training in this regard should also be undertaken to assist Members in understanding the appropriateness of conditions.

Recommendation 3

That monitoring groups are not used in the future. However it is recognised that on occasion there may need to be some form of community engagement for larger more complex planning applications.

Cabinet Response

It was felt that there may be a place for monitoring groups in some circumstances and that in the past confusion had been caused because of the lack of proper terms of reference and reporting lines. This recommendation was therefore referred back to the Overview and Scrutiny Board with a request that consideration be given as to how any future monitoring group could be set up to work more effectively.

Recommendation 4

That a detailed review of the Planning Enforcement Policy, which was adopted in April 2011 (as encouraged in Section 8 – Conclusion), be carried out giving particular attention to Sections 4 – Enforcement Procedures (Informal) and 7 – Council’s Commitment to Complainants.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

Recommendation 5

That a case officer be appointed and remain responsible as the point of contact for each enforcement case to ensure continuity and an electronic case file be set up and open to view by colleagues and management.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

Recommendation 6

That a mechanism be put in place in order for control systems to be developed to ensure enforcement cases are recorded and available upon request to Ward Members.

Cabinet Response

It was queried whether this information was already available and what advantage there would be in establishing a further mechanism. This recommendation was therefore referred back to the Overview and Scrutiny Board for further consideration.

Recommendation 7

That the Planning Committee receives a quarterly report in respect of all new and outstanding planning enforcement cases.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

Recommendation 8

That thorough the Transformation programme a review and mapping exercise be carried out in respect of the process post planning application approval stage and that the results of this be shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

Recommendation 9

That the Internal Audit Report recommendations be supported and included within the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Quarterly Recommendation Tracker report to ensure that progress on the implementation is monitored in an appropriate and timely manner.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

Recommendation 10

That a quarterly report be made available to the Overview and Scrutiny Board to enable Members and officers to be aware of repeat or common themed compliments and complaints (in order to address such complaints).

Cabinet Response

This was agreed

Recommendation 11

That all Heads of Service ensure mechanisms are in place to ensure that when a service request escalates to the extent that there is or could be a critical failure of any nature, they are immediately made aware of the situation and

- (a) that Heads of Service ensure all staff are made aware of and understand the definitions of a complaint; and
- (b) that the Head of Customer Service provides additional guidance in respect of recording service requests which may also be a valid complaint.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

Recommendation 12

That the Head of Customer Service and Human Resources work together to establish a mandatory management training programme to:

- (a) ensure that all managers of the Council are given support to enable them to respond, both verbally and in writing, to all customers in a timely and appropriate manner, with regular reviews of the success of such training carried out; and
- (b) ensure that the Overview and Scrutiny Board receive regular updates to ensure this has been implemented.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

The Leader thanked the Task Group for their work to date in producing the report which had provoked a good discussion and some worthwhile recommendations. The Cabinet looked forward to receiving the further comments of the Overview and Scrutiny Board on the issues the Cabinet had referred back for further consideration.

Councillor Kit Taylor - Portfolio Holder for Planning.

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FORWARD PLAN OF KEY DECISIONS

1 JUNE TO 30 SEPTEMBER 2012

This Forward Plan lists the **Key Decisions** which it is proposed to take during the period 1 June to 30 September 2012. **Key Decisions** are executive decisions which must be taken or delegated by the Council's Cabinet and relate to matters which fall within the Council's agreed Budget and Policy Framework.

Key Decisions are those executive decisions which are likely to:

- (i) result in the Council incurring expenditure, foregoing income or the making of savings in excess of £50,000 or which are otherwise significant having regard to the Council's budget for the service or function to which the decision relates; or
- (ii) be significant in terms of its effect on communities living or working in an area comprising two or more wards in the district;

Key Decisions will include:

1. A decision which would result in any expenditure or saving by way of a reduction in expenditure of £50,000 provided the expenditure or saving is specifically approved in the Medium Term Financial Plan.
2. A virement of any amount exceeding £50,000 provided it is within any virement limits approved by the Council;
3. Any proposal to dispose of any Council asset with a value of £50,000 or more or which is otherwise considered significant by the Corporate Property Officer;
4. Any proposal to cease to provide a Council service (other than a temporary cessation of service of not more than 6 months).
5. Any proposal which would discriminate for or against any minority group.

Further details of each Key Decision are appended to the Forward Plan. To assist with internal forward planning, this Plan also lists other non-key decisions which the Cabinet is expected to make during the specified four month period. It also includes decisions to be taken over a longer period where these are known. The Forward Plan is updated and published on the Council's website on a monthly basis.

CABINET MEMBERSHIP

Councillor R. Hollingworth	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Partnerships and Economic Development
Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Health and Well-being
Councillor M. J. A. Webb	Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Cultural Services, Environmental Services and Emergency Planning
Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth	Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, Business Transformation (including ICT) with special responsibility for the Town Centre Regeneration and Special Projects
Councillor C. B. Taylor	Portfolio Holder for Planning, Core Strategy and Regulatory Services
Councillor M. A. Bullivant	Portfolio Holder for Policy, Performance, Communications, Customer Services, Legal, Equalities, Democratic Services and Human Resources

CONSULTATION AND REPRESENTATIONS

For **Key Decisions** the summary document appended to the Forward Plan sets out details of any proposed consultation process. Any person/organisation not listed who would like to be consulted or who wishes to make representations on the proposed decision are encouraged to get in touch with the relevant report author as soon as possible before the proposed date of the decision. Contact details are provided.

Alternatively you may write to The Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove B60 1AA or email: committee@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Item No.	Decision Taker & Expected Date of Decision	Original Expected Date of Decision	Proposed Decision	Type of Decision (Key or Non-Key)	Lead Councillor/ Portfolio Holder	Comments
1	Cabinet 6 June 2012		Earmarked Reserves/ Capital Budget Carry Forward Requests	Non-Key*	Councillor R. Hollingworth	*Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council on 18 July 2012
2	Cabinet 6 June 2012		Local Development Scheme	Non-Key	Councillor C. B. Taylor	
3	Cabinet 6 June 2012		Street Naming & Numbering	Non-Key	Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth	
4	Cabinet 4 July 2012		Income Management and Payment Card Industry Compliance (request for capital resources)	Non-Key*	Councillor R. Hollingworth	*Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council on 18 July 2012
5	Cabinet 4 July 2012 (or 5 September 2012)		Parking Review (including Blue Badge Holders)	Non-Key*	Councillor M. J. A. Webb	*If any decisions require Council approval these will be referred to the next possible meeting of the full Council
6	Cabinet 4 July 2012	Cabinet 7 March 2012	Countywide Homelessness Strategy	Key	Councillor C. B. Taylor	Deferred by officers for further consideration
7	Cabinet 4 July 2012		Corporate Performance Monitoring Quarter 4 2011/12	Non-Key	Councillor M. A. Bullivant	

8	Cabinet 4 July 2012		Financial Monitoring Quarter 4 2011/12	Non-Key	Councillor R. Hollingworth	
9	Cabinet 4 July 2012		Refurbishment Scheme - Bromsgrove High Street	Non-Key	Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth	
10	Cabinet 4 July 2012	Cabinet 6 June 2012	Review of RIPA Policy (annual operational review)	Non-Key	Councillor M. A. Bullivant	Deferred by officers for further consideration
11	Cabinet 5 September 2012		Budget Preparation Guidelines 2013/14 and Initial Estimates / Budget Projections for 2014/15 to 2015/16	Non-Key*	Councillor R. Hollingworth	*Cabinet will make any recommendations to the full Council on 26 September 2012
12	Cabinet 5 September 2012	Cabinet 6 June 2012	Tenancy Strategy	Key	Councillor C. B. Taylor	Deferred by officers for further consultation
13	Cabinet 5 September 2012	Cabinet 6 June 2012	Fly Posting Policy	Non-Key	Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey	Delayed by officers for further consideration
14	Cabinet 6 June 2012		Land Disposal Policy	Non-Key	Councillor R. Hollingworth	
15	Cabinet 26 September 2012		Statement of Accounts 2011/12	Non-Key*	Councillor R. Hollingworth	*Cabinet will make recommendations to the full Council on 26 September 2012
16	Cabinet 7 November 2012		LSP Annual Report 2011/12	Non-Key	Councillor R. Hollingworth	

Note: There is no Cabinet meeting scheduled for August 2012

KEY DECISION

Proposed to be made by
the Cabinet on
4th July 2012

<p>LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER Kit Taylor</p>	<p>ITEM COUNTY HOMELESSNESS STRATEGY</p>	<p>WARDS AFFECTED All</p>
<p>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER The County Homelessness Strategy</p> <p>REPORT AUTHOR Andy Coel Strategic Housing Manager</p>	<p>SUMMARY The report introduces a revised and updated County Homelessness Strategy for approval. The Strategy sits under the County Homelessness Strategy and sets out the County’s goals and aspirations for preventing homelessness or meeting the needs of those who become homeless. The Strategy will be in two parts – the Countywide element and then a series of local Action Plans for each partner local authority.</p>	<p>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN The Strategy is relevant for anyone who is facing homelessness or actually homeless across this District.</p>

CONSULTATION DETAILS	Method of Consultation	Consultation period or dates
<p>Stakeholders Service users, partners and other stakeholders</p>	<p>Paper and telephone survey of those who have accessed housing options services across the County. Interviews of homeless households. Countywide Home Truths event for stakeholders.</p> <p>Draft report circulated to partners and stakeholders</p>	<p>July – Sept 2011</p> <p>Oct – Nov 2011</p>

DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

Other local authorities across the County.

Item No. 12

KEY DECISION

Proposed to be made by
the Cabinet on **5th September 2012**

LEAD MEMBER/ PORTFOLIO HOLDER	ITEM	WARDS AFFECTED
<p>DOCUMENTS TO BE CONSIDERED BY THE DECISION TAKER 'Report of the Head of Community Services'</p> <p>REPORT AUTHOR Head of Strategic Housing</p>	<p>SUMMARY</p> <p>The Localism Act 2011 introduces a number of housing reforms including the ability for local authorities and social landlords to grant fixed term tenancies with limited security of tenure and changes to the allocation of housing and the law relating to homelessness.</p> <p>The Localism Act places a duty on the Local Authority to prepare and publish a Tenancy Strategy by November 2012.</p> <p>A Tenancy Strategy has been developed by working in close consultation with our Registered Providers, stakeholders and the Housing Management Department of Redditch Borough Council.</p> <p>The strategy will come forward, following the close of the consultation period, for approval by Members.</p> <p>The report will update members on new guidance for the allocation of accommodation that it is anticipated will be issued by mid summer. The guidance is expected to</p>	<p>ALL</p> <p>REASONS FOR BEING ON THE FORWARD PLAN</p> <p>Affects two or more wards within the District</p>

	addresses issues including the ability to discharge the homelessness duty through the use of private sector rented housing, greater priority for members of the armed forces and additional ability for LAs to formulate local allocation and lettings policy.	
<p>CONSULTATION DETAILS</p> <p>Stakeholders District Councils County Council Supporting People RSLs Homes and Communities Agency GOWM OT Service PCT</p>	<p>Method of Consultation</p> <p>A multi agency consultation event was hosted by Bromsgrove on the 18th November 2011 for authorities across Worcestershire that enabled all parties to contribute through a workshop approach.</p> <p>A draft Tenancy Strategy is being circulated to stakeholders for comments to be returned by the 27th April 2012.</p> <p>In addition, Localism introduces an opportunity for local authorities to discharge the homelessness duty into the private rented sector, subject to suitability guidelines and the granting of a minimum 12 month tenancy. A Homeless Policy dealing with homelessness generally and discharging the Homeless Duty into the Private Rented Sector has been developed collaboratively with bdht.</p> <p>Localism has also introduced a requirement to ensure that members of the Armed Forces get additional priority for social housing, where they have a reasonable preference and urgent housing need. Where they have been discharged from the forces within the last 5 years they should not be discounted from the local authorities waiting list due to residency criteria.</p>	<p>Consultation period or dates</p> <p>Last week of January - 29th February 2012</p>

DECISION TO BE MADE IN PARTNERSHIP WITH

All six districts are adopting individual Tenancy Strategies. However an approach is being undertaken whereby there is a Countywide framework developed to achieve a degree of uniformity across the County but still allowing for individual authority strategies to reflect the more localised detail necessary. The Bromsgrove strategy is being developed in collaboration with Redditch BC to achieve maximum uniformity. The Homeless Policy has been developed in partnership with bdht who deliver the homeless service on behalf of the Council. The Allocations policy change is supported by the sub regional Home Choice Plus Steering Group

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Overview and Scrutiny **Annual Report**

2011-2012



Bromsgrove
District Council

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2011-12

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FOREWORD BY THE CHAIRMAN

Welcome to Bromsgrove District Council's 2011/12 Overview and Scrutiny Board Annual Report.

This last year has again proved to be very busy with a number of important strategic reports being presented to the members of the Board as well as it having to manage an ever increasing work programme.

A number of key areas of the Council's business has been scrutinised including how changes in legislation and service delivery will affect the people of Bromsgrove.

The depth of scrutiny and quality of investigations is a testimony to the Council's commitment to support the role of the Board as a 'critical friend' and in its drive towards effective, robust scrutiny to improve frontline services for the people of Bromsgrove.

The Board has also reviewed its work programme and improved the quarterly scrutiny of performance indicators. I believe that this will help demonstrate the huge steps that this Council is making in improving the service offered to its customers as well as giving the opportunity for the members to ensure performance continues to improve.

I am also pleased to report that the function of the Board has been embraced by members, portfolio holders and officers, with excellent attendance and good quality reports and presentations.

I would like to thank all Board Members for their keen questioning and striving to make the strategic contribution of Board valued by the Executive Team and the Council. My sincere thanks are extended to the Committee Services Officers for their continued hard work and contribution to the success of the Board in 2011/12.

Councillor Steve Colella
Chairman, Overview and Scrutiny Board

INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to present the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report which outlines our work during 2011-12 and provides general information on the overview and scrutiny processes at Bromsgrove District Council.

Overview and Scrutiny is a key part of the democratic decision making process in local councils, where elected councillors outside of the Cabinet can contribute to shaping council policy, community well being and accountability. This is done by reviewing council services and policies, community issues and key decisions and making recommendations for improvement.

The four key principles of Overview and Scrutiny are:

- Provides a 'critical friend' challenge to executive policy makers and decision-makers.
- Enables the voice and concerns of the public to be heard.
- Is carried out by 'independent minded members' who lead and own the scrutiny role.
- Drives improvement in public services

The Members of the Board consider these principles when selecting topics to investigate whether it is holding the executive to account, reviewing policies, policy development or scrutiny of external bodies.

MEMBERSHIP (The Board is made up of 13 Members)



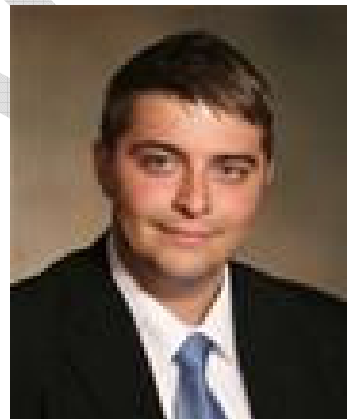
**Cllr. Steve Colella
(Chairman)**



**Cllr. Peter Lammas
(Vice-Chairman)**



Cllr. Chris Bloore



Cllr. James Brogan



Cllr. Dr. Brian Cooper



Cllr. Mrs. Rita Dent



Cllr. Keith Grant-Pearce



Cllr. Mrs. June Griffiths



Cllr. Rod Laight



Cllr. Peter McDonald



Cllr. Sean Shannon



Cllr. Mrs. Caroline Spencer



Cllr. Les Turner

THE ROLE OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Overview and Scrutiny is a key part of the Council's political structure and it plays a vital role in improving the services that people of the District use, whether a resident, employed here or just visiting. It does not just look at the way the Council does things, it can look at anything which affects the lives of people within the District and it allows citizens to have a greater say in Council matters.

Overview and Scrutiny allows Councillors to review and scrutinise decisions, look at existing practices and make recommendations to help ensure the residents of Bromsgrove District receive excellent services. The aim is to ensure overview and scrutiny adds value to the Council's decision-making process and makes a positive contribution towards policy development.

The terms of reference of the Overview and Scrutiny Board also include the following:

- Overall responsibility for monitoring performance improvement.
- Identifying unsatisfactory progress or performance and making recommendations on remedial action to the Cabinet.
- Overall responsibility for monitoring the Council Plan and the Sustainable Community Strategy and making recommendations to the Cabinet.

The detailed terms of reference and procedure rules for the Overview and Scrutiny Board can be found at Part 3 (Part C) and Part 8 of the Council Constitution. The Council Constitution can be accessed by using the following link.

<http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/cms/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-committees/decision-making/council-constitution.aspx>

Number of Meetings

The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on a monthly basis during 2011-12 and there were a total of 12 meetings throughout the year. The meeting arranged for 19th December 2011 was cancelled due to lack of business.

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCESS

Overview and Scrutiny Work Planning

It was not necessary to hold a Work Planning Workshop in 2011-12 as many of the topics carried over from the previous year's work programme continued to be relevant in the new municipal year and the Board agreed at its first meeting on 13th June 2011 that these should remain on the Work Programme for 2011-12. Several new topic proposals were also put forward and agreed by Members, which were incorporated within the Work Programmes for 2011-12.

Topic Proposals

Any Councillor, member of the public or officer can submit an overview and scrutiny proposal. The Board will then make a decision whether or not the suggested topic will be included on the work programme. In making that decision, the Board considers points such as:

- Reasons given and supporting evidence as to why the subject needs to be considered
- Links to Council priorities
- Possible key outcomes that the proposer anticipates could be achieved.

Other relevant points that are taken into account are whether it is of key interest to the public, if it is a poorly performing service, contributes to the Council Plan, an area of concern identified by internal or external audit, a review that could render significant savings or value for money or identified as a key issue in the Sustainable Community Strategy.

Approach to Investigations

Overview and Scrutiny investigations can take a variety of different approaches. The Board can decide to undertake a "short, sharp inquiry" through meetings of the Board or by setting up a Task Group, which meets outside of the formal committee process and which may involve other non-Executive Members of the Council.

Task Groups can be more flexible in their timing and approach to an investigation and can take a longer or shorter time, depending on the issue. Task Groups are often able to consider an issue in more detail and take the investigation outside of the formal committee process to look at what is happening on the ground, by undertake research and interviewing key stakeholders in a more informal setting.

Receiving Evidence

Overview and Scrutiny investigations receive evidence from which their conclusions and recommendations may be drawn. Evidence may be received during a formal Board meeting, in writing to Members of the Board or during a Task Group investigation. Evidence may include written reports from Council officers, written testimonials from interested parties, background papers, oral evidence from witnesses and site visits to look at particular places and events on the ground.

Overview and Scrutiny Inquiries and Recommendations

At the end of an investigation, conclusions are drawn up and recommendations made to the Cabinet and any other relevant local decision makers. The conclusions and recommendations, together with the relevant evidence, may be presented in a report or sometimes just recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting. Reports and recommendations are agreed by the Board before referral to Cabinet for consideration.

Recommendations may also be made to the full Council (policy and budgetary decisions) or to external agencies where the council does not have the power to act.

Executive Response

Overview and Scrutiny reports and recommendations are referred to Cabinet to make executive decisions in respect of each Overview and Scrutiny recommendation and to provide an Executive Response to the Board. The Cabinet is asked to agree, reject or amend each recommendation and to provide an indicative implementation date by which time the agreed recommendations are to be carried out.

The relevant Portfolio Holder is expected to attend the Board Meeting to present the Cabinet Response and answer any questions. If a recommendation is made to any other agency they may also be asked to provide an executive decision and response.

Tracking the Outcomes of Recommendations

Ultimately Overview and Scrutiny is about making a difference. The Overview and Scrutiny Board tracks all recommendations made to and agreed by Cabinet through Quarterly Recommendation Tracker reports. In depth investigations and Task Groups are usually reviewed 12 months after their report has been considered by the Cabinet. The purpose of this is to check if the agreed recommendations have been implemented and to see what outcomes have been achieved.

Short, Sharp Inquiries

A “short sharp inquiry” is carried out through a mix of both formal Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings and informal meetings involving all Members of the Board and chaired by the Overview and Scrutiny Board Chairman. This type of inquiry can be used for the investigation of a topic already on the Board’s work programme or a topic on the Forward Plan which the Board felt warranted a more in depth investigation being carried out. However, it can also be used to consider matters of local concern, that have not been scheduled on either the work programme or Forward Plan but which Members feel would merit inclusion and further investigation.

Task Groups

If it is felt that a more in depth and detailed inquiry is required, the Overview and Scrutiny Board can appoint Task Groups which are separate from the Board and can include Members who are not Members of the Board (Members of the Cabinet cannot join a task group) to consider issues outside of the formal committee process or to allow an in depth overview and scrutiny investigation. It is best practice for the Chairman of a Task Group to be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Task Groups carry out investigations and report back to the Board with their findings and recommendations. Task Groups can use a variety of methods to gather evidence and can invite relevant officers, representatives from external organisations and members of the public who have an interest and would like to put their views forward to act as witnesses.

BOARD INVESTIGATIONS COMPLETED 2011-12

In addition to the regular standing items on the Board's agenda (detailed under the section Current and Future Work of the Overview and Scrutiny Board), it also requested and received reports and commented on the following areas and made in total **8 recommendations** to Cabinet, all of which were agreed:

➤ **Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder**

At the meeting of the Board held on 11th July 2011 Members received a presentation and report from the Senior Community Safety Project Officer which provided an overview of the 2011/12 Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership Plan (CSPP). The report outlined the main local priorities and highlighted some of the key challenges in tackling those priorities.

Members were informed that the Police and Crime Act 2010, which had been implemented in April 2011, reviewed part of the Crime and Disorder Act 1998 and updated several of the requirements in the original Act, one of which was that a 3 year plan was no longer required, and that a rolling refreshed annual plan could be produced. The Community Safety Partnership (CSP) had chosen to produce an annual plan due to the forthcoming challenges it would face, including the potential removal of the Police Authority and the introduction of a Police and Crime Commissioner. The CSP was also aware of a further 40% reduction in funding of the Community Safety Funding at County Council level, which was in addition to the 20% reduction already received that year.

➤ **Detection of Crime (Burglary and Vehicle Crime)**

At the Board meeting held on 11th July 2011 a Topic Proposal Form had been put forward in respect of the Detection of Crime in Hagley and in particular domestic burglary. The Board were informed that although under the Police and Justice Act 2006 scrutiny committees were given powers to scrutinise Community Safety Partnerships (CSPs) those powers were to look at the work of the partnership as a whole rather than a power to scrutinise individual partners. The proposal as it stood was not appropriate for consideration as a scrutiny exercise and after discussion it was agreed that a more general report on this topic would be received by the Board.

A report on burglary and vehicle crime in Bromsgrove district was received by the Board at its meeting held on 24th October 2011. Officers informed Members that it was difficult to accurately compare crime figures in Bromsgrove against that of other areas, as the District's close proximity to motorway networks made it more easily accessible. Members also discussed detection rates, the possibility of any reduction in the number of frontline

police officers and the variance in the number of burglaries on a monthly basis. Members agreed to receive a further update in six months time to investigate any further variance in the figures.

A further report was therefore received by the Board at its meeting held on 23rd April 2012 when Members were informed that, from the information and statistics provided by West Mercia Police, a decrease of 25.5% in the number burglary offences had occurred in 2011/12 compared to 2010/11. The Board's attention was once again drawn to the legal implications and reminded that it's role under the Police and Justice Act 2006 was to scrutinise the Community Safety Partnership, not individual partners. The Board therefore noted the report and agreed that no further information was necessary on this topic.

➤ **The Council's Ethical Policy**

At the Board meeting held on 13th June 2011 Members discussed the Council's Ethical Policy, which related to advertising on for example traffic islands and within Council literature such as Together Bromsgrove. A verbal update was received at the meeting held on 11th July 2011 when Members were informed that although the Council did not have an over arching ethical policy, individual agreements for such things as sponsorship and procurement had strict guidelines which should be adhered to. A report on the possible introduction of an ethical policy for the Council was received at the meeting held on 27th September 2011 when it was resolved that the Board was satisfied that the current organisational requirements were being met and there was no need for a specific ethical policy to be developed.

➤ **Medium Term Financial Plan 2012/13**

Overview and Scrutiny committees have a role in helping the Council achieve value for money services by scrutinising the Council Budget. This can be through consideration of particular topics throughout the year, examining how the resources are being spent and through scrutiny of the Council's draft Medium Term Financial Plan.

The Overview and Scrutiny Board received a presentation on the Draft Medium Term Financial Plan for 2012/13 together with details of the Revenue and Capital bids, at its meeting held on 3rd January 2012. Members had the opportunity to seek further information about any of the bids and about how these bids had been prioritised by senior officers. Following this presentation the Board made recommendations to the Cabinet in respect of the reprioritisation of several Revenue and Capital Bids.

➤ **Town Centre Capital Budget Bid and Progress Update**

Following a presentation from the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resources, the Board requested an update on the work of the Town Centre Steering Group and progress on the Town Centre improvement and regeneration programme. The Board received a presentation from the Town

Centre Regeneration Programme Manager and the Portfolio Holder for Business Transformation which covered the following areas:

- Timescales for the development of the town centre
- Details of the membership and role of the Partnership Steering Group
- Funding and creation of jobs
- Upgrade of the bus station
- A risk assessment of the project and any alternative arrangements made should elements of the project not come to fruition.

The presentation provided the Board with a clear view in respect of the background work which had been carried out in order for the improvements to the Town Centre to be a success and although the work had been slow to start, it was now gathering momentum with more visible changes taking place.

➤ **Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy**

At the final meeting of the Board for the 2010/11 municipal year, Members had the opportunity to pre-scrutinise the Enforcement and Fixed Penalty Notices for Environmental Services and the proposed Joint Environmental Enforcement Strategy and at the meeting held on 5th April 2011 received a briefing paper and presentation which outlined the use of enforcement action to tackle environmental problems such as fly-tipping and dog fouling together with the opportunities for continued improvement to street cleaning performance and improved environmental enforcement within the Council. The Portfolio Holder for Community Services provided the Board with details of what was classed as 'environmental crime' and the 5 stage approach for dealing with offences, together with details of the level of Fixed Penalty Notices for various environmental crimes.

It was agreed that the Board would receive a progress report on the implementation of the strategy in 12 months time. Members therefore received a further report at the meeting held on 23rd April 2012. Members were reminded that the Strategy included a staged approach where the Enforcement Officer would use their discretion in taking the appropriate enforcement action and that the work was accompanied by a publicity and campaign programme to raise awareness. The service commenced following the Council's adoption of the strategy and publicity programme in October 2011 and was delivered by the Community Safety Team. The Board was provided with a summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken and following discussion it was agreed that it would receive this on a quarterly basis in order to monitor progress of the new service.

➤ **Dealing with Fly Posting Report**

At the Board meeting held on 27th September 2011 the Board discussed Fly Posting. A task group had investigated this issue in 2005 which had highlighted the policy and procedures the Council had in place. However,

Members were aware that there had been several recent incidents of fly posting and Members were concerned that the policy and procedures were not being followed, the Board therefore requested that Officers be formally requested to address the issue and for the item to be placed on the Board's quarterly recommendation tracker in order to be monitored.

At the meeting held on 27th February 2012 Members received an update report which provided background information on the current policy which had been in place since 2004, which did not reflect the complexity of tackling fly-posting. The Board were informed of the legislation which was used to tackle fly-posting and were advised that work was currently being undertaken to identify the most effective options that could be used at a local level to successfully implement that legislation and in order to produce an updated policy and procedure. It was agreed that the new policy and procedure documents would be provided for the Board for comment at the meeting to be held on 18th June 2012.

➤ **Homelessness Grant 2012/13**

At the Board meeting on 23rd January 2012 Members noted that the Forward Plan contained an item on the Homelessness Grant for 2012/13. Although, it was too late to pre-scrutinise the report, it was agreed that it would be useful for Members to be provided with background information on funding for 2011/12 and 2012/13 together with a progress on schemes in place for 2011/12 and the methodology used in allocating the funds for 2012/13.

Members took the opportunity to ask the Strategic Housing Officer for detailed information on several of the schemes currently in place and received information on the new Government Welfare Reforms, it was expected that the legislation would come into force with effect from April 2013. The Board asked for an update report to be presented to the meeting to be held in September 2012 in order to ensure that the Council was receiving value for money from the schemes being funded.

➤ **Pre-scrutiny Longbridge Statement of Principles regarding Affordable Housing Provision Report**

This item was picked up from the Forward Plan at the Board meeting held on 27th February 2012, Members asked for a report to be brought to the next meeting as they raised concerns in respect of any implications it could have on the Council's current policy for the provision of affordable housing.

A report was received at the meeting held on 26th March 2012 which provided background information on the Statement of Principles and gave detail on the way in which the properties would be allocated under nomination arrangements. Whilst the Board recognised the need for such a Statement it was concerned that insufficient time and information had been provided to enable it to contribute to the decision making process, it therefore recommended that Cabinet delay the approval of the Statement pending a

more detailed report being received to enable a detailed pre-scrutiny exercise to be carried out.

➤ **Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC)**

During the 2011/12 Municipal Year the Board has, for the first time, received regular updates from the Council's representative (who must be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board) on the above Committee. Since the February 2012 meeting of the Board the agenda and previous meeting's minutes has become a standing item on the agenda and the representative feeds back to Members at each meeting any areas of interest and responds to questions. This allows the views of the Board to be feedback into the HOSC where appropriate. Areas discussed to date are detailed below:

- The strategic service review of the Acute Services in Worcestershire
- Clinical Commissioning Groups
- Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board
- Worcestershire Emergency Ophthalmology Service

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS COMPLETED IN 2011-12

Recreation Road South Car Park Task Group

Background

An Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal Form relating to Recreation Road Car Park South was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 11th July 2011, by Councillor S. P. Shannon. At that meeting it was agreed that a Task Group would be established and Councillor Shannon was appointed as Chairman.

There were a total of four Task Group meetings and the following areas of investigations were covered:

- A comparison of usage, income and penalty charges on Recreation Road South Car Park for 2008/09 and 2010/11.
- The role of the Civil Enforcement Officers and the guidelines they adhered to.
- The penalty charges appeals process and the standard letter templates used.



Terms of Reference

That a review of the civil enforcement officers' guidelines, standard letter templates (for all 3 stages of the appeal system) and a review of the signage at the Recreation Road South Car Park be undertaken to assist in the improvement of the Council's perception by residents and visitors to Bromsgrove.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Having considered the evidence provided by officers, Members had gained a good understanding of the operation of the car park and the role of the Civil Enforcement Officers. The Task Group acknowledged that:

- The car park was of good quality (well illuminated and covered by CCTV).
- Signage was clear and well placed (Members had visited the site).
- The Pay on Foot system had reduced the number of penalty charges issued (2008/09 2,273 and in 2010/11 462).

- The customer satisfaction rate for the car park was high (approximately 91% following a recent survey conducted by the Car Parks Manager. The survey also showed that almost 99% of those asked preferred a pay on foot system).
- Appeals made in respect of penalty charges were dealt with sympathetically (with approximately 42% being overturned).

The Task Group Members were unanimous in the conclusion that the Pay on Foot system at Recreation Road South Car Park was beneficial to car park users as it reduced the number of penalty charges issued, enabled users to only pay for the amount of time they spent in the car park and had clear signage to assist them.

Task Group Members conceded that they had begun the Task Group with a preconceived view of Recreation Road South Car Park and car parking facilities generally provided by the Council. However, after hearing and looking at the evidence provided by Officers it was agreed that the negative view was incorrect and that appropriate work needed to be carried out to change the perception of residents and visitors to the area in order to increase use of the car parks.

The Task Group's final report, which included **5 recommendations**, was presented to Cabinet on 7th September 2011 and their response was received at the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 27th September 2011. The Cabinet response accepted 2 of the 5 recommendations and gave positive feedback on the content of the report. The Board were informed that the operation of the car parking service would be reviewed as part of the Shared Services and Transformation programme. The Board acknowledged that 2 of the 3 recommendations not accepted had significant financial implications and would be taken into consideration when moving forward with the Town Centre regeneration project.

Reduction in Bus Services Task Group

Background

An Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal Form relating to the Reduction in Bus Services was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 11th July 2011, by Councillor C. J. Bloore. At that meeting it was agreed that a Task Group would be established and Councillor Bloore was appointed as Chairman.

There were a total of five Task Group meetings and it was agreed at the first meeting that the Task Group would concentrate on particular bus routes within the District:

- 140/141 (The Stokes to Bromsgrove/Droitwich)
- 144 (Worcester to Birmingham)
- 178 (replaced with X50 and S7 Wythall)
- 202/204 (Cofton Hackett)
- 318 Stourbridge

Terms of Reference

To achieve the successful maintaining of key bus routes throughout the District, in order to allow residents to go about their daily lives.

Key Findings and Recommendations

Whilst the Task Group was completing its investigation Worcestershire County Council announced that, after consideration, some of the vital services, which had been discussed at Task Group meetings, would not now be withdrawn or the changes would not be as significant as originally anticipated. This related in particular to the evening bus service between Worcester and Birmingham. The new bus timetables would come into effect from 4 September 2011.

The Task Group was concerned that there was little or no written evidence to substantiate any response from the Council or individual councillors to the WCC consultation and it was keen to ensure that this should not happen again with any future consultations. A clear audit trail should be available in future to ensure the Council is open, transparent and inclusive (for example through a task group being set up, an informal meeting being held for all Members, through Cabinet setting up an informal group or at a meeting of the full Council) in dealing with issues that may have a significant impact on residents within the Bromsgrove District.

From the evidence provided, the Task Group concluded that the role in consulting with residents was taken by parish councils rather than the District Council. The Task Group Members agreed that by not providing a "united" response to the consultation, opportunities had been missed to influence the form in which the bus services to the District were provided.

Whilst acknowledging that the issue was a County Council decision, the Task Group concluded that a key lesson learned was that a more proactive/co-coordinated response which was inclusive and transparent from the Council at an earlier stage, would not only have helped to influence changes, but also acknowledged to residents that the Council was acting collectively on the issue.

The Task Group was of the view that the reduction in bus services did not only impact on residents, but could have a detrimental effect on the following areas:

- Environmental (air quality due to increased traffic)
- Town Centre Regeneration (for example visitors to the town centre)
- Local Development Framework (issues around housing developments due to lack of transport infrastructure)

The Task Group's final report, which included **2 recommendations**, was presented to Cabinet on 5th October 2011 and its response was received at the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 24th October 2011. Cabinet had approved the recommendations subject to a revision of the wording for Recommendation 1 in respect of Corporate Delegations within the Constitution.

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Planning Policy Task Group

Background

An Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal Form into the planning process was submitted to the Board meeting held on 13th June 2011 with the request that it be included within the Work Programme of the Board for the coming year. After discussion it was agreed that it would be necessary to break the process down into specific areas of planning and to concentrate on the areas of most concern to both Members and residents in the first instance. It was further agreed that initially, a Board Investigation would be carried out in to Planning Enforcement. An initial, informal meeting of the Board took place in July 2011 to discuss this area.

At a subsequent meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 27th September 2011 and following a request from full Council, it was agreed that a Task Group would be established to scrutinise matters relating to planning policy issues. As there was significant interest from Members on this particular topic it was agreed that a special meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board would be held on 12th October 2011 in order to appoint a Chairman of the Task Group and to agree membership.

Following discussions at the Board meeting held on 21st November 2011 it was further agreed that the work of the Board Investigation in to Planning Enforcement would be amalgamated within the scope of the Planning Policy Task Group.

There were a total of ten Task Group meetings, with the following areas of investigation being agreed at the first meeting:

- The planning process and the setting of specific conditions for planning applications and the role of the Planning Committee.
- Gaining and understanding of why conditions are set.
- The effectiveness of conditions and how the Council enforces such conditions.
- How the process could be improved.

Terms of Reference

To review the Council's planning process, in particular the setting and enforcement of conditions, in order to identify strengths and weaknesses and to make recommendations for improvement where deemed necessary.

Key Findings and Recommendations

The Task Group began its investigations with a presentation from the Head of Planning and Regeneration which gave Members an understanding of the planning process and the setting and enforcement of planning conditions. Members used a particular application, the Former Landfill Site, Alvechurch Highway, Lydiate Ash

(more commonly known as Marlbrook Tip) as a case study and the evidence gathered from this proved invaluable in every area of the investigation. The investigation was broken down into 4 areas and this led to 12 recommendations being put forward covering planning applications and the committee process, the planning enforcement process, the Internal Audit Ad Hoc Investigation into Marlbrook Tip and the Customer Feedback Complaints process.

The Task Group acknowledged that the Council had made mistakes over the years in respect of the Marlbrook Tip site and this was reflected in several of the recommendations that were made. The Task Group was also concerned at the inconsistency of the recording of service requests and complaints within the Enforcement area and was pleased to be informed that steps had already been taken to rectify this area. It was envisaged that together with the recommendations this would ensure that similar errors would not occur again in the future. The Task Group supported the recommendations within the Internal Audit Ad Hoc Investigation report and recommended that these be picked up within the Overview and Scrutiny Board's quarterly recommendation tracker to ensure they were carried through.

The Task Group's final report, which included **12 recommendations**, was presented to Cabinet on 4th April 2012 and Cabinet provided an interim response which was received at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 23rd April 2012. Cabinet had agreed 8 of the recommendations but had asked that the Overview and Scrutiny Board look again at elements of the remaining 4 recommendations and provided Cabinet with a response before giving them further consideration. It was therefore agreed at that Board meeting that the Task Group would reconvene and hold a further meeting to discuss the issues raised by Cabinet and report back to the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting to be held on 18th June 2012.

REVIEWS OF PREVIOUS OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INVESTIGATIONS AND TASK GROUP

Improving Residents Satisfaction Task Group

Background

The aim of this Task Group was to identify ways in which the Council could achieve higher levels of satisfaction amongst local residents. Residents' should be the main Council priority and there was a need to investigate the underlying reasons why some residents appears to be "dissatisfied" and recommend ways in which the Council could improve both residents' perception of council services and their satisfaction levels.

There were a total of five Task Group meetings, with the following areas of investigations being agreed at the first meeting:

- Place Survey Analysis (to include a literature search and comparative analysis with other councils)
- Theory and Best Practice on Satisfaction (including a review and comparison of communication strategies and theory on marketing)
- Local Practice and Local Issues

The Task Group's final report, which included **7 recommendations**, was presented to Cabinet on 30th June 2010 and there response was received at the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 13th July 2010. Cabinet accepted all the recommendations and its response included implementation dates for completion of them.

Terms of Reference

To gain an understanding of the statistics behind the current levels of satisfaction and of good practice in delivery and high levels of satisfaction. To understand the causes of dissatisfaction for particular customer segments and to identify solutions based on research undertaken.

Position 12 months On

At the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 13th June 2011 Members received a 12 month review report on progress of the implementation of those recommendations. The majority of the recommendations had been completed and those which had not, continued to be included within the Board's quarterly recommendation tracker.

It was noted that the Council continued to have a good track record on community engagement; good examples of this were the high number of responses received to the Core Strategy consultation and the continued success of the Budget Jury, which had recently been featured on a regional television programme.

The Board was also informed that the Customer Experience Strategy was launched in 2011 along with a 3 year action plan to develop customer service provision in Bromsgrove, building on the work of the Customer First Programme. This new Strategy covered Customer Experience, Transformation, Customer Feedback and Staff and focuses on improving the customer experience.

The Impact of Hot Food Takeaways on Communities and the Environment - Board Investigation

Background

The aim of the Board Investigation was to investigate the impact of takeaway hot food stores on communities and the environment. Members explored this subject and heard evidence over a series of meetings of the then Scrutiny Board. In addition Members were assisted by colleagues from the London Borough of Waltham Forest who passed on their experiences of issues regarding hot food outlets through a fact finding visit by members of the Board to Waltham Forest. Based on the evidence presented, the main themes which emerged were categorised as follows:

- Perceptions – impact of hot food takeaways within the District
- Crime and disorder/policing issues
- Town centre/use of retail outlets
- Litter and street cleanliness
- Regulatory enforcement by Planning and Licensing
- Health issues - the link to poor diet and obesity

Members debated the issues and received information on the policies and consultation exercises of other authorities with reference to hot food takeaways, together with information from licensing on imposing conditions on premises licences.

The Board Investigation report, which included **3 recommendations**, was presented to Cabinet on 2nd December 2009 and their response was received at the Scrutiny Board held on 26th January 2010. Cabinet accepted all the recommendations and its response included implementation dates for completion of them.



Terms of Reference

The investigation sought to find out more about the following aspects of hot food takeaways:

- The approach other local authorities have taken to the regulation of hot food outlets
- The nutritional content and selection of food offered and the contribution to healthy eating
- The effect of hot food takeaway stores on commercial activity

Position 12 months On

At the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 13th June 2011 Members received a 12 month review report on progress of the implementation of those recommendations.

The initial response from the Strategic Planning Department to Recommendations 1 and 2 in respect of a Hot Food Takeaway Supplementary Planning document was that this could not be progressed. However, the Draft Core Strategy made reference under section C9 23 Health and Wellbeing to the option of the provision of a Supplementary Planning Document at a later date. In respect of Recommendation 3, although a bid for funding by the Bromsgrove Partnership to the Health Improvement Fund was not successful, Members were informed that Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) were working in partnership with Worcestershire PCT Public Health Team to develop the Worcestershire Food Choices Project – improving healthy options in food outlets across the County. This contributes to WRS's priority to protect public health (tackling smoking, obesity and alcohol abuse).

Alvechurch Multi-Use Games Area Inquiry – Board Investigation

Background

Back in June 2010 the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board received 3 petitions in respect of the Multi-Use Games Area (MUGA) at Swanslength in Alvechurch. The Board agreed to carry out an inquiry into the future of the MUGA facility to investigate the reported crime and disorder issues and the future options for the MUGA and to make recommendations to Cabinet.

The Inquiry considered written and oral evidence from key stakeholders and conducted site visit to the MUGA and surrounding area. At the beginning of the Inquiry, an open invitation was made to people to submit written evidence to contribute to the investigation and Members of the Inquiry received a substantial amount of correspondence and submissions of written evidence from local residents, both for and against the MUGA and all of which were taken into account. The lead petitioners were also allowed up to 5 minutes to introduce their petition and

answered questions put to them by the Board. Key witnesses including the police, District Council community safety officers, ward councillors, local residents' representatives, Bromsgrove District Housing Trust and Worcestershire County Council Youth Support.

The Board Investigation report, which included **11 recommendations**, was presented to Cabinet on 3rd November 2010 and their response was received at the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 23rd November 2010. Cabinet accepted all the recommendations, subject to slight amendments to the wording of some of the recommendations and its response included implementation dates for completion of these.

Terms of Reference

The aims and objectives of the Inquiry were to investigate the crime and disorder issues highlighted by residents and to consider the future options for the MUGA facility at Swanslength, Alvechurch.



Position 12 months On

At the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 21st November 2011 Members received a comprehensive report giving details of work that had been carried out in respect of all the recommendations detailed in the original Inquiry Report. It was noted that only 2 recommendations had not been completed and this had been a decision made by the Parks and Recreation team, who had suggested that the impact of the implementation of the other recommendations was so successful that it was not necessary or cost effective to carry out Recommendations 9 and 11. Members were concerned that any extra resources put in place at the site to sustain the reduction in anti-social behaviour would not be maintainable in the long term and asked for it to be placed on record that should the circumstances at the MUGA site change, then the implementation of those recommendations should be reconsidered.

JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INVESTIGATIONS

No joint scrutiny exercises have taken place in the year 2011-12.

However at the Board meeting held on 27th September 2011 Members received the Worcestershire Joint Overview and Scrutiny Protocol which had previously been discussed at meetings of both the Worcestershire Chairman and Vice Chairman Network and the Worcestershire Scrutiny Officers Network meetings.

Following a general discussion on the merits of joint scrutiny, the Protocol was noted for information by the Board.

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FUTURE WORK OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Topics already included on the Board's work programme for 2012-13 are as follows:

- Homelessness Grants
- Countywide Homelessness Strategy
- Dealing with Fly-Posting
- Possible Joint Scrutiny in Worcestershire
- Continued Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder

The following are standard items which are considered at regular intervals by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and will again be scheduled into the work programme for 2012-13:

- Quarterly Recommendation Tracker
- Forward Plan of Key Decisions
- Quarterly Performance Monitoring Report
- Quarterly Finance Monitoring Report
- Customer Service Update Reports
- Sickness and Absence Health Monitoring Report
- Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (the Council's representative on this Committee must be a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and provides the Board with regular updates on the work being carried out.)

DEVELOPMENTS DURING 2011-12

Overview and Scrutiny Structure

This is the first full year of work for the Overview and Scrutiny Board following the revisions to the Constitution in January 2011 and the merging of the 3 separate Overview and Scrutiny boards and the incorporation of the Performance Management Board within it. A further amendment was made to the Constitution at the March 2012 full Council meeting which now allows for trained Substitutes to be used at future meetings. It should be noted that a Member of the Board can only use a substitute on two occasions within any one municipal year.

Support Received by the Board

With effect from 1st April 2012 the Overview and Scrutiny Board will be supported by a Shared Democratic Services Team. Three Officers within this service will lead in supporting the Overview and Scrutiny role at both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils.

Work continuing

Examples of work which will continue during 2012-13 are:

- After the Cabinet has considered an Overview and Scrutiny Report, the relevant Portfolio Holder attends the next available Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting to present the **Cabinet's Response** and answer any questions to help build the relationship between Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny.
- The Board has also seen an increase in **Portfolio Holder** attendance for meetings at which reports for a Portfolio Holder's particular area have been received. This has been welcomed and continues to be encouraged in order to further build upon the relationship between Cabinet and Overview and Scrutiny.
- The **Overview and Scrutiny Recommendation Tracker** has been further modified in order to provide more outcome based information and to better enable the Board to monitor the implementation of Cabinet approved recommendations.
- Officer participation within the **Worcestershire Scrutiny Officer Network**. This gives officers across the County the opportunity to work together to discuss good practice and different ways of working to help improve the role of scrutiny.

- The Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and the Democratic Services Officer have also attended meetings of the **West Midlands Regional Scrutiny Network** which held its first meeting in June 2011 and it is planned for 4 meetings to be held each year, with relevant speakers invited to attend to update members on current high priority topics.
- **Improved Call-In Procedure** and Guidance for Members (this is reviewed by the Board annually).
- **Dedicated web pages** to enable Overview and Scrutiny to inform the public about its role and how they can get involved. It also includes work completed and ongoing and is updated on a regular basis. (Go to www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny)
- **Dedicated email address** for scrutiny for the public to use: scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk
- **Joint overview and scrutiny working** with other local authorities
- Good **partnership working** with various agencies who have provided evidence and/or attended meetings as witnesses at the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

LOOKING TO THE FUTURE

The Localism Act

The Localism Act altered requirements in relation to governance arrangements at local authorities. Councils have been granted authority to select governance arrangements considered suitable for the local area. This can include retaining the Leader and Cabinet model, introducing thematic committees, and introducing an elected Mayor, though many local authorities have considered introducing a hybrid model comprising a variety of different governance arrangements. At present, Bromsgrove retains and Leader and Cabinet model of governance which is held to account by a single Overview and Scrutiny Board.

The legislation repealed requirements established in the Local Democracy Economic Development and Construction Act 2009 in relation to petitions. However, Redditch Borough Council, like many other local authorities, has retained the petitions scheme that was developed in response to the 2009 legislation.

The Localism Act extended powers to hold external partners to account to district authorities. However, whilst Local Area Agreements are no longer required these powers only extend to partner organisations involved in the Local Area Agreement. The government has indicated that this list of partners may be updated in due course.

Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011

The Police Reform and Social Responsibility Act 2011 will provide new structural arrangements for national policing, strategic police decision-making, neighbourhood policing and policing accountability. Principal among the changes will be the election of police and crime commissioners (PCCs), the first of which will take place in November 2012. Although, this will not have a direct impact on scrutiny at district level it should be noted that the PCCs will have budgetary control for Community Safety Partnerships, which the Overview and Scrutiny Board can scrutinise where appropriate and this should therefore be something the Board closely monitors.

Health and Social Care Act

The Health and Social Care Act 2012 introduced health scrutiny powers. In two tier authority areas, such as Worcestershire, the County Council assumed responsibility for health scrutiny. In Worcestershire the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) leads health scrutiny. A representative of Bromsgrove District Council is appointed as a district representative to HOSC and reports on the work of the body to the Redditch Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

Final Word

It is important that it is understood that scrutiny is an essential element of good governance and provides an opportunity for non-Cabinet Members to engage in the work of the Council and help improve outcomes for the people we serve.

There are a lot of good procedures which are now in place for overview and scrutiny and these will be reviewed on a regular basis, particularly in light of new legislation. However, we still have much to do to ensure overview and scrutiny is operating effectively at Bromsgrove District Council and both Members and officers are committed to strengthening and improving the overview and scrutiny function much further.

DRAFT

FURTHER INFORMATION

Overview and Scrutiny Board Meetings

Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings are open to the public. To find out more visit our website at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny or telephone 01527 881288 and ask to speak to the Democratic Services Officer.

Public Involvement

If you would like to have your say on issues being considered by Overview and Scrutiny or to suggest a topic for consideration you can email scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk or complete the form on the Council's website www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny

Giving Evidence

Members of the public or organisations with a special interest or knowledge about a particular topic being considered by Overview and Scrutiny can put forward evidence to a committee or appear as a witness to give evidence for an investigation. If you think you or your organisation might be able to participate in an issue currently under review, please contact us.

If you have a personal issue with a council service you may find it more useful to contact your local ward councillor who can help you decide the best way to take it forward.

Contact Overview and Scrutiny

If you would like to find out more about any aspect of the Overview and Scrutiny Board then you can email scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk or telephone 01527 881288 and ask to speak to the Committee Services Officer.

Further information can also be found on the Council's website. Please go to www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny

**Overview and Scrutiny
Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Bromsgrove District Council
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove B60 1AA**



**This report can be provided in
large print, braille, on audio CD or tape,
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پر رابطہ کریں



**Bromsgrove
District Council**

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**EQUALITY
FRAMEWORK
FOR LOCAL
GOVERNMENT
ACHIEVING**

Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

June 2012

RECOMMENDATION TRACKER REPORT

1. SUMMARY

This Recommendation Tracker lists all recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Board (including Task Group recommendations) until implementation is complete.

The recommendations are grouped in date order and by topic.

(N. B. Column 4 also shows each month the Tracker comes before the Board. To ensure recommendations are reviewed at the appropriate time, a tick is placed next to the quarter for which the Cabinet response advised the recommendation was estimated to be implemented.)

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Board notes the Quarterly Recommendation Tracker and agrees to the removal of any items which have been completed.

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
1st June 2010	<p>Community Involvement in Local Democracy Task Group That the publication of meeting times and venues of the Council, Cabinet and other statutory public meetings be enhanced, with an invitation for the public to attend, including a regular slot publicising meetings in the Together Bromsgrove magazine.</p>	30th June 2010	June	√	Sept		Dec		March	
1st June 2010	<p>Community Involvement in Local Democracy Task Group That the Council work in partnership with Bromsgrove secondary schools to facilitate the Schools Councils' constitutional arrangements and arrangements for making recommendations to the appropriate local decision making bodies.</p>	30th June 2010	June	√	Sept		Dec		March	
5th April 2011	<p>Older Peoples' Task Group – 12 month review That the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships revisit and review the Older Person's Services Directory and mapping exercise during 2012/13 and considers involving the Parish Council</p>	N/A	June		Sept		Dec		March	

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)											
	Forum when undertaking this exercise.													
5th April 2011	Older Peoples' Task Group – 12 month review That the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships contact the Older People's Forum regarding its help with a mystery shopping exercise specifically on older people's services.	N/A	June		Sept		Dec		March					
5th April 2011	Older Peoples' Task Group – 12 month review That the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships engages with the Portfolio Holder and the Older People's Forum to look at the possibility of championing a 'village agents' project on 2011/12.	N/A	June		Sept		Dec		March					
5th April 2011	Older Peoples' Task Group – 12 month review That the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships and the Benefits Services Manager look at including benefits information in the leaflets produced and distributed by Lifeline Officers.	N/A	June		Sept		Dec		March					

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
5th April 2011	Older Peoples' Task Group – 12 month review That the Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships and Climate Change Manager look at ways of engaging with specific partner agencies, for information and promoting energy saving ideas for older people and to use any future Older People's events to promote these ideas.	N/A	June		Sept		Dec		March	
25th August 2011	Review of Recreation Road South Car Park Task Group That a PR exercise be carried out to promote the Recreation Road South Car Park (and all other car parks) and to highlight the qualities of the car parks and the benefits of the Pay on Foot system.	7th September 2011	June	√	Sept		Dec		March	
25th August 2011	Review of Recreation Road South Car Park Task Group That the Standard letter templates used by the Car Parking Team be reviewed to ensure they are in line with the Customer	7th September 2011	June	√	Sept		Dec		March	
			<u>Update January 2012</u> the transfer of the management of the parking section to Wychavon District Council has been delayed by two months and as such discussion with Wychavon over a publicity campaign has also been delayed. However, it is hoped to have a 12 month publicity and promotion plan for members by the end of April 2012. (Environmental Business Development Manager)							
			<u>Update January 2012</u> the Standard letter templates have been forwarded to the Customer First Officer to enable her to review them in line with our customer service guidelines. We are also							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)
	Service Strategy Guidelines.		reviewing them with Wychavon District Council who has their own templates as a comparison. It is anticipated that amended standard letters will be in use by the end of January 2012. (Environmental Business Development Manager)
27th September 2011	Reduction In Bus Services Task Group That the Council support Worcestershire County Council by contacting the bus operators, Black Diamond and Johnsons Coaches, to make representations for the 204 service to be reinstated and for clarification on the future of the X50 service.	5th October 2011	June Sept Dec March <i>Cabinet Response that the recommendation be supported but that in order for that there is a specific point of contact on this matter, the letter be sent to the Portfolio Holder for Transport at the County Council rather than the bus operators.</i>

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

WORK PROGRAMME

2012-13

This Work Programme consists of two sections: Items for future meetings (including updates) and Task Group Reviews.

RECOMMENDATION:

(a) To consider and agree the work programme and update it accordingly.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
18th June 2012	New Fly Posting Policy and Procedures - Presentation	Pre-scrutinise new Policy agreed at meeting 27th February 2012
	Longbridge Statement of Principles Affordable Housing Provision - Presentation	Detailed report requested following meeting 26th March 2012.
	Planning Policy Task Group – Response to Cabinet	
	Quarter 4 Customer Service Updates Report	Requested following recommendation in Planning Policy Task Group Report.
	Overview and Scrutiny Board Draft Annual Report 2011/12	For comment
	Forward Plan	
	Overview and Scrutiny Board Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	Revised format for comment
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
16th July 2012	Introduction to the Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Partnerships	
	Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership Plan 2011-12	
	Countywide Homelessness Strategy – pre-scrutiny Report	Picked up from Forward Plan at meeting 26th March 2012.

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
	Quarter 4 Performance Monitoring Report	
	Sickness Absence Performance and Health for Period ended 31st March 2012	
	Forward Plan	
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
10th September 2012	Quarter 1 Finance Monitoring Report	
	Council Annual Report	
	Sustainable Community Strategy	
	Homelessness Grants 2012/13 – Update Report	Update requested following meeting 27th February 2012
	Progress report on the impact of the Government Welfare Reforms	Update requested following meeting 23rd April 2012
	Sickness Absence Performance and Health for Period ended 30th June 2012	
	Overview and Scrutiny Board Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	Forward Plan	
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
22nd October 2012	Quarter 1 Performance Monitoring Report	
	Quarter 1 Customer Services Updates Report	
	Quarterly Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken	
	Forward Plan	
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
19th November 2012	Quarter 2 Finance Monitoring Report	
	Sickness Absence Performance and Health for Period ended 30th September 2012	
	Forward Plan	
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
4th December 2012 (Tuesday 5.00 p.m.) <i>TBC</i>	Budget Scrutiny (Informal meeting)	
17th December 2012	Sustainable Community Strategy Annual Report	
	Quarter 2 Customer Service Updates Report	
	Quarter 2 Performance Monitoring Report	
	Overview and Scrutiny Board Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	Forward Plan	
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13	
8th January 2013 (Tuesday 5.00 p.m.) <i>TBC</i>	Budget Scrutiny	
	21st January 2013	Quarterly Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken
Forward Plan		
Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13		
WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee		
25th February 2013	Quarter 3 Finance Monitoring Report	
	Sickness Absence Performance and Health for Period ended 31st December 2012	
	Forward Plan	
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
26th March 2013 (Tuesday)	Council Plan	
	Quarter 3 Customer Services Updates Report	
	Quarter 3 Performance Monitoring Report	
	Overview and Scrutiny Board Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	Forward Plan	
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme	

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
	2012-13	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
22nd April 2013	Planning Policy Task Group 12 Month Review	
	Quarterly Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken	
	Forward Plan	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	

Budget Meeting Dates (Provisional)

4th December 2012 – 5.00 p.m. (Informal and all Councillors invited to attend)
8th January 2013 – 5.00 p.m.

Scrutiny of Crime & Disorder Partnership Meeting Dates

TBC

Reports not allocated

Annual Review of Call In
Write Off of Debts – Quarterly Report

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TASK GROUP/INQUIRY REVIEWS 2012-13

Task Group	Date of Review
Recreation Road South Car Park Task Group	September 2012
Reduction In Bus Services Task Group	October 2012
Planning Policy Task Group	September 2013

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Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Tuesday, 22 May 2012 (2.00pm), County Hall, Worcester

Membership

Worcestershire County Council Mr A C Roberts (Chairman), Mr M H Broomfield, Mrs M Bunker, Mr B F Clayton, Mr A P Miller, Mrs P J M Morgan, Mr J W Parish, Mr T Spencer.

Bromsgrove District Council Dr B T Cooper
Malvern Hills District Council Mrs J Marriott
Redditch Borough Council Mrs B Quinney
Worcester City Council Mr R Berry
Wychavon District Council Mr G O'Donnell
Wyre Forest District Council Mrs F M Oborski

Agenda

Item No	Subject	Page Nos
1	Apologies	-
2	Declarations of Interest and of any Party Whip	-
3	Public Participation <i>Members of the public wishing to take part should notify the Director of Resources in writing or by e-mail indicating the nature and content of their proposed participation no later than 9.00am on the working day before the meeting (in this case 21 May 2012). Enquiries can be made through the telephone number/e-mail address below.</i>	-
4	Confirmation of Minutes – 17 April 2012	Previously circulated
5	Joint Services Review – The Future Configuration of Acute Services in Worcestershire – Emerging Options, Evaluation Criteria and Financial Issues Supporting Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • JSR Progress Report to the HOSC – Appendix 1 	1

Agenda produced and published by the Director of Resources, County Hall, Spetchley Road, Worcester WR5 2NP

To obtain further information or copies of this agenda, please contact Sandra Connolly:
 ☎ Worcester (01905) 76 6606 (direct) or Worcester (01905) 763763, Kidderminster (01562) 822511
 or minicom: Worcester (01905) 766399 email: sconnolly@worcestershire.gov.uk

The above reports and supporting information can be accessed via the Council's website at
<http://www.worcestershire.gov.uk/cms/democratic-services/minutes-and-agenda.aspx>

Date of Issue: 11 May 2012

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evaluation Criteria, Worcestershire Oncology Project, April 2011 – Appendix 2 • Financial Performance Report Month 11, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust Board, 29 March 2012– Appendix 3 • Minutes, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust Board, 29 March 2012– Appendix 4 	
6	Acute Stroke Services in Worcestershire Supporting Information: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Acute Stroke Services for Worcestershire – 2012 Option Appraisal, 4 May 2012 – Appendix 1 	42
7	Quality Accounts – Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Comments	68
8	Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee Round-up	73

Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee
17 April 2012, County Hall, Worcester – 2.00pm**Minutes****Present:**

Worcestershire County Council:
Mr A C Roberts (Chairman), Mrs M Bunker,
Mr A P Miller, Mr J W Parish, Mr T Spencer

Bromsgrove District Council: Dr B Cooper
Worcester City Council: Mr R Berry
Wyre Forest District Council: Mrs F M Oborski

Officer Support:
Suzanne O'Leary – Overview and Scrutiny Manager
Sandra Connolly – Overview and Scrutiny Officer

Available papers:

- A. The Agenda papers and appendices referred to therein (previously circulated);
- B. Presentation on the Acute Ophthalmology Service Pilot August 2011-April 2012 (previously circulated);
- C. Presentation on Salaried Dental Services (previously circulated);
- D. The minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2012 (previously circulated).

A copy of documents A-C will be attached to the signed Minutes.

**Chairman's
Announcements**

The Chairman welcomed guests and members of the public in attendance.

**549. (Agenda item 1)
Apologies**

Apologies were received from Maurice Broomfield, Brandon Clayton, Jan Marriott, Penelope Morgan and Gerry O'Donnell.

**550. (Agenda item 2)
Declarations of
Interest and of
any Party Whip**

Roger Berry declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 5 as a shadow member of the Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust and a personal interest in relation to agenda item 6 as his wife had made use of the Worcestershire emergency ophthalmology service.

Terry Spencer declared a personal interest in relation to agenda item 6 as both he and his wife used Worcestershire's ophthalmology services.

551. (Agenda item 3)

None.

Public Participation

552. (Agenda item 4) Confirmation of Minutes

The Minutes of the meeting held on 13 March 2012 were confirmed as a correct record and signed by the Chairman subject to the amendment of the final minute number on page 8 from 541 to 548.

553. (Agenda item 5) Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust Foundation Trust Application Pre-Consultation

Attending for this item from Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust were Robert Hipwell, Company Secretary and Alison Roberts, Foundation Trust Programme Manager.

Members were advised that it was Government policy that all NHS Trusts needed to apply for foundation trust (FT) status. Since the first authorisation of a foundation trust in 2004, 144 NHS trusts had now achieved FT status with 108 organisations yet to complete the application process. The Government had set a deadline of 2014 for all aspiring NHS trusts to achieve FT status or merge to become part of another foundation trust. When Worcestershire Health and Care Trust (the Trust) was established in July 2011, it had been required to sign an agreement with the Strategic Health Authority (SHA) and the Department of Health to become a foundation trust by summer 2013 so the Trust was now working to a defined trajectory and milestones. A key milestone was consulting the public on the Trust becoming a foundation trust and how the proposed FT's facilities could be best used to benefit patients and the community. There were 3 distinct phases of activity during the FT application and assessment process and the Trust was currently in the first of these, working with the SHA and going through a series of tests before progressing to the next phases of assessment by the Secretary of State and then by Monitor.

The Trust's paper appended to the agenda report outlined the Trust's proposals for its public consultation on its application for FT status and Members' views were sought on those proposals. The Trust intended to hold 6 public meetings, 1 in each of the County's districts and the public consultation would run May-August. The Trust also needed to ensure that it fully consulted staff.

Each FT needed to develop a public membership and therefore a membership strategy and a target number of members to be achieved. The Trust's aim was to have 5,500 members, 1% of the County's population. Anyone over the age of 14 years could be a member although the minimum age to be appointed to the Council of Governors would be 16 years. In addition to the public membership, there would also be a staff constituency. Staff would automatically be opted-in to this, as was common practice

nationally, unless they indicated otherwise.

The Trust proposed to have 14 public governors on its Council of Governors, 2 each from Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch, Worcester and Wyre Forest and 3 from Wychavon to recognise the different population sizes. There would be 1 further governor to represent patients from outside the County's boundary. In addition to the 14 public governors, there would also be 8 staff governors and 4 stakeholder governors. Two of the stakeholder organisations had not yet been identified as the Trust was open to proposals as it worked with a large number of organisations. One of the stakeholder governors would be a local authority representative and this would be from Worcestershire County Council.

As part of its application, the Trust would be required to submit to the SHA a summary of its consultation process, the issues raised by the consultation and how the Trust had responded to those.

During the ensuing discussion, the following main points were raised:

- Members asked about the election process for public governors. It was explained that Worcestershire residents could nominate themselves as candidates. The election process would be through an arms-length organisation to ensure that it was completely independent. Candidates would issue personal statements and these would be the basis on which the electorate would vote and it was hoped that they would have plenty of candidates to choose from;
- it was noted that the Trust's predecessor organisation had previously started its application for FT status and it was questioned what had been learned from that experience. Members were advised that there had in fact been no let-up in the FT application process since it had started in 2004 and that there had actually been more activity recently, possibly following events in Mid-Staffordshire. It was noted that the FT application process was very demanding and the Trust was working hard to engage the public, highlighting that NHS trusts effectively belonged to the public as tax payers and they were encouraged to get involved. Members could be as passive or as active as they wished depending on their level of interest;
- Another lesson learned was to ensure that the Foundation Trust was of a reasonable size. The Trust's priorities were quality, safety and financial sustainability. The Trust was aiming to avoid repeat applications as it was a very wearing process.

- Members were advised that the Council of Governors was responsible for overseeing the Board's non-executive directors (NEDs) and would also be consulted on the Trust's annual reports and accounts. Whilst governors would also have the power to remove the chairman and NEDs, such a step would demonstrate that there were clearly problems within an organisation. The relationship between governors and the electorate was very important and thought would need to be given to how best to support governors in their role, particularly as over time there would be more and more focus on governors and their oversight of FTs;
- it was queried whether the proposed size of the Council of Governors might be too large. Members were advised that there had been much discussion nationally about the size of the councils and lessons had been learned from the early FTs and their 40-50 strong councils of governors. In determining the size of the Trust's proposed Council of Governors, it was felt appropriate that each of the County's 6 unique districts needed to be represented. It had also been agreed that the patient voice was what was fundamentally important as well as that of staff and the stakeholder representation had therefore been taken down to 4;
- it was noted that the actual costing of the process and establishment of the FT would be good to see for transparency;
- concern was expressed that even if the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee's (HOSC) response to the public consultation on the Trust's FT application was not favourable, it would make no difference. Members were advised that it was an inherent challenge in the process that whilst consulting, it was Government policy that NHS trusts had to become FTs. However, it was highlighted that during the consultation on how the proposed FT would operate and its proposed Council of Governors, if there were concerns and alternative views and suggestions were offered, the Trust would listen and consider all constructive critiques;
- whilst the Trust was to be applauded for encouraging the participation of young people, it was suggested that although some 14 year olds were more mature than others, there could be concern about how they would deal with the complexities of issues. Members were advised that the age of 14 years had been chosen because some of the Trust's services did interact with children and adolescents. The Trust was conscious

that it needed to encourage the interest of young people in the Trust and reiterated that Governors would need to be at least 16 years old. Members highlighted that young people were under a lot of pressure around this age, for example with GCSE selections, and it was suggested that whilst a few year 8-9 pupils were very bright, most would still be considered children with not many being as mature as the Trust would need and that in making information accessible to 14 year olds the Trust would need to be aware of accusations of dumbing-down;

- in response to a question about whether the Trust anticipated any problems with its business plan, Members were advised that the Trust had to develop a robust integrated business plan and long-term financial model and if it did not, it would not progress through the FT process;
- it was noted that NEDs were currently appointed by the national Appointments Commission and in the proposed FT would be appointed by the Council of Governors, through a nominations committee, and that NEDs were remunerated. It was confirmed that NED vacancies were already and would continue to be advertised;
- it was suggested that some of the questions the Trust proposed to include in its consultation document might cause confusion to some of the public, but it was recognised that the Trust was obliged to include them;
- it was questioned how the Trust intended to engage with the minority ethnic groups in Worcestershire which included Polish, Bangladeshi and Pakistani populations, etc. Members were advised that the Trust employed staff who were familiar with a number of these groups across the County and was aware that it needed to try very hard to engage them and produce material which would be accessible. It was suggested that it would be necessary to produce information in alternative language formats;
- further to discussions about the minimum age of the proposed FT membership, it was highlighted that many young people were very bright and those who were interested would come forward to be involved in the Trust if given the opportunity and the Trust was encouraged to engage with schools as there was support amongst the HOSC membership for the proposed 14 year minimum age.

The Chairman thanked all guests for their attendance.

**554. (Agenda item 6)
Worcestershire's
Emergency
Ophthalmology
Service**

Attending for this item were Chris Emerson, Deputy Director – Delivery, NHS Worcestershire and from Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust were Dr Graham James, Consultant Oral and Maxillofacial Surgeon and Clinical Director Head and Neck, Ophthalmology and Dermatology and Jo Tomlinson, General Manager - Head & Neck/Ophthalmology/Dermatology.

Members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation outlining the background to the service pilot, the service configuration, the evaluation of the pilot to-date, evaluation criteria and points for further consideration.

Members were advised that, prior to the pilot, the service had been experiencing difficulties recruiting substantive members of the team and had needed to employ locums. This had impacted on service quality and clinical risk with one locum needing to leave the Trust promptly shortly before the new service model was piloted. It was also identified that there were huge over-capacity issues resulting from the delivery of the service on 3 sites. The Trust had considered that it needed to make a decision about future service provision based on the clinical risks identified and discussed the service with clinicians and commissioners and agreed a change would be necessary. The options were to either stop providing the service in-county or to concentrate the in-county service on a single site.

Whereas the service had previously been provided in Worcester, Redditch and Kidderminster, under the pilot it was now provided only in Kidderminster. The location had been selected based on facilities and capacity. Under the pilot there had been no change in the hours of service provision and the out of hours service continued to be provided by Birmingham Midland Eye Centre (BMEC) as it was under the 3-site model. Rather than being delivered primarily by agency locum staff, under the pilot the service was now led by one of the Trust's own doctors and by consolidating the service it had been possible to reduce the number of sessions each week from 27 to 15. All referrals now went through a single point of access and were dealt with consistently and through a common pathway. It was also highlighted that under the previous model, patients were not necessarily seen locally, but rather at the site where there was capacity.

In evaluating the pilot, 2 patient surveys had been undertaken in November and February with 100 questionnaires offered to patients randomly which provided a 50% response rate. Patients were asked questions about referral pathways, travelling, parking, information provision,

signage, care provided and the department overall. Analysis of the surveys showed that the main referrers to the service were GPs, that 86% of patients travelled less than 20 miles to the service, that 97% of patients were either satisfied or very satisfied with the service, that the referral system worked well and overall care was considered either excellent or good.

GPs were also surveyed a few weeks prior to the meeting so that there had been time for the service to have bedded-in. Whilst the pilot would not end until the end of April, initial analysis of the GP survey showed scores out of 5, with 5 being extremely satisfied, were most commonly 3 or 4 and so there appeared to be a general satisfaction amongst GPs with the pilot service. GPs had also provided comments on the service and there had been both positive and negative comments.

NHS Worcestershire, the service commissioner, had provided a number of evaluation criteria to be applied covering attendance levels, inappropriate referrals, numbers of patients the service could not treat, onward referrals to BMEC, locum-led sessions, cancelled appointments and clinics, complaints, patient and GP feedback, serious untoward incidents and safety and quality concerns. The pilot had seen a 21% reduction in new patient numbers compared against the same period in the previous year. This was considered to be as a result of an increased provision of advice to GPs by telephone to enable them to manage patients in the GP surgery which was considered better both for the patient and the GP. The need for the service to follow-up had also reduced significantly with follow-up under the pilot being undertaken in the appropriate clinics, near to patients' homes, rather than by the emergency service. Overall the pilot had seen a 45% reduction in attendance so whilst some patients had needed to travel further to the service, the number of people attending the service was a lot less.

There had been a number of patients who could not be treated by the pilot service and had been referred on to BMEC, but these needed super-specialist services and would have been referred on under the previous model too. Whilst a number of sessions had been delivered by locums during the pilot, this had only been for 7.6% of sessions and those sessions had had the support and supervision of the team's substantive doctors. No one worked unsupervised or in isolation under the pilot model. During the pilot to-date there had been no complaints, serious untoward incidents or safety/quality concerns.

Taking the pilot forward, questions in the patient survey had been refined as had the evaluation criteria. Consideration was being given to suggestions made about extending the

service's hours towards the evenings, recognising that patients were travelling from across the County. Further revisions would be considered under the Joint Services Review (JSR) which would need to consider the service's location as the potential location of other services was also reviewed.

The pilot service had had no risks identified, no complaints or serious incidents and offered improved governance, 97% patient satisfaction, some concerns about travel from GPs rather than patients and there had been a significant reduction in the number of attendances. Further consideration would be given to the service's location and improved evaluation would remain on-going. It was proposed to extend the pilot to address transport issues through the JSR process which would see services being delivered differently and was an ideal opportunity to look at transport issues. Transport issues were included within the patient survey of the service.

Worcestershire Local Involvement Network (LINK) had undertaken an unannounced visit to the service and had found a warm and friendly atmosphere which patients commented on and really appreciated. The only adverse comments received from patients related to car parking and transport with one patient having to have paid £22 to a community transport scheme. A plea was made for reasonable transport provision for patients to access health services.

Patients returning to the service for checks and follow-ups were also met. They were very positive about the service and full of praise for it and for the staff.

Worcestershire LINK had made a number of recommendations but none of these were very major other than the parking and transport issues.

During the ensuing discussion, the following main points were raised:

- it was queried whether there was any way that an approximate length of appointment time could be given to help patients in determining how many hours of car parking they needed when parking at Kidderminster. Members were advised that the LINK had spoken about this issue with Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust's Chairman and previous and current Chief Executives, highlighting that if a clinic was over-running, patients had to go out of the hospital to buy more parking time in £3 chunks. The LINK intended to follow-up this issue with the Trust;

- concern was expressed that attending an appointment at Kidderminster Hospital could be a confusing experience and the LINK's report had commented on a patient's experience where the number of notices had caused problems. Members were advised that the notices had been an issue for a partially-sighted patient and having been brought to the attention of the clinic, the notices had been tidied up. The LINK recognised that patients attending at Kidderminster were often not sure whether to book in at the ground floor reception or go straight up to the relevant clinic and this was something the Trust ought to be able to clarify in letters to patients;
- a Councillor with experience of the service at various locations throughout the County, supported the principle of it being brought together under 1 roof. However, the Councillor's experience at the Kidderminster Treatment Centre had been that it was a disaster in terms of car parking, checking-in, clinics over-running, waiting areas being over-run with patients and their families and patients finally being seen by a locum with no clue about what was going on. Members were advised that today's discussion related only to acute ophthalmology services and the pilot was to address the problems experienced as a result of the use of locums. The whole ophthalmology service was under review as part of the JSR and there was an emerging view that the whole service might be better delivered from a single site as providing a service from multiple sites made it more difficult to organise services and deliver them efficiently. The changes made under the pilot service had demonstrated many positives and there was no reason why the same benefits would not be seen by bringing the whole service into a single location;
- the Chairman advised Members that today's discussion was to consider the Acute Trust's pilot emergency ophthalmology service. Members would subsequently be able to contribute to the JSR and the possible decision to centralise all ophthalmology services as well as the potential location. It was questioned why the review of acute ophthalmology had not waited for the JSR process. Members were advised that the Trust had been very conscious of the complaints about the service and had not been able to ignore the concerns of staff once they had been raised. Members were advised that the concerns about locums had related to those at mid-grades and the Trust was confident it would be able to recruit sufficient to maintain the service;
- a view was expressed that supported the pilot model, although recognised that the location may be

contentious. However, another view was expressed that changes in services often appeared to mean moving towards centralisation and were often due to safety or staffing issues and there was concern that this was the face of things to come and people could expect to see highly centralised services in the future;

- It was understood that under the pilot service, Worcester's patients were now having to spend half a day on a Kidderminster appointment rather than a couple of hours when the service was also available in Worcester. As a significant number of the service's patients were elderly and travelling was a major problem for them, it was suggested that there would need to be very good justification for centralising services. Also the location of the service would be key and it was highlighted that Kidderminster was at one end of the County and not central. Worcester's residents who had previously had a dedicated eye hospital were now having to travel to Kidderminster for emergency ophthalmology services and there was concern about what might happen to other services as a result of the JSR. Members were advised that GP feedback had also shown concern about the location and in future each Clinical Commissioning Group would be concerned about the location of services for its own population. It was important that the service and its location was added into the JSR rather than looking at this acute service in isolation and transport links would be key if services were to be more centralised. Members were also assured that additional questions had been added to the patient survey to gather data about difficulties attending appointments and patient satisfaction with the treatment received. Members welcomed this as it would provide more data on the patient experience;
- it was highlighted that rather than talking about "centralising" services, it was more appropriate to discuss "concentrating" services;
- it was also highlighted that the service at Kidderminster was still a local service when the alternative option had been to stop the service and have all provision out-of-county and despite the need for some patients to travel further, it remained local. The safety and quality issues of services should not be under-estimated and a single site for the acute ophthalmology service had been the only way to deliver a high quality service. It was highlighted that this same point had been used historically about services in Kidderminster and there remained cynicism about this argument in Worcestershire;

- concern was expressed that in the current economic climate and with the JSR's parameters it would not be possible to achieve the necessary financial savings and maintain services on all of the Acute Trust's sites and there had to be a concentration of the Trust's services. Members were advised that it was important to bring together expertise and for commissioners to work with other service providers on local delivery;
- there was support for the suggestion that the acute ophthalmology service's operating hours should be extended. It was considered that closing at 5pm was too early and this should be extended to 8pm so that most people with even a late appointment with a GP would be able to travel to Kidderminster on the same day if necessary. Members were advised that part of the evaluation of the pilot to-date was a key recommendation that the service should coincide with GP hours. It was highlighted that if the service was provided on 3 sites it would be impossible to extend the service's hours. Consideration of the extension of the service's hours was the next step and such discussions were not confined to this service and the culture within the NHS was changing with some services possibly operating 7 days a week in the future;
- it was suggested that whatever emerged from the JSR, there would be a need to look at transport in Worcestershire;
- it was questioned whether the 45% reduction in patients attending the acute ophthalmology service was all due to the new model of providing telephone advice to GPs or whether some GPs were referring their patients to other service providers, for example in Cheltenham. It was also questioned how outcomes were being measured as there was concern that telephone advice might end up not being the best for a patient and whilst the patient surveys conducted had gathered views about the service provided in Kidderminster, how were views of those not attending Kidderminster being captured? Members were assured that whilst activity in the acute ophthalmology service had reduced, the total activity levels delivered had not changed and since the pilot, patients were now signposted to the appropriate services, going straight to the relevant sub-specialty area. As the evaluation of the pilot was not yet complete, commissioners had not looked at the number of patients now accessing a service out-of-County but would look to see if there had been any change in this number. Members were also assured that it was recognised that it was critical to consider patient outcomes in evaluating the service; and

- on behalf of the Vice-Chairman who had been unable to attend this meeting, the Chairman queried the option of commissioners using out-of-county providers to provide the service for Worcestershire, for example, neighbouring trusts in Birmingham and Gloucester. Members were advised that out of hours and highly specialised ophthalmology services were provided by Birmingham and traditionally patients from the south of the County often attended services in Cheltenham. Commissioners would really need to analyse the data to see if referral patterns were changing due to a reluctance to travel to Kidderminster.

The Chairman highlighted that the discussion about acute ophthalmology services was a prelude to the forthcoming JSR and his personal preference was for excellent centralised services, rather than inferior local ones and that patients essentially wanted good treatment. The concerns about this service's opening hours and the possibility of them being extended had been noted. Transport and parking issues remained outstanding and it was noted that they kept getting raised yet nothing appeared to happen and a patient being charged over £20 for community transport to attend a hospital appointment was extraordinary. It was also noted that there was a high level of patient satisfaction and that this had been corroborated by the LINK's work for which the HOSC was very grateful.

The Chairman thanked all guests for their attendance.

555. (Agenda item 7) Salaried Dental Services

Attending for this item were Nigel Crew, Dental Commissioning Manager, NHS Worcestershire and from Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust, Alan McMichael, Consultant in Dental Public Health, Finbarr Costigan, Clinical Director, Salaried Dental Services, Rod Smith, Assistant Clinical Director, Salaried Dental Services and Lorna Hollingsworth, Assistant Clinical Director, Salaried Dental Services.

Members of the Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee received a presentation outlining the dental market, access to NHS dentistry, patient satisfaction, salaried dental services, the commissioning vision, milestones for the dental anxiety management service, key messages and the estates review.

Members were advised that a lot of progress had been made in increasing access to NHS dentists and that whilst there was still a perception that it was not possible to get an NHS dentist, this was untrue. Roadshows had been held and visits to schools undertaken and bit by bit, perceptions were starting to change and this was also being evidenced

in attendance data.

To increase supply, £1.4 million had been invested in additional dental capacity in Worcestershire since 2010 which was showing up to an additional 25,000 patients now being treated. Risk-based re-attendance had also increased capacity, with patients being seen between 3 months to 2 years on a patient-need basis. Additionally, an incentive payment was now included in dental contracts. Practices could be accredited as child-friendly, for example with good access and baby-changing areas and reception staff had also been able to undertake customer care training and there had also been advanced dental nurse training.

The trajectory of patients accessing dental services continued to increase and since dental access centres (DACs) were established 10 years ago, the dental supply had changed and commissioners and providers were looking at restructuring this service to better fit and support other services. Patient surveys undertaken by the Dental Practice Board showed that patient satisfaction with services in Worcestershire was high at 96%.

Under salaried dental services (SDS), there had been community clinics providing dental services in a number of locations and more recently, 10 years ago, DACs were established in response to a shortage at that time of NHS dentists. This situation had improved and also continued to do so. SDS accounted for 5% of dental activity in the County. Between September and December a patient survey had been undertaken at the DACs and a key finding had been that the Malvern Hills and Tenbury DACs operated in a different way to the other 3. The broad commissioning vision for SDS highlighted the desire of the service to complement general dentistry rather than be an alternative to it, focussing on client-groups more suited to a specialist service than general dentistry. SDS was the primary provider of out of hours dental services and aimed to focus on increasing the complexity mix of the service's patient portfolio, dental anxiety management and referral-based services. SDS was trying to move from the provision of routine care to the provision of care for those individuals who would always have difficulty receiving dental care. There was no intention to reduce the service's budget but to increase the focus on the service's areas of expertise.

A number of key milestones were outlined for the dental anxiety management service (DAMS) including referral guidelines, an IV sedation pilot and limited service, a cognitive behavioural therapy pilot run by SDS dental nurses and a full service specification for the DAMS. A working group had been established to define the categories the DAMS would work with and to ensure that

any gaps between categories were minimised.

Walk-in access was a well-liked aspect of SDS as demonstrated in the patient surveys and some sites might need to be extended and opening hours were also being reviewed. When possible, patients would be referred back to general dentistry via a patient incentive scheme.

Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust was undertaking an estates review and the SDS hoped to increase its usage of domiciliary and mobile care. The review also aimed to reduce duplication, with for example, 2 sites each in Evesham and Kidderminster and 3 in Worcester. The review aimed to ensure equitable access across the County and the HOSC would be consulted further when there were definitive proposals.

A lot of work had been done on the proposed changes with the dental community and they were very supportive and also with the Local Dental Committee.

During the ensuing discussion, the following main points were raised:

- it was confirmed that whilst both the DACs in Tenbury and Malvern operated differently to the other DACs in the County, only the DAC in Tenbury was being proposed for closure;
- it was noted that given the population, there was relatively high usage of the Kidderminster DAC;
- whilst Members were advised that plenty of NHS dentists were actively looking for patients, in Kidderminster there was only visible advertising by a dentist based in Kingswinford and it was suggested that it would be helpful for Councillors to know which NHS dental practices had vacancies. Members were advised that there was an interactive map on the internet where practices with vacancies could be found. Additionally, a mailshot had been sent to all households about NHS dental services;
- it was highlighted that many people, particularly those with an element of dental phobia, would have remained with their dentist if the dentist had left the NHS and it would be difficult for those patients to transfer to a new NHS dentist and have to start to develop a new relationship again. Members were advised that it was estimated that approximately 10% of the population were not registered with a dentist and it was likely that a significant number of those had a dental phobia;

- it was queried how phobic patients would access specialist services. Members were advised that the normal referral route to specialist services was via a general dentist but could also be through a patient's GP or another health specialist. Once the specialist service was firmly established, there could be capacity to enable the option of self-referral;
- it was noted that there would be some people who did not want to change their practice of accessing DACs and register with a dentist. Members were advised that networks would be set up with each DAC to ensure there were very clear ways for patients to register with one of at least 2 available dental practices;
- in response to a question about the frequency of dental check-ups, Members were advised that since 2004, NICE guidance was that dentists should schedule check-ups based on individual patient need, with, for example, patients who were drinkers or smokers and were at high risk of cancer, being seen 6 monthly or more frequently;
- concern was expressed that some older people would have had their dentures for up to 50 years without being replaced and this was questioned. Members were advised that there had historically been an inertia regarding dentures with a perception that once someone's teeth had all gone, they no longer needed to see a dentist. It was now recognised that this was short-sighted as dentures wear out. In Worcestershire there had been a new innovation to visit care homes in the County to treat the more vulnerable patients and find those people who had simply continued to struggle on. It was important that people with dentures remained in regular contact with a dentist;
- it was confirmed that DACS did not develop an ongoing relationship with people who presented there and did not undertake check-ups and recalls and this was another reason people needed to register with a general dentist and maintain regular attendance;
- Members were advised that much work had been done with the homeless population as they were a group who had historically been poorly looked after. A lot accessed the Worcester DAC on a casual basis. Work was ongoing to build a rapport with the homeless and the hope was to increase attendance levels, possibly with the use of a mobile unit to take the service to homeless hostels;
- it was noted that nationally there were only 200 specialist dentists registered with the Dental Council

**556. (Agenda item 8)
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and not all of these would be full time equivalents. It was the newest specialism, having been established in 2009 and being so new there was not much data available. Many of those previously resident at Lea Castle were now patients of this new service;

- it was confirmed that specialist dental services would see more patients being treated in-County. Patients with profound learning difficulties who could only access dental treatment under anaesthetic could be treated at a monthly clinic in Kidderminster. Others with a less profound disability who could receive treatment like the majority of the population tended to attend wherever Lorna Hollingsworth, as the County's specialist dentist, was working. The aim was to establish a specialist team to widen access across the County and it was believed that the necessary expertise existed within the County already, although some training would be needed. Members were advised that some patients would continue to need specialist treatment in Birmingham and that specialist care was all about shared care;
- in response to a question about public health dentistry, given the transfer of public health to local authorities in 2013, Members were advised that Alan McMichael, as the County's Consultant in Dental Public Health, was currently part of Richard Harling's public health team, but under the future model would be part of Public Health England, along with all other public health dentists.

The Chairman advised that HOSC Members were comfortable with the changes being proposed and welcomed the success achieved to-date in increasing access to NHS dentists. The Chairman thanked all guests for their attendance.

The Chairman updated Members on issues he had been involved in since the last meeting:

- the Chairman had met informally with Sarah Dugan, Chief Executive, Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust and been updated on a number of matters;
- the Chairman had met informally with Harry Turner, Chairman, Worcestershire Acute Hospitals NHS Trust who had advised that the Trust had been hurt by recent comments by a Member of the HOSC reported in the media, and had highlighted the importance of the Trust being successful in its bid for foundation trust status. The HOSC Chairman had advised the Trust Chairman that if Members talk to the media they did so as an

individual Councillor and not as a representative of the HOSC. The HOSC Chairman advised Members that it was for their own judgement how they spoke about the Trust.

Cllr Oborski advised that it was her comments which had upset the Trust. Cllr Oborski was concerned that the Trust had needed to borrow £21 million from the Department of Health yet was still failing in terms of employing locums and agency nurses and considered that the HOSC was entitled to an explanation of how the Trust had got into this financial situation. Cllr Oborski's concern was compounded by the Trust's imminent JSR consultation which needed to achieve significant savings and the picture did not balance at the moment and the Trust should be invited to the HOSC to explain the need to borrow £21 million, why locum costs were rocketing and how the Trust could expect to achieve sufficient savings through the JSR.

The Chairman acknowledged the need for Members to be objective and considered the concerns outlined to be objective. Members were urged to request that issues were included on future HOSC agenda if they had concerns rather than having trial by newspaper or Members acting under misinformation.

Cllr Oborski suggested that the financial issues facing the Trust were discussed at the Trust's most recent Board and these papers should be put to the HOSC with the Trust invited to explain how the situation had arisen and how the Trust proposed to deal with it.

Ongoing issues around the County were discussed:

- in Bromsgrove, a new Health and Wellbeing portfolio was to be established with the relevant cabinet member having responsibility for all health and wellbeing issues in the District;
- in Wyre Forest, the main focus was the forthcoming local election. Following a national campaign about the global shortage of helium which was being linked to the excessive use of helium balloons, a local campaign group had now been established. The shortage had already impacted nationally with MRI scans postponed and a research project in Oxford delayed; and
- in Worcester, the possibility of a new swimming pool was being considered and the main focus at the moment was the forthcoming local election.

Members were advised that issues to be discussed at the next meeting would include:

- the emerging options from the Joint Services Review;
- Quality Accounts, with lead Members having informal pre-meetings with the relevant Trust;
- Acute stroke services.

Issues to be discussed at future meetings included:

- Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust's integrated business plan;
- Health and Wellbeing Board priorities and Joint Strategic Needs Assessment;
- Worcestershire Health and Care NHS Trust's application for foundation trust status – HOSC response to consultation;
- Joint Services Review – HOSC response to consultation;
- Cardiac rehabilitation services scrutiny;
- Lessons from the Mid-Staffordshire inquiry. Cllr Bunker had recently attended a meeting where the lead campaigner from Mid-Staffordshire was present. There would be lots of lessons from the inquiry and there had been criticism of the local HOSC and councillors.

The meeting ended at 4.15pm.

Chairman