



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 9TH JANUARY 2013, AT 6.00 P.M.

THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

SUPPLEMENTARY DOCUMENTATION

The attached papers were specified as "to follow" on the Agenda previously distributed relating to the above mentioned meeting.

4. Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 17th December 2012 (Pages 1 - 8)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
5. Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 13th December 2012 (Pages 9 - 14)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

4th January 2013

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Agenda Item 4

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 17TH DECEMBER 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, Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, R. J. Laight, P. M. McDonald (Minute No. 69/01 to Minute No. 73/12), S. P. Shannon, Mrs. C. J. Spencer and L. J. Turner

Invitees: Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Ms. S. Morgan, Ms. R. McAndrews and Ms. A. Scarce

69/12 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor K. A. Grant-Pearce.

70/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

There were no declarations of interest or whipping arrangements.

71/12 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 19th November 2012 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

72/12 CCTV SHARED SERVICE - PRESENTATION ON THE ROLE OF THE CCTV TEAM

The Board received a presentation from the CCTV and Telecare Manager, which had been requested following the completion of an Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal, by Councillor S. R. Colella. The presentation covered the following areas:

- Details of the team, staffing levels and the areas which the team were involved in (including CCTV, Lifeline monitoring and installations, lone worker monitoring and emergency planning).
- The Council's CCTV Scheme objectives and code of practice (which, although due for review, had been put on hold due to the implementation of new legislation).
- The benefits of a shared service and the role of the host authority, together with the difficulties which had been faced during this process.

- Partnership working, including details of how the CCTV team supported those partners, in particular the Police and the Community Safety Team.
- Routine CCTV functions and the particular areas of interest during the day and evening, for example shop lifters and suspicious behaviour during the day and at night anti-social behaviour in parks and railway station and drunken or lewd behaviour.

The CCTV and Telecare Manager provided Members with details of the number of cameras throughout the district, together with the number at specific locations (for example the railway station) and statistics relating to incidents monitored and investigated, including information in respect of intelligence received from partners.

Following the presentation the Board discussed the following areas and the CCTV and Telecare Manager responded to questions from Members:

- The work undertaken on behalf of the Police and whether the Police made any contribution towards the cost of the service provided – it was confirmed that funding was not provided by the Police.
- Specific incidents (in some cases repeated incidents within the same area) which had not been picked up by the CCTV team and the effect of the Shared Services on the efficiency of the team.
- The priorities of the team – it was confirmed that a Lifeline call would always take priority due to the potential of it being a “life or death” situation.
- Staffing levels at peak times (including shift pattern planning and how this was determined) and training received by the CCTV team – all members of the team undertook initial training and were registered. An annual audit of the service was also carried out by Telecare.
- The type of cameras and equipment used – the CCTV and Telecare Manager informed Members that the system was approximately 2½ years old and was fully digitalised. However, when providing evidence for the Police this was copied on to DVDs which were provided by the Police.
- The effectiveness of CCTV as a monitoring tool and any performance measures which were in place.
- Feedback from the Police in order to monitor the effectiveness of evidence provided – the CCTV and Telecare Manager was reviewing how this could be improved, but in the meantime agreed to contact the Community Safety Team Analyst to enquire whether there was any appropriate data available.
- The response time to calls received – it was confirmed that 95.8% were answered within 1 minute. This was reviewed on a regular basis and adjustments made where necessary.
- The cost and promotion of the Lifeline service – it was confirmed that leaflets were available in libraries and doctors surgeries, the scheme was also promoted for example through the Older Peoples’ Forum and targeted talks to various organisations.

- The potential use of CCTV in other areas, for example on street parking - further consideration would need to be given to this to ascertain whether it would be best use of the cameras, but in theory it would be possible if Members requested such a service.
- The use of images as Court evidence – this did happen; however there was a strict protocol to follow before releasing the images as evidence.
- Members were invited to visit the CCTV Centre in order to see for themselves how the team operated; suitable dates would be circulated by officers in due course.

RSOLVED:

- (a) that the Board be provided with copies of the CCTV Code of Practice; and
- (b) that the CCTV and Telecare Manager contacts the Community Safety Team Analyst in respect of any available date to support the effectiveness of the use CCTV and provides that information to the Board.

73/12 **THE LIVING WAGE - INVESTIGATION REQUEST REPORT**

The Chairman reminded Members that this had been brought before the Board following a requested made at the full Council meeting held on 21st November 2012. It was understood that the Group Leaders had already met with the Chief Executive in respect of employees wages and those discussions were nearing a satisfactory conclusion. Members discussed the following areas in more detail:

- Any legal requirements by the Council to implement the “living wage”
- Whether this would apply to contractors employed by the Council and if so, how this would be monitored. The Financial Services Manager informed Members that this could potentially be done through the procurement process when negotiating future contracts, but it would be difficult to impose this on current contractors.
- Members discussed whether it was appropriate for the Board to make comment/recommendations on the implementation of this scheme.

RESOLVED that further information be requested from a relevant source in respect of the areas discussed before the Board decide whether further investigation is required.

74/12 **QUARTER 2 FINANCE MONITORING REPORT**

The Board considered the Quarter 2 Finance Monitoring Report. The Financial Services Manager informed Members that this was broken down into service areas and the Heads of Service were asked to complete the financial commentary section. The main areas of variance in respect of shortfall in income were Car Parking, Building Control and Waste (which related to trade waste and cesspools). In respect of treasury management, the Financial Services Manager informed Members that this was due to lower income than expected from investments, which would be reviewed shortly. The variance

within the capital programme was largely due to delays to the Parkside project which would be utilized in 2014.

The Board discussed the following areas in detail:

- The shortfall in car parking income – possible reasons for this and actions being taken to mitigate the loss.
- The loss of income in respect of trade waste and whether this service was a statutory duty of the Council. Officers informed Members that a review of this service was currently being undertaken in order to promote the service, which would include the feasibility of the collection of trade waste being carried out by outside contractors.
- Members were informed that, as part of the transformation process, efficiencies and route optimisation for household waste were being reviewed and the savings from that work would be picked up in future reports.
- A previous incident of fraud at the depot had been investigated by the Audit Board and the Executive Director, Leisure, Environmental and Community Services confirmed to Members that the investigation report had been endorsed by the Audit Board together with the lessons learnt and all necessary actions had now been taken to ensure such an incident did not happen again.
- The inclusion of any cost for bed and breakfast accommodation within the report – officers to clarify the inclusion of this as a separate item in future reports.
- The reduction in the level of sponsorship – the Financial Services Manager informed Members that further profiling on this element of the budget would be undertaken, which would clarify the position in the Quarter 3 report.
- Members were informed that the current underspend on play areas was due to the majority of scheduled maintenance work being carried out in the autumn/winter months (when use of the areas was at a lower level).
- Members requested confirmation of when the “hardship” fund payments would be made and the criteria that needed to be met in order to receive such a payment.

RESOLVED that the Board receive a report detailing the trade waste review.

75/12 **QUARTER 2 WRITE OFF OF DEBTS REPORT**

The Board considered the Quarter 2 Monitoring of Write Offs Report and were informed by the Financial Services Manager that this was provided for noting only.

Members discussed the following areas in detail and officers were asked to provide further information on several points:-

- In respect of the write off of Sundry Debtors as detailed on page 26 of the agenda, Members requested a breakdown to include the number of debtors and transactions.

- Members noted the length of time taken in some cases to recover Council Tax arrears and the Financial Services Manager explained that these were recovered in various ways, for example through benefit payments or through an attachment of earnings. In either case the amount recovered, often on a weekly basis, was minimal and therefore it could take a considerable time to recover the debt.
- Members discussed the debt support which was given to residents and the work of the Citizens Advice Bureau.
- In respect of the aged debt profile Members asked whether this was similar to the previous years and officers agreed to provide comparative data.

RESOLVED that the Quarter 2 Monitoring of Write Offs Report be noted.

76/12 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL REPORT - COMMUNITY SAFETY TEAM**

Members were asked to consider a topic proposal which had been put forward by Mr. P. Rowbottom and which referred to work carried out by the Community Safety Team. The Chairman of the Board confirmed that, as the Chairman of Hagley Parish Council, he had knowledge of both Mr. Rowbottom and the issues which he had raised.

Members agreed that, in the circumstances, it would be appropriate for the Community Safety Team to be asked to provide further information before the Board made a decision on this topic.

RESOLVED that information be requested from a relevant source before the Board considers whether further investigation is required.

77/12 **YOUTH PROVISION TASK GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

Councillor Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths provided Members with an update of the work of the Task Group to date.

- The first meeting of the Task Group had been held on 5th December and concentrated on work planning. Officers had been tasked with providing further information and setting up various meetings and site visits, including the Ryland Centre, the Trunk, Woodrush Youth Club and the Lounge in Alvechurch.
- Further meeting held on 13th December when the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services was interviewed.
- The Task Group would be visiting the Artrix Centre on 18th December to interview the Artistic Director in respect of working with young people.
- A press release would shortly be issued which would include an invitation to young people to put forward their views and experiences.
- All Councillors had been asked to provide the Task Group with details of activities for young people that they were aware of within their own Ward.

It was anticipated that the Task Group's draft report would be presented to the Board meeting to be held on 22nd April 2013.

78/12 **AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

Councillor S. P. Shannon informed Members that the first meeting of the Air Quality Task Group had taken place on 4th December when it had discussed work planning and set future meeting dates.

- A press release had been issued and appeared on the Bromsgrove Advertiser website on 12th December. This had included an invitation to residents to put forward their views and experiences. Several responses had already been received from residents in the Hagley area.
- Meetings had been arranged for 9th and 15th January and the Senior Practitioner, Pollution Team at Worcestershire Regulatory Services and a representative from the Public Transport Team at Worcestershire County Council had agreed to attend, together with the Council's Climate Change Manager.
- The Parish Councils had also shown an interest in participating in the investigation and their role would be explored further at a future meeting.

It was anticipated that the Task Group's draft report would be considered at the Board meeting to be held on 26th March 2013.

79/12 **WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor Dr. B. T. Cooper, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), informed Members that the meeting due to have been held on 7th December 2012 had been cancelled. The reason given for this was that the Joint Service Review would be issuing a press release on Tuesday 18th December 2012, which would provide an update on the next stage of the Joint Service Review.

80/12 **ACTIONS LIST**

Officers informed Members that updates had now been provided on all outstanding items, with the exception of the item in respect of the Joint Service Review. It was confirmed that actions arising from this meeting would be included within the list.

81/12 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME - 1ST JANUARY TO 30TH APRIL 2013**

The Board considered the Cabinet Work Programme of key decision for the period 1st January to 30th April 2013. Officers informed Members that the Fees and Charges formed part of the budget process.

It was noted that the Playing Pitch Strategy, which Members were informed had been discussed at the Youth Provision Task Group, was due before Cabinet on 6th February 2013.

RESOLVED that the Youth Provision Task Group consider the Play Pitch Strategy as part of its investigation.

82/12 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Members noted that an informal briefing, focusing on the budget would take place on 8th January 2013, commencing at 5.00 p.m. as this was a briefing session, it was confirmed that this was not a public meeting.

RESOLVED that the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.38 p.m.

Chairman

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE AUDIT BOARD

THURSDAY, 13TH DECEMBER 2012 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), J. S. Brogan (Vice-Chairman), Ms. M. T. Buxton, Dr. B. T. Cooper, Miss P. A. Harrison and Mrs. H. J. Jones

Also in attendance: Mr. P. Jones (Engagement Lead, Grant Thornton) and Ms. Z. Thomas (Engagement Manager, Grant Thornton)

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. T. Kristunas, Mr. A. Bromage and Ms. R. Cole.

26/12 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor S. J. Dudley.

27/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

28/12 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 20th September 2012 were approved as a correct record.

29/12 **AUDIT COMMISSION ANNUAL GOVERNANCE REPORT 2011 - 2012**

The Chairman welcomed Mr. P. Jones (Engagement Lead) and Ms. Z. Thomas (Engagement Manager) from Grant Thornton to the meeting.

The Board considered a report on the responses of the Section 151 Officer to the Annual Governance Report from the Audit Commission for 2011/2012. This report had been considered by Cabinet and Council in September.

Ms. Z. Thomas briefly explained the background to the Annual Governance Report which was part of the process for auditing the final accounts for 2011/2012 and reported that the Section 151 Officer had considered and agreed the five recommendations proposed by the Audit Commission. These were:

- Review the shared service plans accounting arrangements in order to simplify the process;
- Improve risk management arrangements and reporting;
- Continue to monitor the delivery of the Internal Audit Plan;

- Review the format of the monitoring of savings as presented to officers and Members; and
- Review the benefits transformation with the aim to bring to a close.

It was reported that responses to the recommendations had been incorporated into an Action Plan which was attached as Appendix 1 to this report.

The Board discussed in particular the issue of monitoring savings arising from the shared service and transformation process. It was appreciated that it was important for the Authority to be able to demonstrate and monitor the savings achieved. The Head of Finance and Resources explained that through transformation work in a particular area, savings were sometimes achieved in other areas which may not have been envisaged at the start of the process.

The Executive Director (Finance and Resources) agreed this could make it more challenging to identify savings but explained officers were aware of this and were working towards improving the processes. It was intended that the information would be presented to Members as part of the quarterly financial monitoring reports.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the responses to the Annual Governance Report 2011/2012 be noted; and
- (b) that officers be requested to report to the Board on a quarterly basis in respect of progress made on the actions to enable them to be monitored effectively.

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet be requested to ensure that processes are put into place to enable savings achieved through the transformation process to be effectively monitored.

30/12 **PLANNED AUDIT FEE FOR 2012/2013**

(The Chairman agreed to the consideration of this item as an urgent matter as consideration was required before the next meeting of the Board).

At the invitation of the Chairman, Mr. P. Jones, the Council's Engagement Lead from Grant Thornton gave a brief introduction to the Company and explained how they would hope to work with the Council over the forthcoming year.

Mr. Jones then reported on the Council scale fee for 2012/2013. It was noted that this had reduced from an Audit Fee of £106,676 for 2011/2012 to £64,006 for 2012/2013 a reduction of £40%.

In response to questions from Members it was explained that this was largely due to a streamlining of processes and was not as a result of a decrease in input. In addition there would be a focus on agreed areas of high risk within

systems. The Audit Commission would maintain a supervisory role and there would be formal Client surveys undertaken to obtain feedback.

RESOLVED that the planned audit fee for 2012/2013 of £64,006 be approved.

31/12 **CORPORATE RISK REGISTER / RISK MANAGEMENT**

The Head of Finance and Resources gave the Board an update on the changes to the Risk management arrangements following the changes in processes arising from shared services and the transformation of services. A joint shared approach had been taken with regard to risk identification, recording and monitoring.

It was reported that a new risk management framework document had been produced in draft and was currently in the process of being reviewed by the Corporate Management Team. Key risks had been identified across each service and these would be managed on an on going basis using a web based system. It was reported that an officer Risk Management Group would monitor the operational risks and where appropriate escalate these for discussion and inclusion in the Corporate Risk Register.

The Head of Finance and Resources referred to some of the key risks identified so far such as:

- The need to deliver “business as usual” whilst transformation was on going;
- Failure to deliver a Local Plan could result in increased challenge over planning decisions or unwanted developments;
- Failing to work closely with the new Police and Crime Commissioner with respect of community safety;
- Failure to secure County Council funding for Lifeline services from April 2013.

Clearly actions would be put in place to mitigate the risks identified. The Head of Finance and Resources felt that use of the new risk management tool would enable risks to be monitored and addressed on a more effective and timely basis.

The Board discussed the importance of an effective risk management system and it was

RESOLVED that officers be requested to report further to the Board on the development of the new risk management system, including corporate and operational risks.

32/12 **BENEFITS INVESTIGATIONS APRIL - SEPTEMBER 2012**

The Board considered a report on Benefits Service Fraud Investigations service for April to September 2012. The Head of Finance and Resources reported on some of the background to the figures. It was reported that

referrals arose from a number of sources and that it was essential to have a joint approach to working with the Department of Work and Pensions (DWP).

It was also noted that the changes to the Benefits systems arising from the Welfare Reform Act would have significant consequences. The DWP had proposed combining the various fraud services into a Single Fraud Investigation Service (SFIS).

Members of the Board raised queries on the tables of investigations and sanctions which gave comparisons across the County. It was noted that a significant proportion of cases within the District resulted in the acceptance of a caution. In addition it was noted that in the previous financial year the number of investigations closed had peaked in quarter 2 and decreased quite significantly in quarters 3 and 4.

Members felt it would be helpful to understand the nature of the cases more fully before considering any further action which may be required.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be noted; and
- (b) that the Head of Finance and Resources be requested to provide the Board with additional information on the nature and demographic profile of the cases of fraud within the District and that this be circulated prior to the next meeting of the Board in March 2013.

33/12 **INTERNAL AUDIT MANAGER'S - DRAFT AUDIT PLAN 2013 / 2014**

The Board considered a report from Mr. A. Bromage, Internal Audit Manager, Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service, on the draft internal Audit Operational Plan together with the key performance indicators for the Internal Audit Shared Service.

Mr. Bromage explained that the Annual Plan had been drawn up following discussions with the Section 151 Officer and Heads of Service and was a risk based plan. Mr. Bromage and the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) responded to Members' questions in relation to:

- the purpose of days allocated to Shared Service Delivery (Client)
- Section 106 Agreements
- Bromsgrove Urban and Rural Transport service
- the days allocated to catch up work from the previous year

In addition Members queried the days allocated to Transitional (Critical Friend) and the Risk Management days and whether this was the best use of the Audit days available. The Executive Director (Finance and Resources) undertook to discuss this further with the Internal Audit Manager to ensure best value was obtained from the days available.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be noted subject to the discussion referred to in the preamble; and
- (b) that the key performance indicators for the Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service for 2013/2014 be approved.

34/12 **AUDIT BOARD WORK PROGRAMME 2012 / 2013**

The Board considered the Work Programme 2012/2013.

It was noted that the Audit Commission Annual Letter had been considered previously and could be removed from the list for the March meeting.

In addition further to the discussion on risk management earlier in the meeting, it was agreed that at the March meeting, high level risks be considered together with operational risks from the Leisure and Culture Department and that the Head of Service be invited to attend the meeting.

It was also requested that an item on Corporate Fraud and how the Authority pro-actively responds to this be added to the Work Programme

RESOLVED that subject to the amendments set out in the preamble the Work Programme be noted.

35/12 **INTERNAL AUDIT MONITORING REPORT**

The Board considered a report which detailed the monitoring of internal audit work as at 30th November 2012. It was reported that the full Audit Plan would be delivered by the end of the year.

In relation to the Key Performance Indicators, Members requested that this be broken down into quarterly targets where possible.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

36/12 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

RESOLVED that under Section 100 I of the Local Government Act 1972, as amended, the public be excluded from the meeting during the consideration of the following item of business of the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part 1 of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraph of that part being as set out below, and that it is in the public interest to do so:-

<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Paragraph</u>
37/12	7

37/12 **INTERNAL AUDIT MONITORING REPORT**

The Board considered the Appendices to the Internal Audit Monitoring Report.

RESOLVED that the current position be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.35 p.m.

Chairman