



## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**WEDNESDAY 4TH AUGUST 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.**

**THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE**

**MEMBERS:** Councillors R. Hollingworth (Chairman), G. N. Denaro (Vice-Chairman), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP, R. D. Smith, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

### **AGENDA**

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 30th June 2010 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 28th June 2010 (Pages 7 - 8)
  - (a) To receive and note the minutes
  - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
5. Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 13th July 2010 (Pages 9 - 12)
  - (a) To receive and note the minutes
  - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
6. Minutes of the meeting of the Performance Management Board held on 19th July 2010 (Pages 13 - 18)
  - (a) To receive and note the minutes
  - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes

7. To receive verbal updates from the Leader and/or other Cabinet Members on any recent meetings attended in an ex-officio capacity (Pages 19 - 20)
8. Finance and Performance Monitoring Report - Quarter 1 2010/2011 (Pages 21 - 52)
9. Planning Services - Peer Review (Pages 53 - 58)
10. Town Centre Frontage Improvement Scheme (Pages 59 - 64)
  - Appendices For Item 8 - Finance And Performance Monitoring Report Quarter 1 2010/2011 (Pages 65 - 104)
  - Appendices For Item 9 - Planning Services Peer Review (Pages 105 - 142)
  - Appendices For Item 10 Town Centre Frontage Improvement Scheme (Pages 143 - 180)
11. 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
12. To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item of business containing exempt information:-

**"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 on the grounds that it involves the likely disclosure of exempt information as defined in Part I of Schedule 12A to the Act, as amended, the relevant paragraph of that part, in each case, being as set out below, and that it is in the public interest to do so:-

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph(s)</u>
13	1 and 3 "

13. Minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 24th June 2010 (Pages 181 - 204)
  - (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

23rd July 2010

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# Agenda Item 3

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 30TH JUNE 2010 AT 4.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Chairman), G. N. Denaro (Vice-Chairman), Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E., M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillor S. R. Colella

Officers: Ms. S. Hanley, Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. J. Staniland, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. J. Godwin, Ms. T. Kristunas, Ms. D. Poole, Mr. G. Revans, Mr. M. Carr and Ms. R. Cole

#### 17/10 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP and Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP.

#### 18/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

#### 19/10 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 2nd June 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

#### 20/10 OVERVIEW BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Board held on 1st June 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be noted.

#### 21/10 AUDIT BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 7th June 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the minutes be noted; and
- (b) that recommendations contained at Minute No 10/10 (a) to (e) relating to Protecting the Public Purse be approved.

- (c) that it be noted that recommendation Minute No 10/10(e) was a matter for the Cabinet to determine and therefore did not need to be referred to the Council.

22/10 **SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 10th June 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes be noted.

23/10 **JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 15th June 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED:** that the minutes be noted.

24/10 **COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT IN THE DEMOCRATIC PROCESS -  
OVERVIEW BOARD/TASK GROUP REPORT**

Councillor G. N. Denaro as the Portfolio Holder for Resources referred to the Overview Board Task Group report on Community Involvement with Local Democracy and acknowledged the importance of increasing democratic participation, particularly in the light of recent events at both national and local level.

The increased level of public involvement in the democratic process through the work of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Committee in relation to petitions and task group exercises was acknowledged and welcomed.

Councillor Denaro welcomed the recommendations within the report, some of which complemented and extended the work already being undertaken by officers from a number of departments within the Authority and in partnership with colleagues from the County Council. Concern was expressed however regarding the current and forthcoming programme of work to be carried out by officers and the potential impact of the additional recommendations.

Councillor Denaro stated that having discussed the proposals with the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services he was satisfied that in the main, existing projects and programmes could be extended to include recommendations of the Task Group and that the resources required were largely internal with officer time and activity able to be re-directed. This would need close working between Heads of Service and their respective officers to extend existing work programmes to take account of additional projects.

Members also wished to see that the impact of the work to be undertaken was measured with an increase in the outturn figures in respect of the 2011 local elections.

The Cabinet felt that there were significant resources implications which would need to be addressed in the way suggested by the Portfolio Holder.

At the invitation of the Leader, the Chairman of the Overview Board Councillor S. R. Colella addressed the meeting and referred to the evidence base considered by the Task Group and the significant amount of work undertaken by Members and officers.

The Leader thanked the Task Group on behalf of the Cabinet for their hard work in producing a very good report.

**RESOLVED** that the recommendations of the Community Involvement in Local Democracy Task Group be approved subject to the programme of implementation being drawn up in consultation with the relevant Heads of Service as referred to in the preamble.

25/10 **IMPROVING RESIDENTS SATISFACTION - SCRUTINY BOARD/TASK GROUP REPORT**

The Cabinet considered the report of the Improving Residents' Satisfaction Task Group. The Leader invited the Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor S. R. Colella to introduce the report.

Councillor Colella referred to the results of the latest Place Survey which had indicated a low level of satisfaction with services provided by the Council. The Task Group had looked in detail at the survey results and identified ways of improving residents' perception, including highlighting areas where the Authority was performing well.

The Cabinet was in agreement with the recommendations but it was highlighted that there were financial implications in respect of some of the recommendations and these would need to go through the normal budget process.

As with the Community Involvement in Local Democracy Task Group, it was felt that there should be close working between relevant Heads of Service and their officers to extend existing work programmes in order to undertake the work arising from the recommendations.

The Leader thanked the Chairman of the Task Group for an excellent report.

**RESOLVED** that the recommendations of the Improving Residents' Satisfaction Task Group be approved, subject to items with direct financial implications going through the usual budgetary process and to the programme of implementation being agreed with Heads of Service.

26/10 **SHARED SERVICES BOARD**

It was noted that there were no recommendations arising from the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 24th June 2010 and that the minutes would be submitted to the next Cabinet for noting.

27/10 **BROMSGROVE LOCAL STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP**

The minutes of the meeting of the Bromsgrove Local Strategic Partnership held on 20th May 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be noted.

28/10 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FORUM**

The minutes of the meeting of the Equality and Diversity Forum held on 15th April 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be noted.

29/10 **VERBAL UPDATES FROM THE LEADER AND/OR OTHER CABINET MEMBERS ON ANY RECENT MEETINGS ATTENDED IN AN EX-OFFICIO CAPACITY**

The Leader reported on the position in relation to the West Midland Leaders Board, Advantage West Midlands and the West Midlands Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership.

30/10 **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2009/2010**

The Cabinet considered a report on financial information for the year ended 31st March 2010 together with a list of amendments to the Statement of Accounts arising from a single transaction.

The Portfolio Holder and the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources responded to questions on the accounts from Members. Arising from the queries raised the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources undertook to provide additional financial training to all Members of the Council.

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (a) that the unaudited Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 be approved;
- (b) that the increase in the 2010/2011 Capital Programme of £1.192m in relation to the carry forward requests as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved;
- (c) that the Annual Governance Statement be approved; and
- (d) that the outturn position on revenue and capital as detailed in the report be noted.

31/10 **BENEFIT TAKE UP STRATEGY**

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed adoption of a Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Take Up Strategy to ensure that residents continue to receive advice and encouragement to claim any benefit to which they may be entitled.

**RESOLVED** that the Housing Benefit and Council Tax Benefit Take up Strategy attached as an Appendix to the report be approved.

32/10 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN 2010/2011**

The Cabinet considered a draft version of the Improvement Plan 2010/2011.

**RESOLVED** that the draft Improvement Plan 2010/2011 be approved.

33/10 **PERFORMANCE MONITORING REPORT (MAY 2010)**

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's performance as at 31st May 2010 (period 2).

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that it be noted that 61% of Performance Indicators were stable or improving;
- (b) that it be noted that 45% of Performance Indicators which had a target were meeting their target as at the month end and that 85% were projected to meet their target at the year end;
- (c) that the performance figures for May 2010 as set out in Appendix 2 be noted;
- (d) that the particular areas of improvement as set out in section 4.2 of the report be noted; and
- (e) that the particular areas of concern as set out in section 4.3 of the report be noted.

34/10 **ANNUAL REPORT - NATIONAL INDICATOR OUTTURNS 2009/2010**

Consideration was given to a report on the National Indicator Performance Outturns in 2009/2010 for all National Indicators collected at a District level.

It was reported that a separate Annual Report would be submitted to Cabinet in September 2010 which would summarise achievements against Council priorities and targets.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the changes to the format and timing of the Annual Report as set out in section 3 be noted; and
- (b) that the performance outturns for all National Indicators as set out in the Appendix to the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.

Chairman

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE AUDIT BOARD

MONDAY, 28TH JUNE 2010 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Peters (Chairman), B. Lewis F.CMI (Vice-Chairman),  
D. Hancox, Ms. H. J. Jones and C. R. Scurrall

Also in attendance: Ms. J. Hill, Audit Commission

Observers: Councillor G. N. Denaro, Portfolio Holder for Resources

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. T. Kristunas and Ms. P. Ross

14/10 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor J. T. Duddy.

15/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

16/10 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 7th June 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

17/10 **2009/2010 STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS AND GOVERNANCE STATEMENT**

Consideration was given to the report relating to the financial information for the year ended 31st March 2010, which included the Financial Outturn Information 2009/2010, the Statement of Accounts 2009/2010 and the Annual Governance Statement 2009/2010.

The Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resources responded to several questions from the Chairman and Members in respect of the Annual Review and Statement of Accounts 2009/2010. Following further discussion it was

**RESOLVED**

- (a) that the Annual Governance Statement 2009/2010 be noted; and
- (b) that the outturn position on revenue and capital as set out in the report be noted.

**RECOMMENDED**

- (a) that the Council approve the unaudited Statement of Accounts for the year ended 31st March 2010 in accordance with the Accounts and Audit Regulations 2003 (amended 2006); and
- (c) that the Council approves the increase in the 2010/2011 Capital Programme of £1.192m in relation to the carry forward requests as set out in Appendix 2 of the report.

The meeting closed at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY, 13TH JULY 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors D. L. Pardoe (Chairman), A. N. Blagg, C. R. Scurrall and C. J. Tidmarsh

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. M. Carr and Ms. A. Scarce

10/10 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors R. J. Deeming and C. B. Taylor.

11/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

No declarations of interest or whipping arrangements were received.

12/10 **MINUTES**

The Minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 10th June 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

13/10 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY PROPOSAL - THE FUTURE OF BURT**

The Board considered a topic proposal by Councillor C. Scurrall on the future of Bromsgrove Urban and Rural Transport (BURT). Members discussed the financial implications of providing this service, particularly in the difficult financial context, whether the Council had a statutory duty to provide this facility and the provision of public transport generally in the district. The Executive Director, Finance and Resources advised Members that a budget bid would have been put forward for the service for consideration in the Medium Term Financial Plan and that as the service had not yet been running for a year it may be more appropriate to consider the matter when the next budget bid was submitted.

The following questions were raised:

- What was the financial investment made to set up the service?
- What are the current running costs (i.e. cost of the driver and maintenance of the vehicle) and any revenue received?

- Can a summary of the journeys made be provided? (i.e. does the service concentrate on Bromsgrove Town Centre or does it pick up residents in Hagley, Wythall, Rubery and Alvechurch for example.)
- What is the take up of the service?
- Redditch Borough Council provided a similar service with a larger number of vehicles. Has consideration been given to combining the two services?

After further discussion it was

**RESOLVED** that further information and responses to the questions raised by the Board be provided by the Head of Community Services, at the Scrutiny Board meeting to be held on 28th September 2010.

14/10 **WORK PROGRAMME 2010/11**

The Board considered a report on the Scrutiny Board Work Programme 2010/11.

Members discussed the Quarterly Recommendation Tracker which would be brought to the meeting of the Scrutiny Board on 28th September 2010. Officers confirmed that many of the Cabinet decisions/Scrutiny recommendations on the Tracker referred to the Refuse and Recycling (VFM) Task Group, which was due to be reviewed in July 2010. A detailed response would be requested from the Head of Environmental Services for the next meeting.

The Board discussed the implementation of the Street Trading Consent Policy. Members also raised individual issues they had referred to the Licensing Team in respect of this policy, which had not been addressed. The Executive Director, Finance and Resources asked for details of these to be emailed to Officers, in order to investigate the issues further.

Members also made the following points:

- The Place Survey continued to be a high priority topic for consideration but in light of the recent changes may have to be adapted.
- Shared Services – Members felt that although this was an important issue, it was still at the early stages of implementation. The Executive Director, Finance and Resources suggested that a good starting point for review would be when the senior management team had been in post for 12 months. Members agreed that this item would be considered in early 2011.
- The Corporate Safeguarding Policy (Children and Vulnerable Adults) should remain a high priority and also be considered in more detail later in the year, or early 2011.

The Board also considered the medium priority items and agreed that these should be held in “reserve” for the time being and looked at in more detail if there was sufficient time when the high priority topics had been considered.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the Overview and Scrutiny work planning process for 2010/11 be noted; and
- (b) that the Scrutiny Board Work Programme for 2010/11 (as set out in Appendix 1) is agreed.

The meeting closed at 6.55 p.m.

Chairman

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# Agenda Item 6

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD

MONDAY, 19TH JULY 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors C. B. Taylor (Chairman), S. R. Colella, Mrs. A. E. Doyle,  
Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths and Ms. H. J. Jones

Observers: Councillor M. Webb

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. G. Revans, Mr. J. Godwin, Mr. K. Hirons and  
Ms. A. Scarce

#### 11/10 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor Mrs. M. Bunker.

Members asked for clarification as to when the vacant seat on the Board would be filled. The Chairman confirmed that he would be meeting the Leader on 28th July 2010, when this matter would be discussed.

#### 12/10 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

#### 13/10 MINUTES

The Minutes of the Performance Management Board held on 17th May 2010 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

#### 14/10 RECYCLING AND GARDEN WASTE SERVICE - LESSONS LEARNED REPORT

The Chairman welcomed the Portfolio Holder for Community Services, Head of Environmental Services and Street Scene and Community Manager to the meeting and invited the Portfolio Holder to introduce the report.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Services explained that neither he nor the Head of Environmental Services had been involved in the implementation of the changes to the Recycling and Garden Waste Collection Services. He summarised the Lessons Learned Report, drawing Members' attention to the following points in particular:

- The early launch of the service changes and involvement of Members, Parish Councils and the public.
- The development of back office systems to assist implementation.
- The adverse weather conditions which had delayed delivery of some bins, adding additional pressure to the workload.
- The lack of a mechanism which “pinpointed” a bin to a particular property.
- The underestimate of the number of additional green bins required.
- The funding for purchase of new brown bins, which had been insufficient for 2010 applications, and required a further order to be submitted at a later date.

Members discussed how it might have been more appropriate for this report to have been submitted to the Scrutiny Board in order for them to carry out a more in depth investigation, as they were concerned that it was often the small things which could build up and lead to adverse publicity and be detrimental to residents’ perception of the Council and its services. However, it was agreed that overall the implementation of the new service had gone well and that a larger number of homes than expected had taken up the service.

The Board discussed in detail how the charge for the service was collected and how this would work in the future. Currently this was done by either cheque or cash and the Street Scene and Community Manager confirmed that a direct debit system was being considered, although this may prove to be difficult. It was anticipated that households would be sent a letter/invoice 2-3 months before the service would resume, allowing them an opportunity to take up the service again.

Members discussed the calendar which had been provided to residents and it was confirmed that this had caused some difficulties and had been misleading. The Head of Environmental Services confirmed that the format would be revised and that a survey of residents would be carried out shortly, covering the service as a whole. A question and answer session at the Council House was also planned. Members asked if this session could be taken out to other areas of the district and the Head of Environmental Services confirmed that this would be possible where appropriate.

The Board was informed that the Council had the highest level of uptake of the garden waste service in the County. The charge made was in line with that of other councils in the area, although it was understood that Malvern charged around £60. The service had expanded by 8% this year, which it was felt, showed that residents were happy to pay for a good service.

**RECOMMENDED** that the Cabinet ensure that positive publicity is taken from the success of the garden waste service.

**RESOLVED** that the Lessons Learned – Recycling & Garden Waste Service Report be noted.



15/10 **DOLPHIN CENTRE SERVICE LEVEL AGREEMENT**

The Chairman invited the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services to introduce the report. The Head of Leisure and Cultural Services advised Members that the Grant Fund Agreement at Appendix 1 of the report set out the key aims, service standards, objectives and performance targets, funding arrangements and associated management requirements, between Bromsgrove District Council and Wychavon Leisure Community Association Limited.

The key performance issues and targets contained within this document and discussed by Members, were:

- Quest (UK quality scheme for sports and leisure facilities) scores in 2011/12 and 2013/14.
- Increased user satisfaction for the service within a 2 year period.
- Development of user feedback process.
- Health and Safety and related management tools.
- Development of an effective staff training process to ensure delivery of high quality services.
- Usage information and increased participation rates.
- A Partnership Board to oversee the delivery of service.
- Climate Change and utility management.

The Board was concerned that the Dolphin Leisure Centre usage, as detailed in the Performance Report (Item No. 6 on the Agenda) was below target and the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services gave information on how the usage was likely to even out over the municipal year, together with the likely reason for the target not being met for May 2010. It was agreed that the Head of Leisure and Cultural Services would, however, pass on the Board's concerns to the Chief Executive of the Trust at his next meeting with him.

16/10 **PERFORMANCE REPORT (MAY 2010)**

The Board considered the Performance Report for May 2010. Members were particularly concerned about item 4.3 of the report and the number of performance indicators not meeting their targets. After discussion it was agreed that as it was only the second month of the year then there was sufficient time for performance to improve and be brought up to target, but that Members would keep a close check on those areas affected.

Members discussed the following areas in more detail:

- The number of violent crimes and robberies.
- The average speed of answer at the Customer Contact Centre. It was confirmed that this was created by a high demand due to Council Tax billing and brown bin delivery problems.
- Finance and Resource Department - National Indicator (NI) 181 (Time taken to process housing and council tax benefit new claims or change

events). Members were advised that this has now been addressed and that the small backlog had been worked through.

- Planning and Regeneration - NI 157. This was a good example of the balance between meeting a target and taking more time in order to reach the correct decision on a planning application.

**RESOLVED:**

- (a) that it be noted that 61% of performance indicators are stable or improving;
- (b) that it be noted that 45% of performance indicators that have a target have met their target as at the month end and that 85% are projected to meet their target at the year end;
- (c) that the performance figures for May 2010 as set out in Appendix 2 be noted;
- (d) that the particular areas of improvement as summarised in section 4.2 of the report are noted; and
- (e) that the performance indicators of particular concern as set out in section 4.3 of the report be noted.

17/10 **IMPROVEMENT PLAN - NEW TEMPLATE**

The Board considered the Improvement Plan 2010-2011 and the new template. Members agreed that the new template was clearer and much easier to read. Members agreed that it would be useful to receive a report on the impact of the recent political and financial changes at the next Performance Management Board meeting.

Members discussed in more detail the following areas:

- The Railway Station and the availability of funding for this.
- The Hanover Street Car Parking extension – Officers to advise Members if this was on target to be operational by the end of July as originally expected.
- CP4 One Community – Members were concerned at possible funding cuts and how these would affect such projects as ‘U Decide’. It had not been made clear whether funding that had been allocated this year would also be jeopardised. The Chief Executive agreed to investigate this further and report back to the Board.

A Member of the Board had recently visited Sanders Park with her grandchildren. Members asked that it be noted how impressed the Member had been with the facilities, including the excellent activities available and quality of the refreshments available at the café.

**RESOLVED** that a report on the impact of political and financial changes be submitted to the Performance Management Board meeting on 20th September 2010.

18/10 **SHARED SERVICES REPORT**

The Board considered the Shared Services report. The Chief Executive explained that there were primarily two reports, the project update and the shared service transformation programme; which had been launched to staff recently. Feedback generally had been positive; a concern has been about the availability of Heads of Service, which was being addressed. The Chief Executive also informed Members that other councils were now looking at shared services as a result of the pending financial cutbacks, which could range from 25 to 40%.

After further discussion it was

**RESOLVED** that the Shared Services Report be noted.

19/10 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered the Work Programme and agreed that the following amendments should be made:

- That an Improvement Plan report be included in the September 2010 agenda.
- That the Place Survey be moved to the October 2010 agenda and that verbal feedback be provided following the recent political changes and the expected demise of the Place Survey in its current form.

**RESOLVED** that the Work Programme be noted, subject to the above amendments.

The meeting closed at 7.40 p.m.

Chairman

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# Agenda Item 7

**THERE ARE NO ENCLOSURES FOR THIS AGENDA ITEM**

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### **CABINET**

4 AUGUST 2010

#### JUNE (QUARTER 1) INTEGRATED FINANCE AND PERFORMANCE REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Roger Hollingworth
Relevant Head of Service	Hugh Bennett, Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships
Non-Key Decision	

#### **1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 To report to Cabinet on the Council's performance and financial position at 30 June 2010.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Cabinet notes that 60% of PIs are stable or improving.
- 2.2 That Cabinet notes that that 45% of PI's that have a target are meeting their target as at the month end and 80% are projected to meet their target at the year end.
- 2.3 That Cabinet notes the performance figures for June 2010 as set out in Appendix 2.
- 2.4 That Cabinet notes the achievements and issues as set out in the 'Council Summary' in 4.1.1. below.
- 2.5 That Cabinet notes the current financial position on Revenue and Capital as detailed in the report.
- 2.6 That Cabinet note the release of previously approved earmarked reserves of £68k, as set out in Appendix 5.
- 2.7 That Cabinet approves the budget virements between £15k and £100k, listed in Appendix 6.
- 2.8 That Cabinet notes that complaints increased by 7% compared to the final quarter of last year and increased 13% compared to quarter 1 last year. In addition compliments decreased in quarter 1 (19) compared to the final quarter of last year (29) but they are nearly double the number in quarter 1 last year (10). Details are shown in Appendix 7.
- 2.9 That Cabinet notes the performance of the Council's Treasury Management function, as detailed in Appendix 8.

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### **CABINET**

4 AUGUST 2010

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 This is the first integrated quarterly finance and performance report for 2010/11. It reflects the revised Shared Services department structure as well as the revised corporate performance indicator set.
- 3.2 The integration of finance and performance demonstrates that the Council is taking a wider view of the impact of financial resources when performance changes and the link between the two measures.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 An integrated performance and finance report for each department, plus a council summary, is shown on the following pages.

4.1.1 Overall Council Summary			Quarter 1 (Apr- Jun) 2010/11		
<b>Performance Summary</b>					
No. of PI's improving (I)	22	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	20	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	35
No. of PI's Stable (S)	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	12	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	5
No. of PI's worsening (W)	16	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	12	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	4
<b>Achievements</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Launch of the Worcestershire Regulatory Service, hosted by Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils on 1 June.</li><li>• Formal commencement of Single Management Team to serve Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils (20<sup>th</sup> April)</li><li>• Successful launch of WETT Internal Audit Service</li><li>• Successful launch of WETT Property Service</li><li>• Transfer of Dolphin Centre to Leisure Trust</li><li>• Successful running of General election through shared service arrangements</li><li>• Launch of shared service for CCTV / Lifeline</li><li>• Launch of shared service for ICT</li><li>• Good progress on new Doctors Surgery (Town Centre)</li><li>• Launch of co-mingled refuse collection service</li></ul>					
<b>Issues</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Implications of the governments' public sector cost reduction exercise.</li><li>• Only 45% of performance indicators have met their year to-date target, compared to 60% at the same time last year.</li></ul>					



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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Overall Council**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Environmental Services</b>	4,439	281	294	13
<b>Community Services</b>	3,259	370	391	21
<b>Planning &amp; Environment Services</b>	1,033	155	145	-10
<b>Leisure &amp; Cultural Services</b>	1,888	367	388	21
<b>Planning &amp; Regeneration</b>	1,438	160	133	-27
<b>Customer Services</b>	57	114	110	-4
<b>Finance &amp; Resources</b>	1,505	672	663	-9
<b>Legal, Equalities &amp; Democratic Services</b>	967	254	248	-6
<b>Policy, Performance &amp; Partnerships</b>	40	51	45	-6
<b>Business Transformation</b>	0	530	549	19
<b>Corporate Services</b>	598	181	195	14
<b>SERVICE TOTAL</b>	<b>15,224</b>	<b>3,135</b>	<b>3,161</b>	<b>26</b>
<b>Interest on Investments</b>	<b>-87</b>	<b>-22</b>	<b>-9</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>COUNCIL SUMMARY</b>	<b>15,137</b>	<b>3,113</b>	<b>3,152</b>	<b>39</b>

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#### **Financial Commentary**

- Regulatory Services commenced on 1<sup>st</sup> June 2010, the financial monitoring report will be submitted to the Regulatory Services Management Board and Joint Committee.
- Officers are currently working with our advisors to maximise the return available on investments during 2010/11.
- Income levels within Land Charges have been adversely affected by the impact of Third Party service providers.

#### **Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Overall Council**

Department	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Actual spend April – Jun £'000	Variance To date April – Jun £'000
<b>Street Scene &amp; Waste Management</b>	308	100	-208
<b>Planning &amp; Environment Services</b>	1,890	629	-1261
<b>Culture &amp; Community Services</b>	1,015	593	-422
<b>Legal Equalities and Democratic Services</b>	86	0	-86
<b>E-Government &amp; Customer Services</b>	93	70	-23
<b>Budget for Support Services Recharges</b>	136	0	-136
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,528</b>	<b>1,392</b>	<b>-2,136</b>

#### **Financial Commentary**

- The Capital Programme is to be profiled for the next quarter report to provide the year to date variance rather than the balance remaining for the year. This will include revising the Capital Programme to reflect the revised shared service department structure.

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- The variance on the Planning and Environment service area is because no capital expenditure has been charged on the Houndsfield Lane Caravan Site project, this expenditure will be made during the forthcoming year.

#### **4.1.2 Environmental Services** | **Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11**

##### **Performance Summary**

No. of PI's improving <b>(I)</b>	2	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	1	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	3
No. of PI's Stable <b>(S)</b>	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	3	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening <b>(W)</b>	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	1

##### **Achievements**

- Commencement of comingled recycling bin collections to approximately 38,000 residential properties.
- Rollout of paper and cardboard recycling collection to 21 of the 38 district schools through working with local recycling company.
- Trial project with New Starts commenced to divert reusable furniture from bulky household waste service.
- Successfully processed all trade waste and cesspool customer contracts on time.
- Continuation in processing garden waste service applications.
- 95% of refuse and recycling crews underwent and assed NVQ level 1 in Refuse Collection. Those staff missed through sickness or annual leave will be scheduled in to complete this qualification on their return.
- Initiation of ATS tyre contract for depot vehicles (waste and cleansing) providing weekly tyre checks and maintenance work to ensure good tyre management mitigating against damage and excess tyre replacement.

##### **Issues**

- Long-term and short-term sickness is still an on going issue amongst refuse & recycling crews.
- There is a need to improve communication amongst staff and departments as currently information necessary to effective working is often not shared very well.
- Planned shared services issues are having an effect on staff morale as there is uncertainty for the future of services and individuals.

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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Environmental Services**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Waste Management</b>	-24	-6	14	20
<b>Depot / Transport</b>	-72	125	60	-65
<b>Car Parks / Civil Enforcement Parking</b>	-931	-185	-14	171
<b>Cemeteries / Crematorium</b>	72	5	21	16
<b>Streets &amp; Grounds</b>	2,488	361	285	-76
<b>Transport &amp; Waste</b>	2,906	-19	-72	-53
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>4,439</b>	<b>281</b>	<b>294</b>	<b>13</b>

**Financial Commentary**

- The Transport and Waste summary includes the income relating to garden waste. The income will be offset by costs associated with the delivery of the service during 2010/11.
- Car Park income is significantly down for the first quarter. Officers are currently working through the projections for the full financial year with the aim to mitigate any shortfall and to address pressures on income within the budget process.

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**Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 Environmental Services**

Department	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Actual spend April – Jun £'000	Variance To date April – Jun £'000
<b>Depot Services</b>	30	5	-25
<b>Vehicle &amp; Equipment replacement programme</b>	170	95	-75
<b>Other schemes</b>	108	0	-108
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>308</b>	<b>100</b>	<b>-208</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Capital expenditure on target, no underspends anticipated at year end.</li> </ul>			

<b>4.1.3 Community Services</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>
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**Performance Summary**

No. of PI's improving (I)	10	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	9	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	10
No. of PI's Stable (S)	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	2	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	4
No. of PI's worsening (W)	8	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	7	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	3

**Achievements**

**Community Safety**

- Planned and delivered the 'High 5' event in Sanders Park
- Operation Harness delivered in partnership with Police, aiming to tackle issues of alcohol consumption in parks & open spaces. Over 100 cans & bottles seized.
- World cup domestic abuse & alcohol campaign successfully delivered.
- Cannabis farms event presentation to Local Landlords forum.

**CCTV & Lifeline**

- Successful implementation of shared service

**Housing Strategy**

- Successful transfer of North Worcestershire Care & repair agency to Festival Housing

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<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• 'Step up into private renting' scheme has secured additional funding from Supporting People for a full time support officer.</li><li>• New 'empty space' scheme offering advice and assistance to High Street property owners to convert unused space into residential accommodation. One successful scheme delivered in the quarter</li></ul>
<b>Issues</b>

#### **Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Community Services**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Housing Strategy</b>	2,169	164	156	-8
<b>Community Safety</b>	626	112	135	23
<b>Travel Concessions</b>	464	94	100	6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>3,259</b>	<b>370</b>	<b>391</b>	<b>21</b>

#### **Financial Commentary**

- Housing Strategy- The current under spend is due to a number of schemes making minor savings on expenditure during the period. There have also been delays in the receipt of invoices from suppliers. Work is being done to address this issue, so that invoices are paid quicker to accurately reflect the true spend to date.
- Community Safety – The over spend in this area is mainly in relation to transferring budgets between authorities for the shared service and time differences in invoicing between Redditch and Bromsgrove. This issue should be resolved by quarter 2 to reflect a more accurate picture.

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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Planning & Environment Services**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Environmental Health</b>	1,059	166	156	-10
<b>Licensing</b>	-39	-13	-13	0
<b>Land Drainage</b>	13	2	2	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,033</b>	<b>155</b>	<b>145</b>	<b>-10</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Environmental Health underspend is due to Admin Officer post vacancy.</li></ul>				

**Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 Planning & Environment Services**

Department	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Actual spend April – Jun £'000	Variance To date April – Jun £'000
<b>Town Centre</b>	170	1	-169
<b>Strategic Housing</b>	1,720	628	-1092
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,890</b>	<b>629</b>	<b>-1261</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Capital expenditure commitments are increasing with a large amount of Disabled Facilities Grants and Discretionary Grants being processed already. Traditionally the first quarter reflects lower expenditure due to invoices anticipated not yet received by suppliers.</li><li>• A large proportion of the current underspend is due to the Houndsfield Lane Caravan Site allocation of funds which have not yet been requested.</li><li>• The £700k budget in relation to Affordable Housing across the district has not yet been fully spent as a review of planning requirements and timescales for allocation of funds is currently underway.</li></ul>			

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<b>4.1.4 Leisure and Cultural Services</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>
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**Performance Summary**

No. of PI's improving (I)	4	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	3	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	7
No. of PI's Stable (S)	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	4	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening (W)	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	0

**Achievements**

- Roundhill Allotment site expansion completed – 27 new plots sold
- Transfer of Dolphin Centre to Leisure Trust
- Arts and Community Events Programme Commenced (Bandstand Programme – Race for Life – Carnival and High Five – Leukaemia Bikeathon – Rubery Festival – St Georges Day)
- Disability Sports project a finalist in the BBC Midlands Power of Sports Award
- Winner of the Bromsgrove and County Club of the Year Award
- Club of the Year at the NPower Disability Sports Awards West Midlands
- Gymnastics Development Club won the National Educational Award at the recent British Gymnastics – England Award 2010
- Disability Club Boccia Boars was identified by Cerebral Palsy Sport as the exit route for the Playground to Podium Project – the pathway to steer talented young people to the Paraolympics for Herefordshire and Worcestershire – the club was the first in the County to complete in the league this year and used BP case study.

**Issues**



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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Leisure and Cultural Services**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Parks &amp; Open Spaces</b>	501	73	67	-6
<b>Allotments</b>	59	3	2	-1
<b>Promotions</b>	337	41	64	23
<b>Sports &amp; Recreation Development</b>	221	32	31	-1
<b>Sports Centres</b>	716	204	209	5
<b>Leisure Services</b>	54	14	15	1
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,888</b>	<b>367</b>	<b>388</b>	<b>21</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Promotions – due to economic downturn sponsorship has decreased. Officers are reviewing the situation and will endeavor to mitigate the shortfall during 2010/11. It is anticipated that there will be a deficit at the end of year.</li></ul>				

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**Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 Leisure and Cultural Services**

Department	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Actual spend April – Jun £'000	Variance To date April – Jun £'000
<b>Sports Facilities</b>	593	443	-150
<b>CCTV Shared Service Contribution</b>	150	150	0
<b>Parks &amp; Cemeteries</b>	218	0	-218
<b>PCN5 Lifeline</b>	54	0	-54
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,015</b>	<b>593</b>	<b>-422</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b>			
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Expenditure is in line with expectations and therefore no major problems have arisen in the first quarter of 10/11, and it is anticipated that all projects will be completed during 2010/11.</li> </ul>			

<b>4.1.5 Planning and Regeneration</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>
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**Performance Summary**

No. of PI's improving (I)	1	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	2	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	3
No. of PI's Stable (S)	1	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	0	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening (W)	1	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	1	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	0

**Achievements**

- Building Control has secured a further Partner Client as part of a National Partnership working programme. This results in BDC having 5 formal working partners comprising local Architects, Engineers and Contractors, the joint highest figure across H&W.
- Building Control has secured the Perryfields Social Housing contract against strong levels of competition from the private sector.
- Held a special meeting of the Planning Committee (28<sup>TH</sup> June) in order to consider a major retail application for Sainsbury's.
- Introduced a regime for charging for Pre Application and Permitted Development

advice in line with County Colleagues and in conjunction with RBC.

- Working towards Action Plan to respond to Peer Review Report.
- Economic Development – Business Start-Up Showcase on 8<sup>th</sup> June. Record number of award-winners including two more “£ Million Turnover Awards”. Over 300 new businesses now sponsored since inception. Event attended by Savid Javid MP
- Launched the frontage improvement grant scheme for the high street
- Public consultation on possible Hewell Grange conservation area
- Secured funding from the CABE/DEFRA rural master planning fund for urban design training

**Issues**

- The LPI for major applications has risen this year from 80% to 85%. Current performance suggests that this target may be challenging.
- Change in government and revocation of Regional Spatial Strategies has led to huge uncertainty about the status of current and future planning policy.
- Planning applications being received on Area of Development Restraint (ADR) sites ahead of adopted policy on ADR delivery.

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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Planning and Regeneration**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Building Control</b>	3	-23	-36	-13
<b>Development Control</b>	821	40	13	-27
<b>Strategic Planning</b>	447	99	93	-6
<b>Economic &amp; Tourism development</b>	186	43	45	2
<b>Emergency Planning</b>	35	7	2	-5
<b>Land Charges</b>	-72	-24	-4	20
<b>Town Centre</b>	18	18	20	2
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,438</b>	<b>160</b>	<b>133</b>	<b>-27</b>

**Financial Commentary**

- The income for development control and building control is on target so far for new financial year. However land charges has a shortfall mainly due to the provision of the service by private companies.

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<b>4.1.6 Regulatory Services</b>			<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>		
<b>Performance Summary</b>					
No. of PI's improving <b>(I)</b>	n/a	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	n/a	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	n/a
No. of PI's Stable <b>(S)</b>	n/a	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	n/a	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	n/a
No. of PI's worsening <b>(W)</b>	n/a	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	n/a	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	n/a
<b>Achievements</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The county-wide Worcestershire regulatory service was launched on 1<sup>st</sup> June. Financial and performance reporting for the service will now be via the Regulatory Services Management Board and Joint Committee.</li> </ul>					
<b>Issues</b>					

<b>4.1.7 Customer Services</b>			<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>		
<b>Performance Summary</b>					
No. of PI's improving <b>(I)</b>	3	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	3	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	5
No. of PI's Stable <b>(S)</b>	1	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	1	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	0
No. of PI's worsening <b>(W)</b>	1	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	1	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	0
<b>Achievements</b>					
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>4 CSA's successfully completed the NVQ Level 3 in Customer Service.</li> <li>Successfully recruited to the new apprentice post based within the CSC which is a new development and hopefully will assist the team here to improve customer service but also support future capacity building within the organisation</li> <li>Introduced the Benefit Surgery in the CSC (A service developed with colleagues in Benefits where by an assessor is based in the CSC on a two weekly basis) to improve service to customers.</li> </ul>					
<b>Issues</b>					

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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Customer Services**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Customer Service Centre</b>	57	114	110	-4
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>57</b>	<b>114</b>	<b>110</b>	<b>-4</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b>				
The underspend within the Customer Services Department is due to the employment of an Apprentice Customer Service Advisor in a Customer Service Advisor post.				

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<b>4.1.8 Finance and Resources</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>
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**Performance Summary**

No. of PI's improving <b>(I)</b>	2	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	2	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	6
No. of PI's Stable <b>(S)</b>	0	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	2	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	1
No. of PI's worsening <b>(W)</b>	2	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	3	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	0

**Achievements**

- Facilities Management transferred to Worcestershire County Council under WETT Programme
- Internal Audit transferred to Worcester City under WETT Programme.
- Human Resources and Accountancy supported the hosting of Regulatory Services by BDC from 1<sup>st</sup> June.
- Successfully recruited to 2 vacant posts in Benefits 1 in Corporate Fraud and 1 in Revenues.
- Improved microphone system installed in Council Chamber.
- Driving at Work Policy approved.
- Statement of Accounts completed and approved within statutory deadline.
- Draft of revised Financial Regulations prepared.
- The corporate fraud policies were reviewed

**Issues**

- Formal agreements for Internal Audit and Facilities Management not signed prior to transfer.
- Shortage of internal audit resource and potential impact of Annual Audit Plan.
- Benefits Service performance – backlogs of correspondence and no resource to pursue overpaid benefit cases. Should improve next quarter with new officers in post

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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Finance and Resources**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Central Overheads</b>	145	36	34	-2
<b>Accounts and Financial Management</b>	57	170	174	4
<b>Human Resources and Welfare</b>	16	88	107	19
<b>Grants and Donations</b>	91	43	42	-1
<b>Property, Assets and Facilities Management</b>	-21	270	232	-38
<b>Revenues and Benefits</b>	1,217	65	74	9
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>1,505</b>	<b>672</b>	<b>663</b>	<b>-9</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The underspend within the Property, Assets and Facilities Management Function is due to the receipt of rental income following the delayed completion of the sale of two industrial units.</li><li>• The overspend in Human Resources and Welfare relates to the management restructure and the severance costs that require funding from reserves.</li></ul>				



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<b>4.1.9 Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>
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**Performance Summary**

No. of PI's improving (I)	n/a	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	n/a	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	n/a
No. of PI's Stable (S)	n/a	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	n/a	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	n/a
No. of PI's worsening (W)	n/a	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	n/a	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	n/a

**Achievements**

- Successful General Election arrangements.
- New Petition Scheme adopted to meet legislative requirements.
- Shared Services Agreement completed.
- Gender Equality Policy agreed.
- Regulatory Services Agreement completed and successful first meeting of the new Worcestershire Shared Service Joint Committee held.
- Shared departmental management team implemented.
- Participated in National Volunteer Week.
- Community Involvement in Democracy Task Group and Improving Residents' Satisfaction Task Group reports completed.
- Two well-attended meetings of the Equality & Diversity Forum held and consulted on the disabled access award scheme.

**Issues**

- Inquire Board meetings and Labour Group not taking up seats on Boards and certain Committees.

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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Democratic &amp; Member support</b>	758	120	114	-6
<b>Elections &amp; Electoral Services</b>	185	21	27	6
<b>Legal Advice &amp; Services</b>	24	113	107	-6
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>967</b>	<b>254</b>	<b>248</b>	<b>-6</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• There are no other major variances that have arisen in the first quarter of 2010/11 within the service.</li></ul>				

**Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services**

Department	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Actual spend April – Jun £'000	Variance To date April – Jun £'000
<b>Alterations to Council Buildings in compliance with DDA</b>	36	0	-36
<b>Remedial Work to Council Buildings following Stock Conditions Survey</b>	50	0	-50
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>86</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>-86</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Remedial Works at the Council House have been put on hold pending a review on the space required by employees and services of the Council.</li></ul>			

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<b>4.1.10 Policy, Performance and Partnerships</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>
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**Performance Summary**

No. of PI's improving (I)	n/a	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	n/a	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	n/a
No. of PI's Stable (S)	n/a	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	n/a	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	n/a
No. of PI's worsening (W)	n/a	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	n/a	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	n/a

**Achievements**

- First session of Budget Jury held in June
- Launch of joint Bromsgrove & Redditch intranet - ORB
- ORB chosen as intranet for WETT regulatory Services and being considered by other shared services
- Largest ever Together Bromsgrove published, with significant consultation content
- Bromsgrove DC have signed up to the 10:10 campaign – to reduce our own carbon emissions by 10% in 2010/11
- A number of HoS have included positive climate change actions in their Business Plans
- Reported NI188 (Planning to adapt to climate change) as having achieved 2009/10 target (Level 1)
- Reported NI186 (Per capita CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the local area) as having achieved 2009/10 target (actual results are delayed by 2 years)

**Issues**

- Reported NI185 (CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from Local Authority operations) not on target in 2009/10– working on identifying causes of increased emissions in Q2

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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Policy, Performance and Partnerships**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Printing</b>	0	23	19	-4
<b>Corporate Admin / Central Post</b>	0	31	32	1
<b>Policy &amp; Performance</b>	0	73	70	-3
<b>TRUNK</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>-76</b>	<b>-76</b>	<b>0</b>
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>40</b>	<b>51</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>-6</b>

**Financial Commentary**

- At this time of the year expenditure is in line with expectations and therefore no major variances have arisen in the first quarter of 10/11.
- The TRUNK centre invoices Bromsgrove Council quarterly for our contribution towards running the centre.

<b>4.1.11 Business Transformation</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>
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**Performance Summary**

No. of PI's improving <b>(I)</b>	n/a	No. of PI's meeting YTD target	n/a	No. of PI's where est. outturn projected to meet target	n/a
No. of PI's Stable <b>(S)</b>	n/a	No. of PI's missing YTD target by < 10%	n/a	No. of PI's projected to miss target by < 10%	n/a
No. of PI's worsening <b>(W)</b>	n/a	No. of PI's missing YTD target by >10%	n/a	No. of PI's projected to miss target by >10%	n/a

**Achievements**

- Investors in People spot check showed that standards have been maintained. This puts BDC in a very positive position for the full assessment in April 2011
- Achieved a 42% response rate from the Employee Survey with largely positive results – actions to be incorporated within the Organisational Development Strategy action plan
- Mandatory refresher training for members of political boards and committees all achieved by the deadline
- Workforce Plan and Organisational Development Strategy documents progressing well

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- Disclosure Log published on BDC website for responses to information. This will make information requested freely available and reduce the number of requests
- Business Development Team has now taken responsibility for tracking requests for information from RBC.
- Physical records audit completed at RBC Town Hall and major satellite offices.
- LEAN - embedding skills and knowledge with people. The majority of processes covered (some in an NVQ environment) which identified financial and time savings
- Data Cleansing RBC - Waste Management completed,
- Created new layers of Agricultural Land classes on LocalView
- Commissioned by Streetscene to provide comprehensive GIS dealing with Street Cleaning, Grounds Maintenance and Waste collection
- Commissioned to create a comprehensive Town Centre dataset
- Upgraded Redditch and Bromsgrove Email and Web Filtering devices providing a common platform
- IT Shared Service Team now working as a single team able to resolve issues for either site from first point of contact.
- Joint procurement procedures and standardisation project complete, equipment now being purchased through OGC framework.

#### **Issues**

- Sickness levels are currently above the expected levels for the department. Additional monitoring and better use of the sickness policy is now being implemented to address this issue.

#### **Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Business Transformation**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>IT Services</b>	0	530	549	19
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>530</b>	<b>549</b>	<b>19</b>

#### **Financial Commentary**

The overspend within the department is mainly due to the departmental restructure during the shared services and the severance costs that require funding from reserves.

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**Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 Business Transformation**

Department	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Actual spend April – Jun £'000	Variance To date April – Jun £'000
<b>Internet/Intranet Development</b>	3	0	-3
<b>Corporate budget for IT Upgrades</b>	0	3	3
<b>Government Connect Scheme</b>	1	-2	-3
<b>Spatial Project Phase 1</b>	1	0	-1
<b>Spatial Project Phase 2</b>	5	0	-5
<b>Councillors Remote Access</b>	4	0	-4
<b>Increase Bandwidth for Internet Link</b>	10	0	-10
<b>ICT Shared Service - Phase 1</b>	69	69	0
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>93</b>	<b>70</b>	<b>-23</b>

**Financial Commentary**

The spend for many of the schemes has been delayed whilst a review of the projects is being undertaken.

The Shared ICT Service project is well underway, the total spend on the project for the April-June quarter is £190,164, this is also being contributed to by Redditch Borough Council. It is expected that the project will be delivered on time and within budget for 2010/11.

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<b>4.1.12 Corporate Services</b>	<b>Quarter 1 (Apr – Jun) 2010/11</b>
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**Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (Apr-Jun) 2010/11 – Corporate Services**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2010/11 £'000	Profiled Budget April - Jun £'000	Actual spend April - Jun £'000	Variance to date April - Jun £'000
<b>Corporate Services</b>	598	181	195	14
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>598</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>195</b>	<b>14</b>
<b>Financial Commentary</b>				
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Corporate savings are under review as to the present shortfall in this area. The savings from shared services will be identified during the next quarter.</li></ul>				

**4.2 Sundry Debtors**

Sundry Debt is raised by the Council to ensure effective recovery of debts owing. The outstanding balance at 30/06/10 was £996k (balance to 31/03/10 was £561k) which includes:-

Type of Debt	Amount £'000
Car Parking Fines	66
Lifeline debts	26
Rents/Hire Charges	40
Building Regulations	14
Trade Waste and Cesspool emptying	60
Developer Contributions	114
Housing Schemes	29
Enhanced Recycling	55
Licensing	7
Services Provided to other organisations e.g. BDHT	76
Sponsorship	10
Contributions from Other Organisations	463
Cemeteries	2

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The age of the debt is represented as follows:

<b>Age of Debt</b>	<b>Balance as at 31/03/10 £'000</b>	<b>Balance as at 30/06/10 £'000</b>
Under 30 days (not yet due)	362	772
Up to 1 month	10	66
1 – 2 months	33	6
3 – 6 months	21	7
Over 6 months	135	145

The increase in debt due for payment in under 30 days is because of amounts to be paid from other Council's for the provision of shared services.

Debt recovery is originally carried out by the Exchequer Section with 2 reminders being sent to debtors. Debts over 90 days are currently under review and recovered by the legal team.

#### **5.0 TREASURY MANAGEMENT**

The Council's Treasury Management Strategy has been developed in accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance prudential indicators and is used to manage risks arising from financial instruments. Additionally treasury management practices are followed on a day to day basis.

#### **5.1 Credit Risk**

Credit risk arises from deposits with banks and financial institutions, as well as credit exposures to the Council's customers. Credit risk is minimised by use of a specified list of investment counterparty criteria and by limiting the amount invested with each institution. The Council receives credit rating details from its Treasury Management advisers on a daily basis and any counterparty falling below the criteria is removed from the list.

The Council has not had and does not expect any default losses by any of its counterparties in relation to investments.



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Due to market conditions the Council has reduced its credit risk for all new investments by only investing in the highest rated instruments and has shortened the allowable length of investments in order to reduce risk.

The credit criteria in respect of financial assets managed in-house by the Council are as follows:

<b>Financial Asset Category</b>	<b>Criteria (Fitch ratings)</b>	<b>Maximum Investment</b>
Deposits with banks	Short Term: F1+/F1 Support: 1,2,3 Long Term: minimum 'AA-/A	£3million/£2million
Deposits with building societies	Short Term: F1+/F1 Support: 1,2,3 Long Term: minimum 'AA-/A	£3million/£2million
Deposits with Debt Management Account – Deposit Facility (DMADF)		£no upper limit *

\* Investments with the DMADF are guaranteed by HM Treasury. Following advice from the Council's treasury advisors, from a credit perspective no upper limit was imposed on investments with the DMADF.

Fitch Ratings is an international credit rating agency (one of three nationally recognised rating agencies alongside Moody's and Standard & Poor's). Fitch Rating's long-term credit ratings are set up along a scale from 'AAA' to 'D' where 'AAA' designates the best quality companies, reliable and stable through to 'D' where the company has defaulted on obligations and Fitch believes that it will generally default on all or most of its obligations. Fitch's short term ratings indicate the potential level of default within a 12 month period. F1+ is the best quality grade, indicating exceptionally strong capacity of obligor to meet its financial commitment

At 30 June 2010 short term investments comprise:

	31 March 10 £	30 June 10 £
Deposits with Banks/Building Societies	8,360	9,550
<b>Total</b>	<b>8,360</b>	<b>9,550</b>

### **5.2 Income from investments**

An investment income target of £87k has been set for 2010/11 using a projected return rate of 0.75% – 1.50 %. During the past financial year

bank base rates have dropped to 0.5% and current indications are projecting minimal upward movement for the short term.

In the period to 30 June 2010 the Council received income from investments of £9k. In order to maximise available returns within our risk criteria the Council placed £1million in a one year deposit attracting 1.85%. Accrued interest on this deposit is included in the figures referred to above.

Details of the Council's performance for the Treasury Management function during the first quarter of 2010/11 are included at Appendix 8.

## **6.0 EFFICIENCY SAVINGS**

As part of the budget round for 2010/11 a number of efficiency savings were approved. These challenging targets were allocated across all services as detailed in Appendix 4.

To date the efficiency savings total £140.5k for 2010/11.

## **7.0 REVENUE BALANCES AND EARMARKED RESERVES**

### **7.1 Revenue Balances**

The revenue balances brought forward at 1 April 2010 were £1.266m (subject to audit). It is anticipated that a further £134k will be transferred to balances during 2010/11. During the period £2.5k has been utilised to fund the proposed dissolution of Lickey End Parish Council.

### **7.2 Earmarked Reserves**

The Council maintains a number of reserves which have been set up to earmark resources for future spending plans. The funding to be utilised from these reserves equates to £68k. Details are shown in Appendix 5.

## **8.0 CAPITAL RECEIPTS**

8.1 The Capital Programme was approved by Members in January 2010, the effect of the level of Capital Spend to 2012/13 on capital receipts is estimated below:

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<b>Capital Programme</b>	<b>2010/11 £'000</b>	<b>2011/12 £'000</b>	<b>2012/13 £'000</b>
Balance b/fwd	5,133	3,041	1,914
Actual funding to date (April – June)	-216		
Estimated use for the remainder of the year	-2,476	-1,227	-226
Received in year	600	100	100
Balance c/fwd	3,041	1,914	1,788

8.2 The figures in the above table include general capital receipts for the funding of projects throughout the District. In addition, an estimate of capital receipts has been made of £100k per annum in relation to any sales of assets, with an additional £500k in financial year 2010/11 as the anticipated capital receipt from the sale and change of usage of Industrial Units at Aston Fields.

8.3 As part of the Use of Resources assessment the Council must demonstrate that it has a robust Capital Programme that is delivered on time and within budget.

**9. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

9.1 Covered in the report.

**10. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 None

**11. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None

**12. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

12.1 Performance reporting & management links to the Improvement objective

**13. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

13.1 Risk considerations covered in the report. There are no Health & Safety considerations

**14. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

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14.1 Performance Improvement is a Council Objective

**15. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 None.

**16. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

16.1 None

**17. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

17.1 None

**18. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

18.1 None

**19. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

19.1 Sound performance management and data quality are key to achieving improved scores in the Use of resources judgement. This performance report supports that aim.

**20. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

20.1 None

**21. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

21.1 Not applicable

**22. LESSONS LEARNT**

22.1 Not applicable

**23. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

23.1 None

**24. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	No
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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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**4 AUGUST 2010**

Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	No
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	No
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

**25. WARDS AFFECTED**

All

**26. APPENDICES**

- Appendix 1 Performance Summary for April – June 2010
- Appendix 2 Detail Performance report for April – June 2010
- Appendix 3 Detailed figures to support the performance report
- Appendix 4 Efficiency Savings 2010/11
- Appendix 5 Current Position (April – June) on Earmarked Reserves
- Appendix 6 Virements for approval by Cabinet
- Appendix 7 Customer Feedback
- Appendix 8 Treasury Report for April – June 2010

**27. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**28. KEY**

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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- PI - Performance Indicator
- NI - National Indicator ( a PI defined by government and used by all Councils)
- LPI - Local Performance Indicator – (a PI defined by Bromsgrove, District Council to measure performance on local priorities)
- CAA - Corporate Area Assessment – the methodology used by the Audit Commission to judge the performance of Councils and partners

**AUTHORS OF REPORT**

Hugh Bennett, Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships  
Teresa Kristunas, Head of Resources  
John Outhwaite, Senior Policy and Performance Officer  
Debbie Randall, Accountancy Services Manager

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### **Cabinet**

4<sup>th</sup> August 2010

#### **Spatial Planning Peer Review Action Plan**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Jill Dyer
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford
Non-Key Decision	

#### **1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The following report and appendix 1 highlight the key points emerging from a spatial planning peer review undertaken by the Improvement and Development Agency for Local Government (IDeA) and the Planning Advisory Service (PAS). Appendix 2 is the peer review action plan developed to address the recommendations of the external review team.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Members note the spatial planning peer review report (Appendix 1), and endorse the peer review action plan (Appendix 2).

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In October 2009 a team from IDeA and PAS visited the Council to undertake a Spatial Planning Peer Review. The format of the review was designed to help the planning service assess its current achievements, and its capacity to change and continue to improve. The review team were onsite for two days during which they spoke to a wide variety of officers, members, service users, and other partners and stakeholders in the planning process in order to gauge the necessary information to deliver their report.
- 3.2 A report was prepared by the review team (see appendix 1) which outlines 18 key recommendations organised into the following areas,
- Achieving outcomes,
  - Integration and collaboration,
  - Leading and engaging the community,
  - Management,
  - Innovation,
  - Learning and excellence and,
  - Shared knowledge and evidence.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

- 4.1 The action plan (see appendix 2) identifies both the recommendations from the review team, and also the proposed actions developed by planning services to address these issues.
- 4.2 Some of the actions such as lifting the housing moratorium, and engaging with Birmingham City Council at director level, have already been implemented. Some of the other recommendations focus on the delivery of development targets associated with the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS). This part of the development plan, however, has now been revoked meaning that these recommendations may need to be reassessed in the light of the new planning regime which focuses on bottom-up local planning, rather than top-down regional planning.
- 4.3 Whilst most of the recommendations are to be implemented by officers, in a number of key areas, members' involvement in the way the planning service operates is the subject of the review team's recommendations. Officers will work with members on delivering these actions.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 6.1 None

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The review and action plan has a number of recommendations which will affect how the Council prepares future planning policies.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 8.1 The operation of an efficient and successful spatial planning and regeneration service will have significant impacts on all of the Council's objectives and priorities. Most obviously, this will include the development of new housing to meet identified needs and town centre regeneration, to the promotion of sustainable development which addresses climate change, and promotes inclusive communities.

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**



9.1 None directly, all risk to be managed through the Planning and Regeneration risk register.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 Actions within the plan focus on how the planning service interacts with its customers, the implementation of the plan will improve contact, where necessary, between the planning service and its customers.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

12.1 The recommendations that the planning service looks to investigate opportunities for shared working and adopts a more flexible development management approach, in time could deliver a planning service that is better value for money.

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

13.1 Successful spatial planning has full regard to climate change, carbon reduction, and the protection of biodiversity. Actions within the plan relate to improvements which will ensure these issues continue to be a significant consideration when the planning service assesses a wide range of developments within the district.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 None

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 None

**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

16.1 None

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

17.1 None

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

18.1 The recommendations and subsequent action plan identifies a number of areas / lessons to be learnt with regard to the delivery and development of planning services.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

19.1 A wide range of planning services users were interviewed as part of the review, and this is reflected in a number of actions within the plan, including the introduction of a website review, the implementation of the customer first actions plans, and ongoing customer surveys.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	No
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	No
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	No
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards

**22. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 - Spatial Planning Peer Review  
Appendix 2 - Spatial Planning Peer Review Action Plan

**23. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**Cabinet**

**4<sup>th</sup> August 2010**

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**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### **CABINET**

4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2010

#### **FRONTAGE IMPROVEMENT SCHEME**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Dyer/Booth/Denaro
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford, Head of Planning and Regeneration
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	

#### **1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS**

- 1.1 The Frontage Improvement Scheme is a town centre regeneration project between Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council which aims to regenerate and revitalise the town centre.
- 1.2 A budget of £20,000 has currently been allocated to the scheme to be spent during 2010/11. This comprises of £10,000 from Worcestershire County Council, £5000 from the Bromsgrove Town Centre budget and £5000 from the Strategic Planning Team budget. The existing fund could potentially assist with 5 improvement schemes within the Phase 1 target area of 19 properties. Additional funding of £50,000 is therefore being sought to boost the impact of the scheme.

#### **2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That Cabinet recommend to Full Council the approval of £50,000 funding to support the project, to be released from balances to be funded by receipts generated from VAT refunds.

#### **3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area was designated in 1968 and contains a high number of listed buildings and notable unlisted historic buildings. The Council has a statutory duty under s71 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas. A draft Character Appraisal for the town centre including management and enhancement proposals was therefore produced in November 2009. The draft management proposals highlighted the need for improvements to the shopfronts within the town centre, and improved maintenance of the historic buildings which led to the allocation of the existing scheme budget for frontage improvements. A copy of the draft character appraisal has been attached as Appendix A.
- 3.2 The current budget of £20,000 is being targeted to No's 61-97 High Street (odd properties only) between Church Street and Mill Lane which contains

19 retail units - 13 of which are in listed buildings. A map of the target area and photos of the historic buildings have been included as Appendices B and C. Assistance is available for shopfront improvement works, replacement signage and external repairs to upper floors such as window refurbishment at a rate of 80% of the cost of the works to a maximum of £4000 per property. Where possible additional funding will also be offered for conversion of empty upper floors through the Housing Empty Spaces scheme to maximise impact.

**4. KEY ISSUES**

4.1 The current budget will potentially improve 5 properties within the target area, however additional funding would have a more noticeable impact on the appearance of this part of the Conservation Area. A concentrated effort to enhance this cluster of listed and unlisted historic buildings will improve public perception of the town centre as a more active retail centre and demonstrate the Councils commitment to town centre regeneration in a tangible way.

4.2 It is proposed that a further budget of £50,000 be allocated to the Frontage Improvement Scheme to be spent initially on the Phase 1 target area of Nos. 61-97 High Street (odd properties only) prioritising works to the listed buildings. Dependant on uptake from Phase 1, a second phase would target other groups of important historic buildings within the Town Conservation Area for example potentially linking to the proposed street café project at Nos. 2-46 High Street. The exact details of the Phase 2 target area would be delegated for approval by the Town Centre Steering Group at a later date if required.

**5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 It is proposed that the additional £50,000 could be funded from the VAT refunds that have recently been received in relation to VAT liability over a number of years. The scheme would be managed by the Town Centre Regeneration Programme Team in conjunction with the Conservation Officer. All associated administration costs would be met by the existing Town Centre and Strategic Planning Team budgets.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 The Council has a statutory duty under s71 (1) of the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990 to prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of Conservation Areas.

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

- 7.1 The Frontage Improvement Scheme will support the regeneration and revitalisation of the town centre, which is a key Council priority. Improvement of the High Street frontages will enhance the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and supports our current Local Plan policies relating to the historic environment. The scheme will also make the town centre a more attractive location for businesses, thereby adding to the vitality of the area.

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

- 8.1 The Frontage Improvement Scheme supports CO1 Regeneration and CO1 Priority to improve the Town Centre. The additional funding would improve the contribution the scheme could make to these Council objectives.

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

- 9.1 There may be some risk of under spend as the additional funding would not become available until September 2010 and should be spent by the end of March 2011. It is therefore envisaged that any unallocated funds would be redirected either to a Phase 2 target area or to support the conversion of empty upper floors on the High Street. Details of the reserve schemes could be delegated for approval by the Town Centre Steering Group. The risks are being managed by separate risk registers for both the Town Centre Regeneration Programme and the Strategic Planning teams.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

- 10.1 Phase 1 of the scheme is being targeted to owners and tenants of properties between 61 and 97 High Street (odd numbers only). The target area was approved by the Town Centre Steering Group on 20<sup>th</sup> May 2010. Leaflets advertising the scheme have been sent by post to the registered owner of each building within the target area and hand delivered to the tenant of each retail unit. Details of the scheme have also been included on the Conservation page of the Council website and a press release issued, which was reported in the Bromsgrove Advertiser on 7<sup>th</sup> July. Following this, three properties (no.61, 67 and 89 High Street) have indicated that they wish to apply for assistance.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 The Frontage Improvement Scheme is not means tested and applications are welcomed from any owner or tenant within the Phase 1 target area.

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

12.1 The funding associated with the scheme will be spent within the Council's current procurement framework to ensure Value for Money. In addition the expenditure on the scheme will encourage businesses into the town and therefore generate more cash to the local economy and the Council.

12.2 The owner or tenant of the building is responsible for preparing plans for the improvement works, arranging contractors and project managing the works on site. The Council will check the suitability of the proposals before making a formal funding offer, and will then check the quality and extent of the works carried out before any payments are issued. The Council therefore has no liability for overseeing the contractor or maintaining the works in the future.

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

13.1 The improvement works carried out to buildings within the target area will improve their energy efficiency and retain the embodied energy within the existing historic fabric. Applicants will be encouraged to use local contractors and locally sourced materials.

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 None

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 None

**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

16.1 None

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

17.1 None



**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

- 18.1 Any lessons learnt from the improvement scheme will be used in other Town Centre Regeneration projects and heritage based funding schemes.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

- 19.1 The Housing Initiatives Officer has carried out a public consultation to gauge interest in assistance from various existing housing assistance schemes. This has established initial interest from six properties within the Phase 1 target area.

**20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT**

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	No
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	No
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Executive Director - Finance & Corporate Resources)	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	Yes

**21. WARDS AFFECTED**

St. Johns

**22. APPENDICES**

- A Draft Character Appraisal
- B Map of Phase 1 target area
- C Photos of Phase 1 target buildings

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**CABINET**

**4<sup>TH</sup> AUGUST 2010**

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**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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## APPENDIX 1

SUMMARY - Period 1 (April) 20010/11					
Monthly (April) performance			Estimated Outturn		
	No.	%age <sup>3</sup>		No.	%age <sup>3</sup>
Improving or stable.	n/a		On target	19	56%
Declining	n/a		Missing target by less than 10%	6	18%
No data	n/a		Missing target by more than 10%	9	26%
			No data <sup>2</sup>	6	
Total Number of Indicators reported this period <sup>1</sup>	0		Total Number of Indicators reported this period <sup>1</sup>	40	
			On target	31	89%
			Missing target by less than 10%	4	11%
			Missing target by more than 10%	0	0%
			No data <sup>2</sup>	5	
			Total Number of Indicators reported this period <sup>1</sup>	40	

SUMMARY - Period 2 (May) 20010/11					
Monthly (May) performance			Estimated Outturn		
	No.	%age <sup>3</sup>		No.	%age <sup>3</sup>
Improving or stable.	20	61%	On target	15	45%
Declining	13	39%	Missing target by less than 10%	8	24%
No data	7		Missing target by more than 10%	10	30%
			No data <sup>2</sup>	7	
Total Number of Indicators reported this period <sup>1</sup>	40		Total Number of Indicators reported this period <sup>1</sup>	40	
			On target	28	85%
			Missing target by less than 10%	5	15%
			Missing target by more than 10%	0	0%
			No data <sup>2</sup>	7	
			Total Number of Indicators reported this period <sup>1</sup>	40	

SUMMARY - Period 3 (June) 20010/11					
Monthly (June) performance			Estimated Outturn		
	No.	%age <sup>3</sup>		No.	%age <sup>3</sup>
Improving or stable.	24	60%	On target	20	45%
Declining	16	40%	Missing target by less than 10%	12	27%
No data	15		Missing target by more than 10%	12	27%
			On target	35	80%
			Missing target by less than 10%	5	11%
			Missing target by more than 10%	4	9%

<b>Total Number of Indicators reported this period<sup>1</sup></b>	55	<b>No data<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Total Number of Indicators reported this period<sup>1</sup></b>	11	<b>No data<sup>2</sup></b>	<b>Total Number of Indicators reported this period<sup>1</sup></b>	11
				55			55

**Notes**

- 1 - This figure shows the total number of indicators reported in Appendix 2 for this period. This will vary as some indicators are reported monthly, some quarterly, some annually (but in different periods - depending on when they become available).
- 2 - Some of the indicators do not have all the performance elements, for instance some do not have targets because they are new indicators this year, others are activity measures (e.g. monthly call volume). These indicators will be included in the 'no data' count where comparisons cannot be made.
- 3 - The percentage figure shown is the percentage of the number of indicators for which relevant data is available this period, not the total number of indicators reported this period.





Performance Indicators Quarter 1 (April - June 2010)

Ref	Description	Freq. of reporting	Cum or Snap?	2009/10 outturn	2010/11						Comments					
					April Target	April Actual	Target & Trend	May Target	May Actual	Target & Trend		June Target	June Actual	Target & Trend		
<b>Environment Department</b>																
NI 191	Residual Household waste per household (RH)	M	C	581.13	47.55	52.89		95.39	97.46	I	142.99	146.98	W	578.00	578.00	Figures have not yet been provided by County for trade waste April - Jun which, when received, will move the scores closer to target.
NI 192	Percentage of household waste re-used, recycled and composted	M	C	37.4	42.80	38.61		44.86	40.08	I	43.64	41.40	I	40.00	40.00	Tonnages for comingled recycling are currently subject to a 20% reject rate due to issues with the EnviSort plant - this is due to be addressed with the aim of reducing it to a maximum 10% reject rate
	Number of missed waste collections	M	C	1107	125	167		250	287	I	375	438	W	1,500	1,630	151 missed collections of which 40 were household, 28 garden waste and 43 recycling
	Town Centre Car Park Usage (av per month)	M	S	126,928 (ave)	126,875	125,929		n/a	n/a	n/a	126,875	127,936	I	>126,875	>126,875	Target exceeded

Community Services

																Total Crime is currently 144 crimes over its target year to date. As last month, this is predominantly due to violent crime, vehicle crime, shed thefts and make off without payment at petrol stations from service stations (Biking). Violent crime will be reviewed at the August CSP Tasking meeting. Theft from Motor Vehicles and shed thefts will also be looked at in September, however there is police operation which has commenced to address thefts from motor vehicles at beauty spot car parks over the Summer Months (Operation Everest). Biking is a national problem which requires a change in how petrol stations operate nationally, there is little we can do at a local level to combat this problem.
																There have been 5 offences more than the target for June, this is due to a known persistent and prolific offender with burglary habits from the Birmingham area who has been offending in Bromsgrove. This person has now been reimpranded by West Midlands Police, we hope this will have a positive effect on performance for July. The year to date performance is still within target due to low burglary rates in April and May

Ref	Description	Freq. of reporting	Can or Snap?	2009/10 outturn	2010/11								Comments						
					April Target	April Actual	Target & Trend	May Target	May Actual	Target & Trend	June Target	June Actual		Target & Trend	Est. Outturn	Est. Outturn Target & Trend			
	The number of violent crimes	M	C	1046	88	107		179	204		<b>I</b>	271	303		<b>W</b>	1,038	1,070	<b>W</b>	Violent Crime continues to be over target however June's violent crime rate is not significantly higher than May and less than April. This is good news as there are three England World Cup games in this month which would historically effect the violent crime figures. Additional measures were taken to prevent violent crime during the World Cup and they have proven to have worked. West Mercia Police are working in conjunction with the Love 2 Love nightclub in Bromsgrove Town Centre to combat disorder from the club. The club have already amended their opening hours to assist the police, and the police have also changed their policing tactics outside of the club which will have a positive effect on the performance in July.
	The number of robberies	M	C	44	4	6		9	12		<b>S</b>	13	15		<b>I</b>	54	56	<b>I</b>	The Monthly target was achieved but we are still 2 offences over the year to date target. As per comments last month, those few offences are low level street robberies involving juveniles.
	The number of vehicle crimes	M	C	672	55	47		111	109		<b>W</b>	166	149		<b>I</b>	664	647	<b>I</b>	Vehicle Crime is 15 offences within target and 17 offences year to date. West Mercia Police and BDC Neighbourhood Wardens are continuing to carry out vulnerable vehicle checks and give high visibility patrols and beauty spot car parks to prevent thefts from motor vehicles, this seems to be having a positive effect and this work will continue throughout the summer months.
	The number of Criminal Damage incidents	M	C	908	74	64		151	147		<b>W</b>	210	225		<b>I</b>	890	905	<b>W</b>	June has been the second consecutive month where the Criminal Damage target has not been met. Apart from the mindless vandalism which is difficult to prevent we are not aware of any other emerging trends with criminal damage offences. We have arranged for a crime analyst to produce a problem profile on criminal damage so that we can establish some remedial action.
	Monthly Shopmobility Centre Usage	M	S	144 (ave)	160	141		160	133		<b>W</b>	160	148		<b>I</b>	160	160		Usage has increased but still below target
	Community transport usages	M	C	n/a	140	238		280	475		<b>S</b>	420	729		<b>I</b>	1680	1,680		Usage increased slightly over previous month and is above target



Ref	Description	Freq. of reporting	Cum or Snap?	2009/10 outcome	2010/11								Comments			
					April Target	April Actual	Target & Trend	May Target	May Actual	Target & Trend	June Target	June Actual		Target & Trend	Est. Outturn	Est. Outturn Target & Trend
	Average time (weeks) from referral to completion for category 1 DFGs	Q	C	44					34	77	<b>W</b>			34	77	The performance for the delivery of DFGs is not within the target timescale, this is as a result of last year financial problems. Grants were placed on hold from October until the new financial year in 2010, this has therefore increased the completion times
	Average time (weeks) from referral to completion for category 2 DFGs	Q	C	63					35	69	<b>W</b>			35	69	See above
	Average time (weeks) from referral to completion for category 3 DFGs	Q	C	63					52	90	<b>W</b>			52	90	See above
	Percentage of DFG budget allocated to approved schemes (activity measure)	Q	C	100.00					n/a	35	n/a			n/a	n/a	On target to commit all budget
	Percentage of DFG budget spent (activity measure)	Q	C	100.00					n/a	8	n/a			n/a	n/a	On target to spend all budget
	Private dispersed Lifeline customer numbers - new customers	M	S		18	20		18	16	20	<b>I</b>			18	20	At a falls awareness presentation we secured 4 new customers.
	Private dispersed Lifeline customer numbers - Leavers	M	S		12	9		12	8	9	<b>W</b>			12	9	5 Service Users passed away, 3 went into nursing homes and 1 has moved away.
	Private dispersed Lifeline customer numbers - net gain	M	S		6	11		6	8	11	<b>I</b>			6	11	A net gain of 11 is above the target
	Private dispersed Lifeline customer numbers - total private dispersals	M	S		607	612		613	620	631	<b>I</b>			n/a	n/a	
	Number of lifeline calls received (activity measure)	M	S		n/a	3,427		n/a	7,631	7,002	n/a			n/a	n/a	
	Number of lifeline calls answered within 1 minute	M	S		98.50%	99.94%		98.50%	99.98%	99.34	<b>W</b>			98.50	98.50	Despite the implementation of shared service including the operation of new call handling equipment the staff have maintained the highest of standards.
N1155	Number of affordable homes delivered	Q	C	88					n/a	1	<b>W</b>			80	80	One affordable housing unit was achieved via mortgage rescue. Due to slippage in the program units that were expected to be completed in Q1 will now complete in Q2.
N1156	Number of households occupying temporary accommodation	Q	S	14						34	<b>I</b>			34		We continue to maintain low numbers of clients in temporary accommodation well within our 2010 target of 34.
	Number of CCTV incidents (activity measure)	M	C		n/a	33		n/a	24	80	n/a			n/a	n/a	This has been affected by lost data, cameras down for 4 days and inability to record incidents. These issues have now been resolved.
	% of CCTV incidents which are proactive monitoring	M	C		n/a	60		n/a	71	34	n/a			n/a	n/a	As above
	Number of CCTV evidential seizures	M	C		n/a	33		n/a	24	12	n/a			n/a	n/a	As above

Ref	Description	Freq. of reporting	Cum or Snap?	2009/10 outcome	2010/11								Comments			
					April Target	April Actual	Target & Trend	May Target	May Actual	Target & Trend	June Target	June Actual		Target & Trend	Est. Outturn	Est. Outturn Target & Trend
	Number of locally delivered diversionary sessions	M	C	163	16	30		35	33	<b>W</b>	53	48		185	185	Target missed due to poor coach capacity to increase delivery of diversionary sessions. Aiming to develop further diversionary activities in the coming months. However, target was narrowly missed as daily Community Coaching sessions were provided during the holiday period.
	Numbers of users attending diversionary activities.	M	C	617	56	64		125	72	<b>W</b>	207	221		720	720	Target achieved and exceeded due to successful community coaching session over the holiday period.
	Number of over 60's swimming usages	M	C		1275		2,600	2,467		<b>S</b>	4,050	3,845		14,750	14,750	Usage increased significantly over previous month
	Number of people attending Age Well scheme	Q	C				N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A		n/a	n/a	Project doesn't start until September
	Number of attendances at arts events	M	C	23,728	91	100		659	585	<b>I</b>	1,319	1,250		24,202	24,202	The target profile has been changed as the H1 5 event will now take place in July, 3,000 target attendances transferred from June to July. The revised June target was exceeded but the year to-date figure remains slightly below target due to poor weather.
	Mix usage (community use)	Q	S	60,250			N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	16,125	17,696		64,500	64,500	Exceeded target for the first quarter of 2010/11. A particular increase in attendance is noted for live events and exhibition and open events. Also the Artix celebrated its 5th Birthday in April. This PI is being reported quarterly for the first time.
	Dolphin Centre Usage	M	C	415,407	34,056	34,301		71,765	67,317	<b>W</b>	106,087	98,378		413,000	413,000	Target not met. No identifiable reasons other than the good weather and football world cup.
	Sports development usages	M	C	30,095	1,966	2,060		4,480	4,916	<b>I</b>	7,329	7,654		30,600	30,600	Target exceeded due to continued delivery of regular programmes including PSP, Mobility, Sport Unlimited and successful holiday schemes.

**Finance & Resources Department**

N1181	Time taken to process HB/ICT benefit new claims or change events (days)	M	C	9:12	12.00	19.61		12.00	13.61	<b>I</b>	12.00	14.05		12.00	12.00	The staff completed overtime throughout June which meant a lot of the older work has been processed, hence a drop in performance compared to last month.
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Ref	Description	Freq. of reporting	Cum or Snap?	2009/10 outturn	2010/11								Comments	
					April Target	April Actual	Target & Trend	May Target	May Actual	Target & Trend	June Target	June Actual		Target & Trend
	% of HB overpayments recovered during the quarter of the outstanding debt.	Q	S	8.00				25.00	8.00	n/a		25.00	25.00	This is extremely low due to an increase in overpayments as a result of the backlog of work and lack of recovery action taken. I fully expect this to change over the coming months once the new overpayments officer is fully trained. In addition to this, the backlog of work has now been tackled with the eldest items no more than a few weeks old meaning the risk of overpayments is reduced.
	% of the outstanding HB overpayments debt written off during the quarter.	Q	S	1.08			2.00	0.00	n/a		2.00	2.00	2.00	Due to a new member of staff in place, no overpayments were submitted for write off this quarter. However, as we start to analyse the outstanding debt, I fully expect the number of write offs to increase and possible exceed the target of 2% for the current year. This is because as we start to analyse the debts, we expect to see a number of overpayments where no recovery action has been taken.
	Total annual savings as identified in WTPP (£'000)	Q	C			N/A	207.00	119.00	n/a		1,088	1,088	1,088	Savings identified have yet to be fully recognised as shared service projects are not yet fully completed.
	Percentage of invoices paid within 10 days of receipt	M	C	83.00	90.00	W	90.00	84.84	I		90.00	85.00	90.00	The percentage of invoices paid within 10 days was below target because there are delays in goods being received which is delaying the payment of invoices within the 10 days.
FP001	Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt	M	C	98.00	99.61	W	98.00	98.96	W		98.00	98.00	98.00	On Target
LPI (formerly BV12)	The average number of working days lost due to sickness.	M	C	9.12	0.78	S	2.13	2.08	I		8.75	8.31	8.31	With the return of several employees on long term sickness absence, there has been a significant reduction in the numbers of days lost which has created an estimated outturn of GREEN

Customer Services

	Monthly Call Volumes Customer Contact Centre (activity measure)	M	S		9,914	n/a	n/a	6,992	n/a	n/a	7,465	n/a	n/a	n/a	Call volumes to the contact centre increased by 6.5% compared to last month and matches the 2009/10 profile exactly This is expected following the spikes in demand experienced in April and May following Council Tax billing and Brown Bin payment scheme
	Monthly Call Volume Council Switchboard (activity measure)	M	S		4,799	n/a	n/a	4,127	n/a	n/a	4,565	n/a	n/a	n/a	Call volumes to both switchboard increased by 10.5% compared to last month and matches the 2009/10 profile exactly. This is expected following the peaks of demand generated by Council Tax billing and the Brown Bin payment scheme during the beginning of the first quarter

Ref	Description	Freq. of reporting	Cum or Snap?	2009/10 outcome	2010/11								Comments			
					April Target	April Actual	Target & Trend	May Target	May Actual	Target & Trend	June Target	June Actual		Target & Trend	Est. Outturn	Est. Outturn Target & Trend
	Resolution at First Point of Contact all services (percentage)	M	S	95.00	85.00	97		85.00	98	I	85.00	96	W	95.00	95.00	Overall resolution performance remains above target and is consistent with previous monthly performance
	% of Calls Answered	M	S	85.00	85.00	86.00		85.00	89.00	I	85.00	92.00	I	85.00	85.00	Continues to exceed target and demonstrates a positive trend showing an improvement of 3 seconds over last month. This is driven by the improved call handling of the contact centre
	Average Speed of Answer (seconds)	M	C	20	20.00	34.00		20.00	28.80	I	20.00	24.70	I	20.00	20.00	The positive improvement trend continues this month showing an average improvement of 4 seconds compared to last month. This is driven by the improved call handling of the contact centre. (The actual average answer time for June is 16 seconds)
	Number of complaints received (Council wide)	M	C	200		34		n/a	59	I	n/a	76	I	decreasing	decreasing	Complaints received were: 1 about the long stay Car park being only 5 hours, 4 about free car parking for CSC users being removed, 1 about attitude of a CSA, 1 about brown bins – delay in delivering, 1 about replacement bins, 2 Recycling Collections, 2 about bins not being placed back properly, 1 about damage to wall by refuse lorry, 2 missed collections, 1 objection about planning applications, and 1 about a benefits claim
	Number of compliments received	M	C	60		9		n/a	16	W	n/a	21	S	increasing	increasing	Compliments received were – 1 about the helpfulness of the Street Cleansing Team, 1 about our Refuse Team, 1 about a course run by Sports Development and 2 about the excellent service provided by the Customer Service Centre Team

**Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services**

There are no Corporately reported PIs for this department

**Planning & Regeneration**

MI 157	The percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	M	C	83.00	85.00	66.60		85.00	70.00	I	85.00	73.00	I	85.00	85.00	There has been a reduction in the number of major applications determined in June in relation to other months this quarter which saw 6 and 4 applications. One application received and processed within time.
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Ref	Description	Freq. of reporting	Cum or Snap?	2009/10 outturn	2010/11								Comments		
					April Target	April Actual	Target & Trend	May Target	May Actual	Target & Trend	June Target	June Actual		Target & Trend	Est. Outturn
NI 157	The percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	M	C	87.80	85.00	88.30		85.00	88.20	<b>W</b>	85.00	88.00	<b>S</b>	85.00	In the last Quarter of 2009/10 minor applications returned to a more healthy number of 15 – 17 April and May reflected this with an increase to 25 in June. Of the three applications that went over, two were called to committee (piggeries in Old Birmingham Road (B/2010/0301) and land to rear of 51 Twalling Road (B/2010/0196). One application required additional site notice 17 Melbourne Avenue B/2010/104.
NI 157	The percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	M	C	91.00	90.00	94.30		90.00	95.00	<b>I</b>	90.00	95.00	<b>W</b>	90.00	Other applications maintained a fairly constant figure 48 in May and 53 in June. Three applications went out of time; the Market Hall B/2010/0317 (due to need for FRA and Committee determination) a Loft conversion in Coppins Mount Lane due to incorrect site notice and 2 Thicknall Rise deferred from Committee for more information.
	Number of vacant retail units on Birmingham High Street	Q	S					n/a	n/a		n/a	n/a	n/a	decreasing	Information not available

**Regulatory Services**

There are no Corporately reported PI's for this department

**Policy, Performance and Partnerships**

There are no Corporately reported PI's for this department

**Business Transformation**

There are no Corporately reported PI's for this department

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2010/11 Monthly Performance figures

Ref	Description	Freq	Cum of Snap	Apr.	May.	Jun.	Jul.	Aug.	Sep.	Oct.	Nov.	Dec.	Jan.	Feb.	Mar.		
NI 191	Residual Household waste per household (kg)	M	Target	47.55	47.84	47.60	48.38	47.12	47.68	47.09	48.57	53.04	46.98	44.23	48.21		
			Actual	52.89	44.57	49.52											
			numerator	2,058.94	1,735.24	1,927.57											
			denominator	38,929	38,929	38,929											
NI 192	Percentage of household waste re-used, recycled and composted	M	Target	42.36	46.38	44.98	45.93	44.70	45.33	42.77	38.61	26.03	32.34	29.03	36.41		
			Actual	38.61	41.74	43.21											
			numerator	1,295.043	1,243.254	1,467.374											
			denominator	3,354.123	2,978.494	3,396.265											
	Number of missed waste collections	M	Target	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125	125		
			Actual	167	120	151											
	Town Centre Car Park Usage	M	Target	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875	126,875		
			Actual	125,929		127,936											

Environment Department

Community Services

	Total crimes	M	Target	433	447	433	447	447	433	447	433	447	447	404	447
			Actual	485	505	472									
	The number of domestic burglaries	M	Target	30	31	30	31	31	30	30	31	31	31	28	31
			Actual	25	17	35									
	The number of violent crimes	M	Target	88	91	92	96	97	90	87	78	78	80	74	87
			Actual	107	97	99									
	The number of robberies	M	Target	4	5	4	5	5	4	5	4	5	5	4	5
			Actual	6	6	3									
	The number of vehicle crimes	M	Target	55	56	55	56	56	55	56	55	56	56	51	56
			Actual	47	62	40									
	The number of criminal damage incidents	M	Target	74	77	59	93	74	81	74	76	59	63	70	90
			Actual	64	83	78									
	Shopmobility Centre Usage	M	Target	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160	160
			Actual	141	133	148									

	Community transport usages	M	C	Target	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140	140
				Actual	238	237		254												
	Average time (weeks) from referral to completion for category 1 DFGs	Q	S	Target				34												
				Actual				77												
	Average time (weeks) from referral to completion for category 2 DFGs	Q	S	Target				35												
				Actual				69												
	Average time (weeks) from referral to completion for category 3 DFGs	Q	S	Target				52												
				Actual				90												
	Percentage of DFG budget allocated to approved schemes	Q	C	Target																
				Actual				35												
	Percentage of DFG budget spent	Q	C	Target																
				Actual				8												
	Private dispersed Lifeline customer numbers - new customers	M	S	Target	18	18	18	18												
				Actual	20	16	20	20												
	Private dispersed Lifeline customer numbers - leavers	M	S	Target	12	12	12	12												
				Actual	9	8	8	9												
	Private dispersed Lifeline customer numbers - net gain	M	S	Target	6	6	6	6												
				Actual	11	8	8	11												
	Private dispersed Lifeline customer numbers - total private dispersals	M	S	Target	607	613	613	620												
				Actual	612	620	620	631												
	Number of Lifeline calls received	M	S	Target	n/a	n/a	n/a	n/a												
				Actual	3,427	4,204	4,204	7,002												
	%age of Lifeline calls answered within 1 minute	M	S	Target	98.50%	98.50%	98.50%	99												
				Actual	99.94%	99.98%	99.98%	99.34												
NI 155	Number of affordable homes delivered	Q	C	Target				20												
				Actual				71												
NI 156	Number of households occupying temporary accommodation	Q	S	Target	n/a	n/a	n/a	34												
				Actual	n/a	n/a	n/a	13												
	Number of CCTV incidents	M	C	Target																



NUMBER OF CCTV INCIDENTS	M	C	Actual																	
			315	336	80															
%age of CCTV incidents which are proactive monitoring	M	C	Target																	
			Actual	60	71	34														
Number of CCTV evidential seizures	M	C	Target																	
			Actual	33	24	12														

**Leisure & Cultural Services**

Number of locally delivered diversionary sessions	M	C	Target	16	19	18	21	25	16	18	14	5	5	12	16
			Actual	30	3	12									
Numbers of users attending diversionary activities.	M	C	Target	56	69	82	96	124	52	69	32	30	20	42	48
			Actual	64	8	149									
Number of over 60's swimming usages	Q	C	Target	1275	1325	1450	1450	1450	1375	1250	1200	950	875	1000	1150
			Actual	1272	1195	1378									
Number of people attending 'Age Well' scheme	Q	C	Target	N/A	N/A	N/A									
			Actual	N/A	N/A	N/A									
Number of attendances at arts events	M	C	Target	91	568	660	3,222	15,080	847	859	3,025	129	63	111	95.00
			Actual	100	485	665									
Artix usage	Q	C	Target	N/A	N/A	16,125									
			Actual	N/A	N/A	17,696									
Dolphin Centre Usage	M	C	Target	34,056	37,709	34,321	34,563	31,105	34,813	35,922	35,630	26,064	36,000	38,571	40,403
			Actual	34,301	33,016	31,061									
Sports development usages	M	C	Target	1,966	2,514	2,849	2,686	2,351	1,941	3,064	3,540	1,171	1,983	2754	3,781
			Actual	2,060	2,856	2,738									

**Finance & Resources Department**

NI 181	M	C	Target	12.00	12.00	12.00															
			Actual	19.61	16.68	15.60															
			numerator	21,202	35,180	55,762															
			denominator	1,081	2,109	3,574															
% of HB overpayments recovered during the quarter of the outstanding debt.	Q	C	Target			25															
			Actual			8															
Maximum % of the outstanding HB overpayments debt written off during the quarter	Q	C	Target			2															
			Actual			0															
Total annual savings as identified in the MTFP (£'000)	Q	C	Target																		
			Actual																		
Percentage of invoices paid within 10 days of receipt	M	C	Target	90.00	90.00	90.00															
			Actual	86.69	79.55	88.29															
Percentage of invoices paid within 30 days of receipt	M	C	Target	98.00	98.00	98.00															
			Actual	99.61	98.64	98.63															

	The average number of working days lost due to sickness.	M	C	Target	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.71	0.78
				Actual	0.78	77.00	0.49									

**Customer Services**

	Monthly Call Volumes Customer Contact Centre (activity measure)	M	S	Target													
				Actual	9,914	6,992	7,465										
	Monthly Call Volume Council Switchboard (activity measure)	M	S	Target													
				Actual	4,799	4,127	4,565										
	Resolution at First Point of Contact all services (percentage)	M	S	Target	85.00	85.00	85.00										
				Actual	97.00	97.70	96.00										
	% of Calls Answered	M	S	Target	85.00	85.00	85.00										
				Actual	86.00	89.00	92.00										
	Average Speed of Answer (seconds)	M	C	Target	20	20	20										
				Actual	34	22	16										
	Number of complaints received (Council wide)	M	C	Target	n/a	n/a	n/a										
				Actual	34	25	17										
	Number of compliments received (Council wide)	M	C	Target	n/a	n/a	n/a										
				Actual	9	5	5										

**Planning & Regeneration**

N1157	The percentage of major planning applications determined within 13 weeks	M	C	Target	85.00	85.00	85.00										
				Actual	66.60	75.00	100.00										
N1157	The percentage of minor planning applications determined within 8 weeks	M	C	Target	6	4	1										
					denominator	numerator	denominator	numerator	denominator	numerator	denominator	numerator	denominator	numerator	denominator	numerator	
N1157	The percentage of other planning applications determined within 8 weeks	M	C	Target	90.00	90.00	90.00										
					Actual	94.30	95.80	94.00									
	Number of vacant retail units on Bromsgrove High Street	Q	S	Target	52	48	53										
					Actual												

## **VFM Gains 2010-11**

Appendix 4

	<b>Efficiencies</b>
	<b>10/11</b>
	<b>£'000</b>
<b><u>SAVINGS IDENTIFIED</u></b>	
<b><u>Council Wide</u></b>	
Shared service - Alternative Methods	90
Procurement Review	100
ICT Shared Service	39
CCTV Shared Service	46
	<b>275</b>
<b><u>Financial Services</u></b>	
Property Services Review	11
	<b>11</b>
<b><u>Street Scene &amp; Community</u></b>	
Co-mingled Waste Service	200
Increased income at sanders park	1
Savings from Dolphin Centre	75
	<b>276</b>
<b>Total Efficiency Savings</b>	<b>562</b>

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Earmarked Reserves

Description	B/fwd 2010/11 £'000	Received in Year £'000	Used 2010/11 - Quarter 1 £'000	Total Movement in year 10/11 £'000	Current Position 2010/11 April - June £'000
Building Control Partnership Reserve	-22	0	0	0	-22
Unspent Plan. Del. Grant reserve	-27	0	0	0	-27
Liveability Reserve	-16	0	0	0	-16
LPSA Reserve	-5	0	0	0	-5
Litigation Reserve	-50	0	0	0	-50
Sports Partnerships Reserve	-19	0	0	0	-19
Area Committees	-21	0	0	0	-21
Local Plans Inquiry	-243	0	0	0	-243
Housing - Nightstop	-6	0	0	0	-6
Housing needs assessments and surveys	-2	0	0	0	-2
Council Chamber equipment	-7	0	0	0	-7
Town Centre Development	-18	0	18	18	0
Single Status/JE	-146	0	0	0	-146
Shared Services Agenda incl Joint CE	-444	0	0	0	-444
Business Start up grants	-6	0	0	0	-6
Youth Provision Reserve	-32	0	0	0	-32
Activity Referral Scheme	-4	0	0	0	-4
Town centre Market Stalls	-4	0	0	0	-4
Alcohol Abuse Reserve	-6	0	0	0	-6
Local Strategic Partnership	-25	0	3	3	-23
Recycling Extension	-129	0	0	0	-129
Town Centre Conservation Grants	-5	0	0	0	-5
Equalities	-5	0	0	0	-5
Legal Monitoring Dept	-24	0	24	24	0
Market Hall Demolition	-23	0	23	23	0
Town Centre Electricity	-6	0	0	0	-6
Parks and Recreation	-2	0	0	0	-2
Housing - Education Initiative	-3	0	0	0	-3
Community Safety - WCC & LNP Funding	-25	0	0	0	-25
Sports - H & W SP - Sports Unlimited Grant	-13	0	0	0	-13
	-1338	0	68	68	-1,271

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	Virement From:			Virement To:			Reason for virement
	Account	Cost Centre	Amount £	Account	Cost Centre	Amount £	
Is the virement for 2009/10 Only or for future years?							
Future Years	A01 – Monthly Salaries	DP07	-54,006	A01 – Monthly Salaries D88 –	LA00	54,006	Restructure of Leisure and Cultural salaries
Future Years	B90 – Ground Maintenance by Contractor	RG01	-15,000	Miscellaneous Services (Car Park Refunds)	SC01	15,000	Budget re-allocation

--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--



# Customer Feedback How did we do?



- Putting the Customer first
- April to June 2010



**Bromsgrove**  
District Council

[www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)



# Customer Feedback April to June 2010

## How did we do?

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Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	9
Leisure and Cultural Services	10
Planning and Regeneration	11
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<b>Section 3</b>	
Identified Trends and Recommended Improvement Actions	13

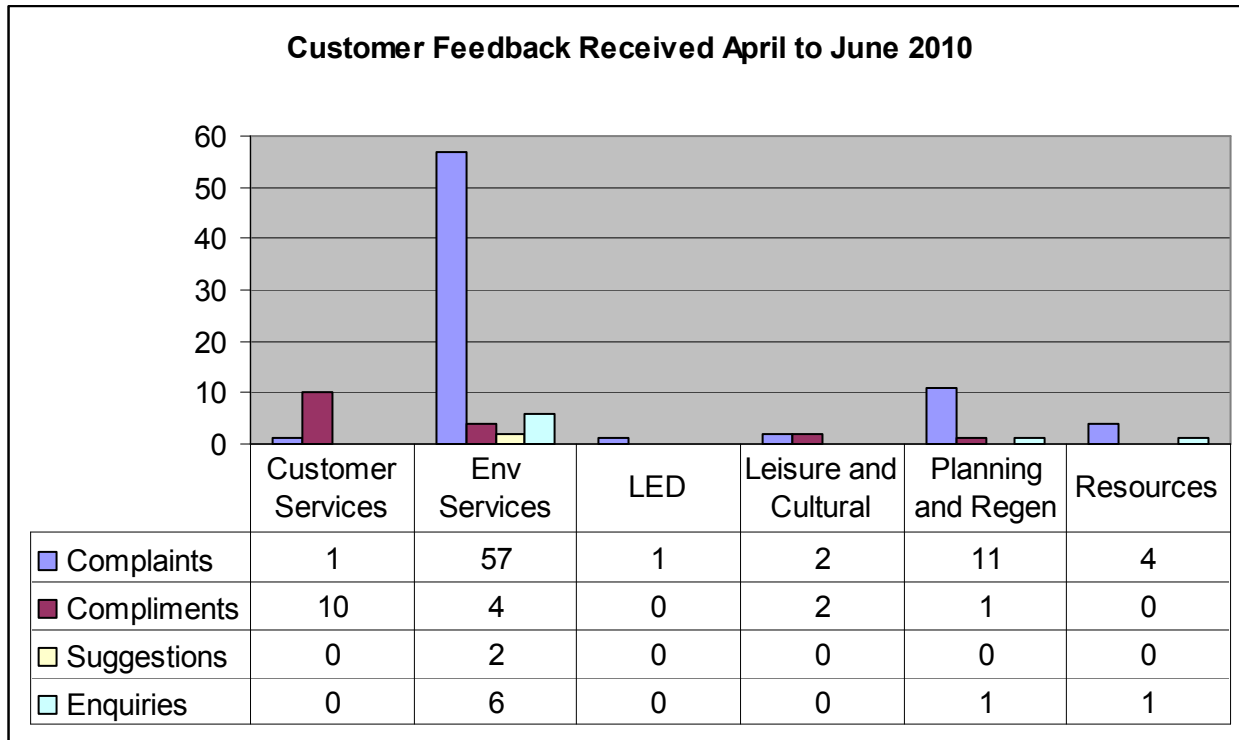
# Customer Feedback Analysis April to June 2010

## Section1 Corporate Analysis

This section discusses the customer feedback data recorded for the Council but only features the departments that have received feedback.

### 1.1 Customer Feedback received

Figure 1

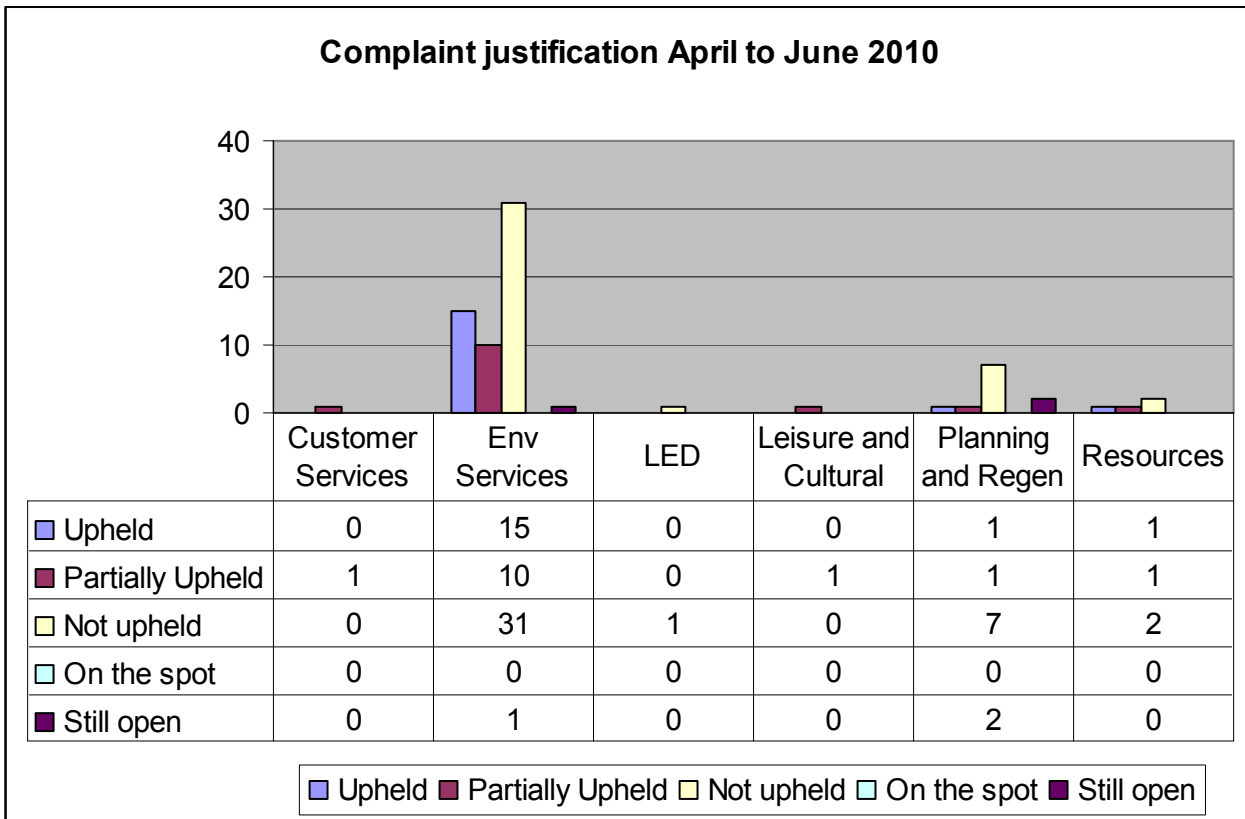


### Summary

The Council received 76 complaints in the first quarter of 2010/11 – 5 more than in the last quarter of 2009/10. The number of compliments received decreased from 26 last quarter to 17 this quarter. The compliments received were from customers pleased with events organised by Sports Development and for the excellent service they received from the Customer Service Centre, Waste Team, Environmental Health and Street Cleansing Team.

## 1.2 Complaint Justification

Figure 2

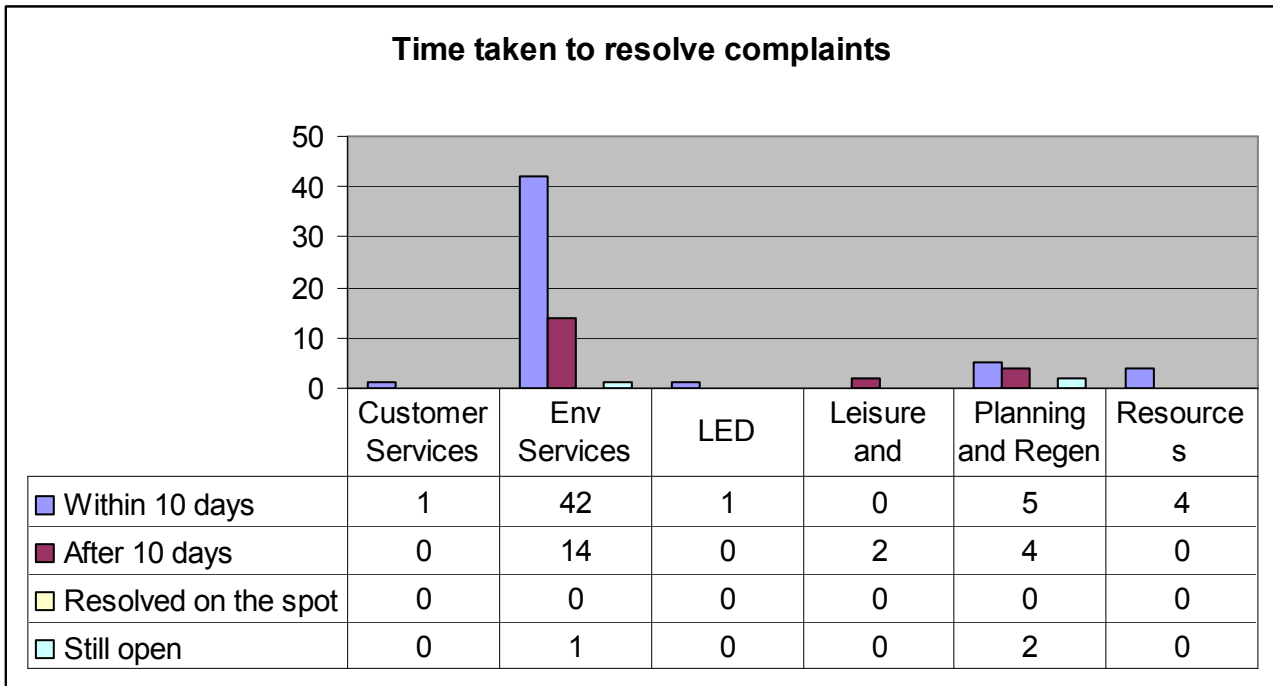


### Summary

The number of complaints found unjustified this quarter is 54% which is a **10 %** decrease on last quarter. The increase in the number of complaints being upheld is mainly due to new brown and green bins not being delivered on time (42%) and subsequent missed collections.

## 1.3 Complaint response

Figure 3



### Summary

Our customer standard is to provide a full response to customer complaints within 10 working days of receipt.

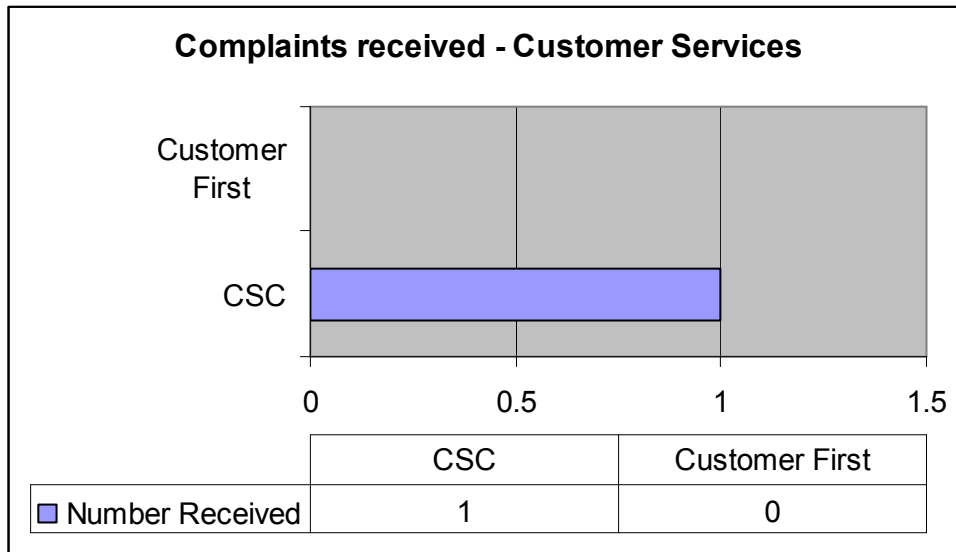
In this quarter we

- dealt with **57%** of complaints within 10 days – this a decrease of **46%** from last quarter
- dealt with **26%** of complaints between 10 – 20 days.
- dealt with **17%** of complaints between 20 – 30 days
- Customers are informed if the complaint investigation will take longer than the 10 day standard

## Section 2 Departmental Complaint Analysis

### 2.1 Customer Services - Complaints Received

Figure 4

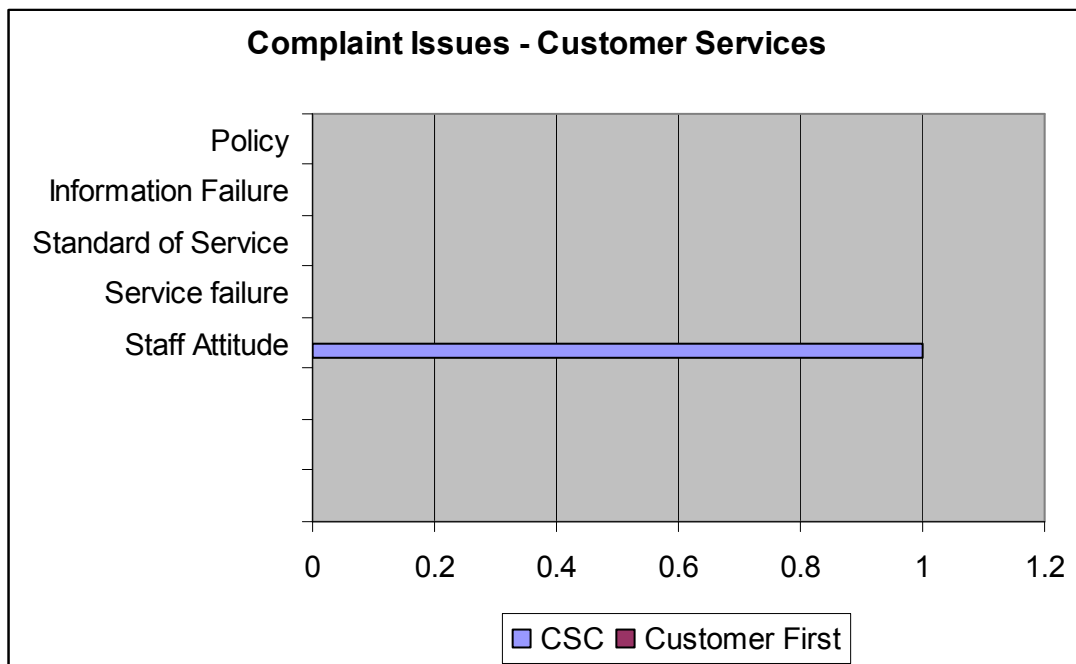


#### Summary

The Customer Services Department received 1 complaint during this quarter.

#### 2.1.1 Complaint Issues

Figure 5

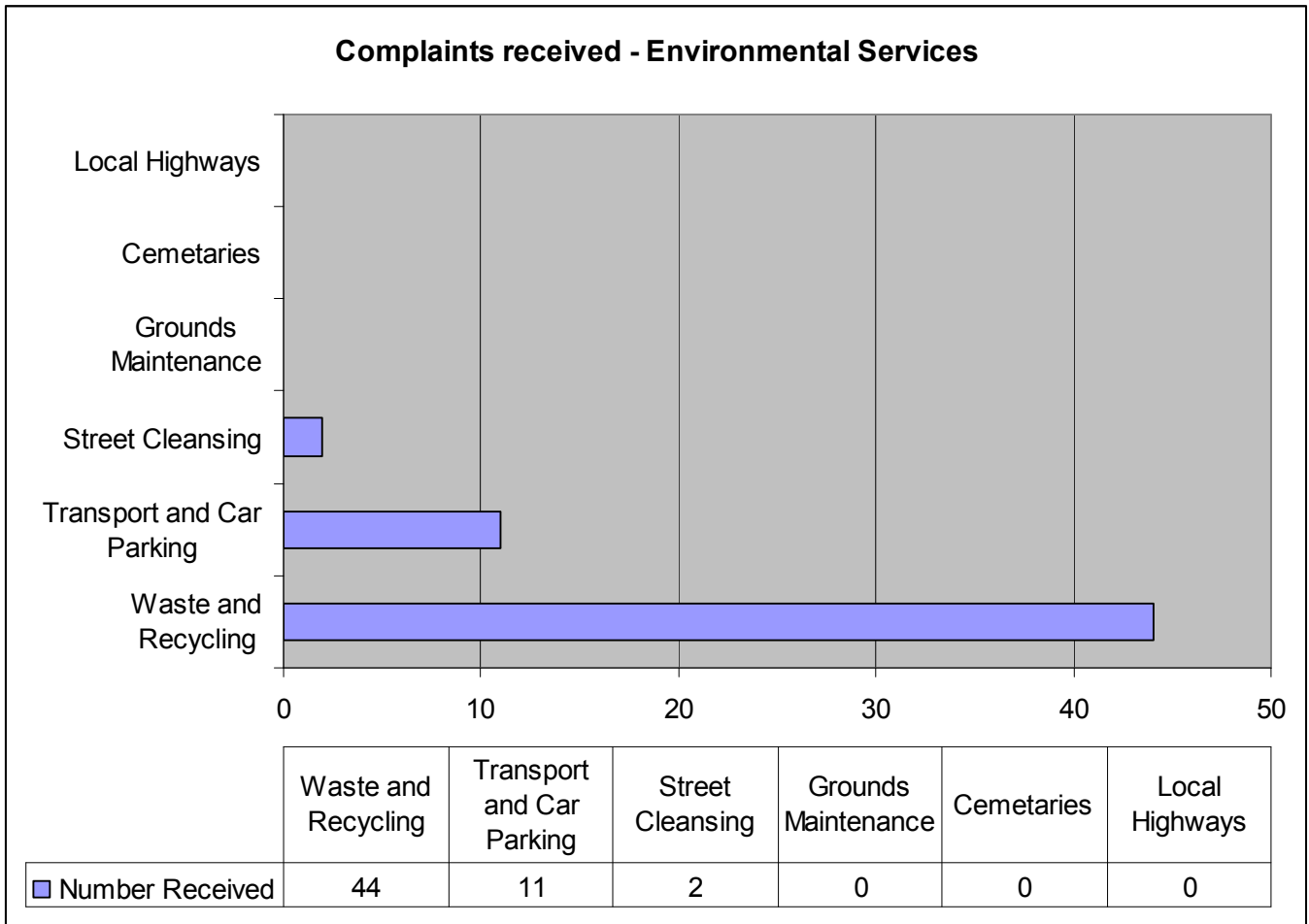


#### Summary

The complaints received for the Customer Service Centre was about the unhelpful attitude of a Customer Service Advisor.

## 2.2 Complaints received by Environmental Services Department

**Figure 6**



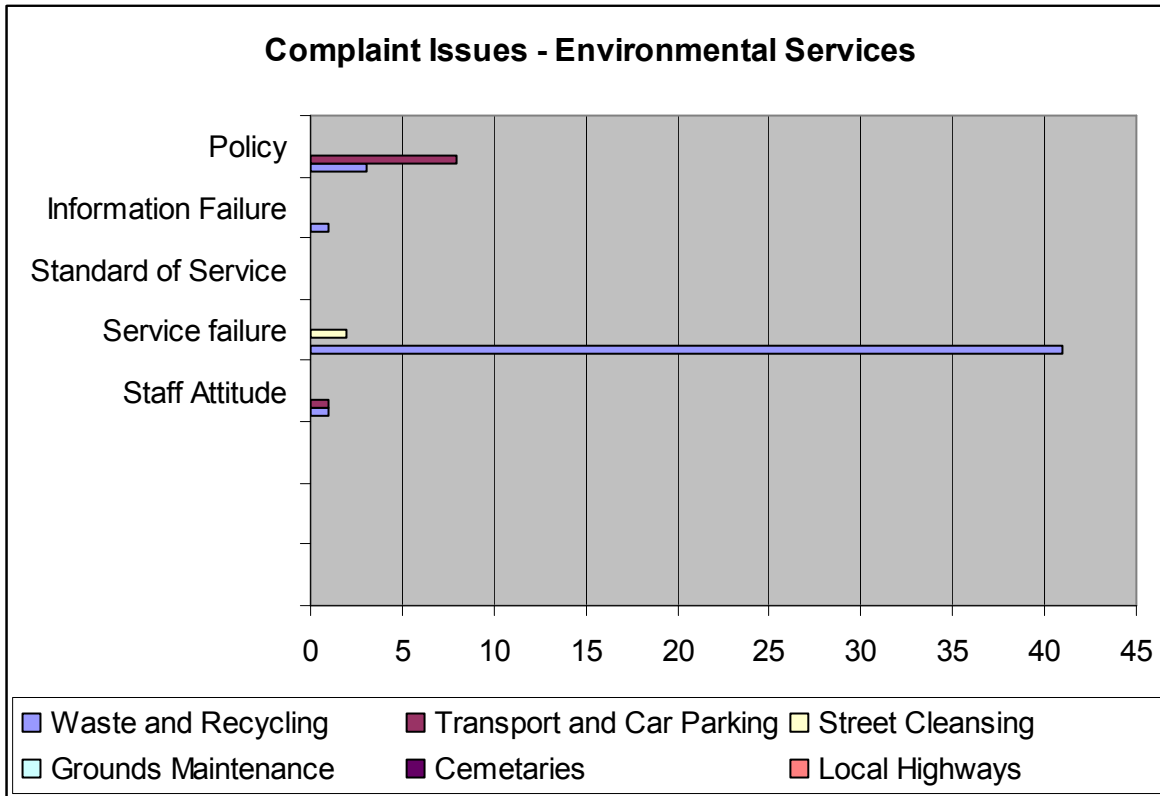
### Summary

Environmental Services Department received **57** complaints during this quarter



## 2.2.1 Complaint Issues – Environmental Services Department

Figure 7



### Summary

77% of the complaints received for Environmental Services were for Waste and Recycling Services.

### 2.2.2 Complaint Issues

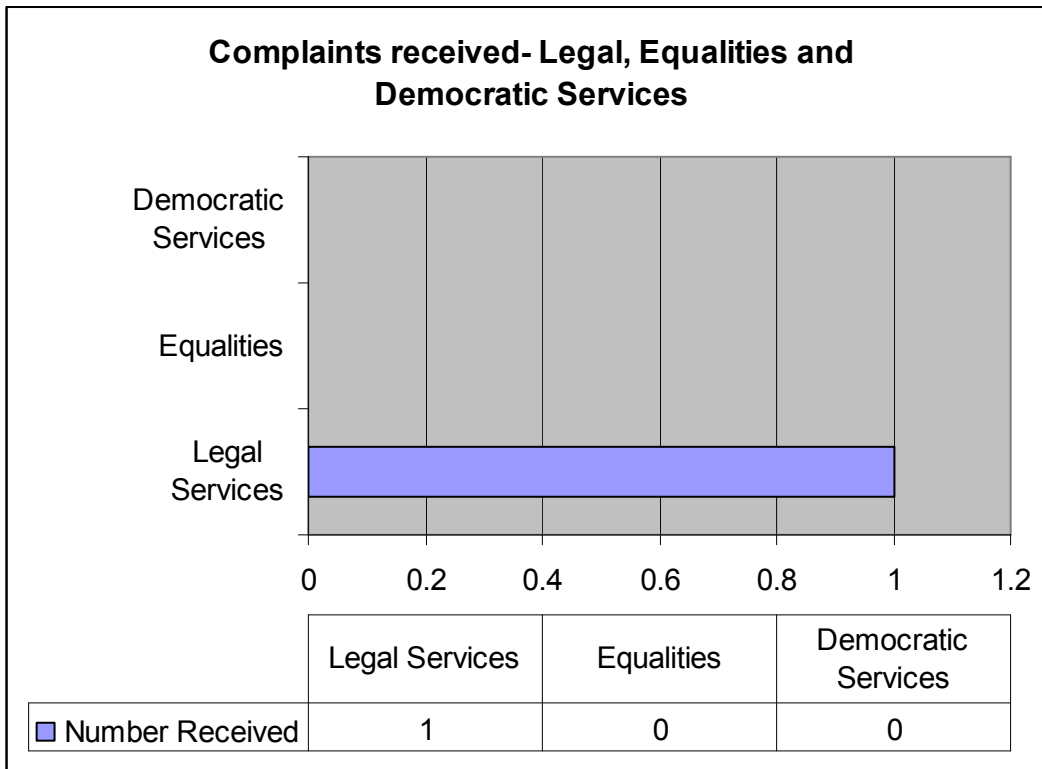
The types of complaint received for Environmental Services are summarised below:

Complaint	Numbers	Justified
Delivery delays brown/green bins	25	14 not upheld 7 upheld 4 partially upheld
Problems with recycling	3	1 Not upheld 1 partially upheld 1 upheld
Missed Bins	4	1 partially upheld 3 not upheld
Assisted refuse collection missed	4	3 upheld, 1 partially upheld
Bins not replaced properly	4	2 partially upheld, 1 upheld 1 not upheld
Fly tipping	1	1 upheld
Damage to property by refuse wagon	1	1 not upheld
Policy – Car park Charges	10	10 not upheld
Staff Attitude (1 Car Parks, 1 Waste)	2	1 not upheld, 1 partially upheld
Lack of information re new collections	1	1 partially upheld
Dirty streets	1	1 Upheld
<b>Totals</b>	<b>56</b> (1 still open at time of reporting)	31 not upheld, 10 partially upheld, 15 upheld



## 2.3 Complaints Received by Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services Department

Figure 8

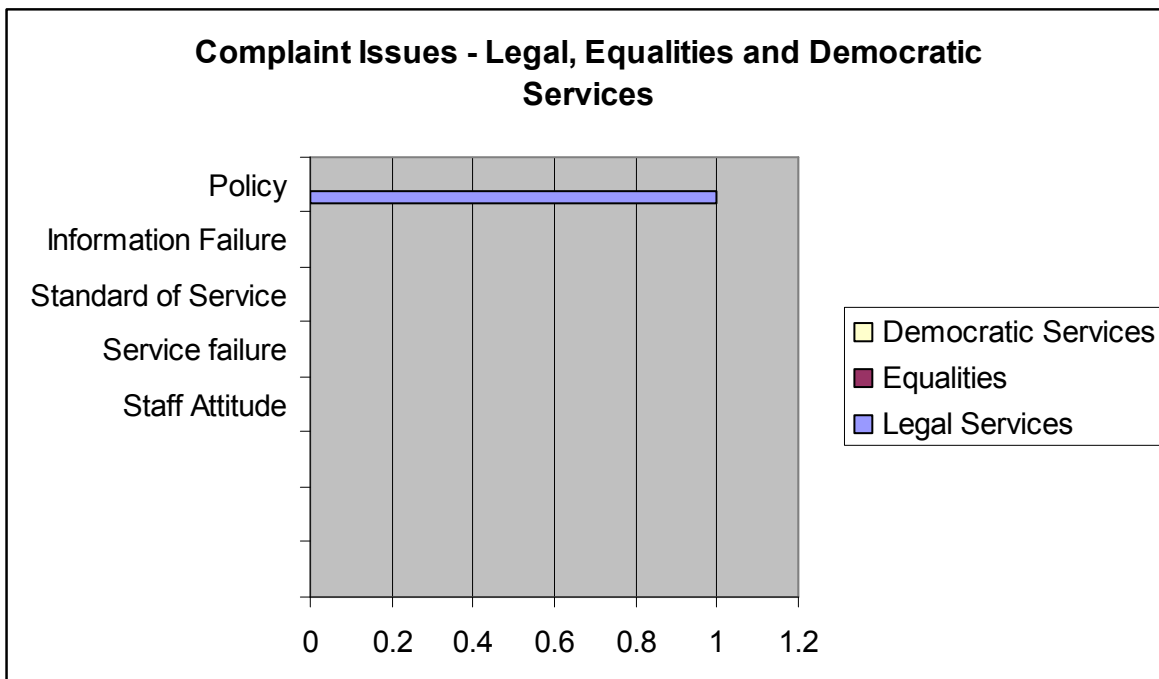


### Summary

Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services received 1 complaint this quarter

### 2.3.1 Complaint Issues

Figure 9

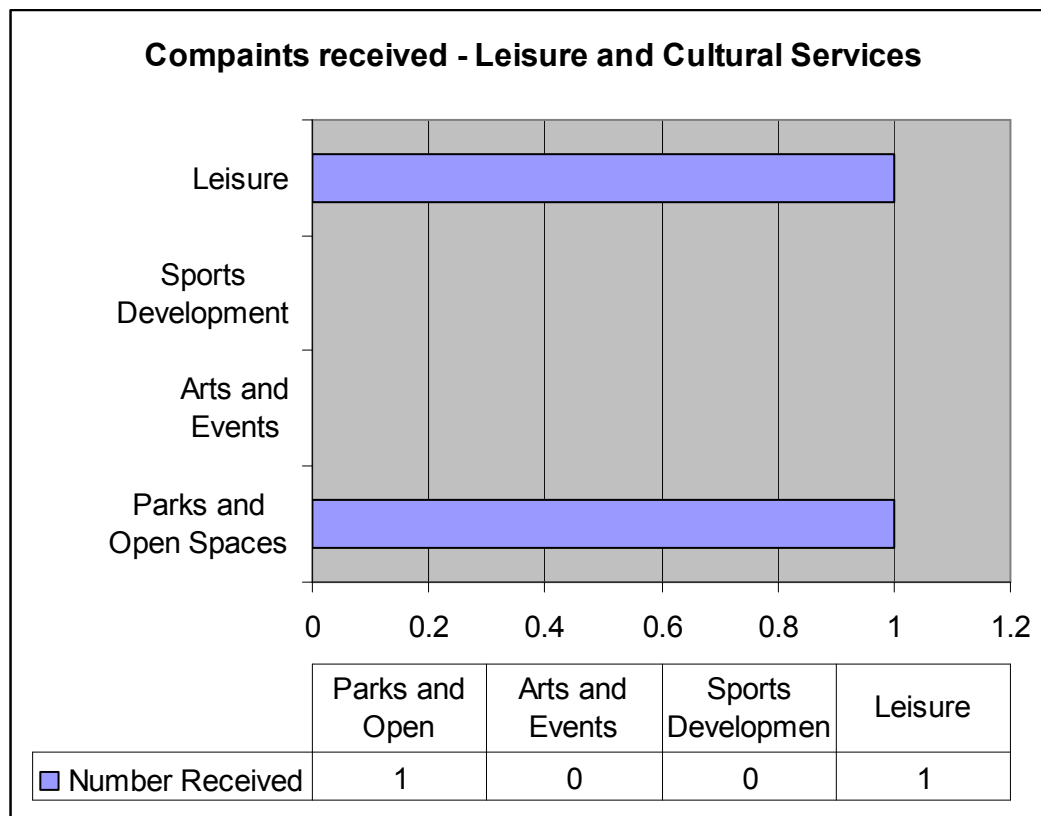


### Summary

The complaint received was about the procedure at a planning committee meeting.

## 2.4 Complaints received by Leisure and Cultural Services

Figure 10

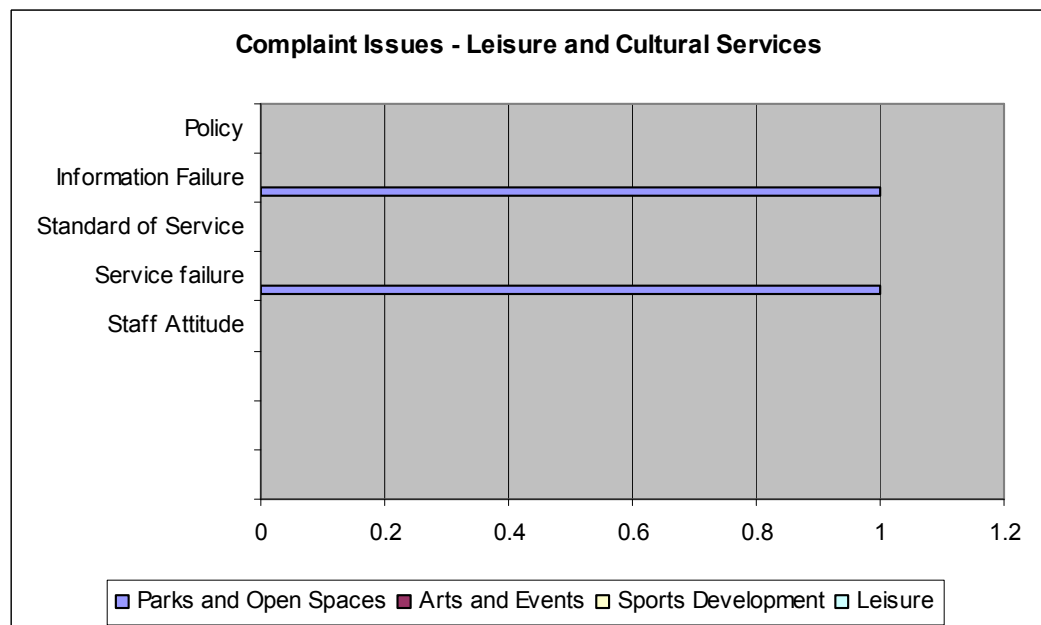


### Summary

The Leisure and Cultural Department received **2** complaints this quarter

### 2.4.1 Complaint Issues

Figure 11

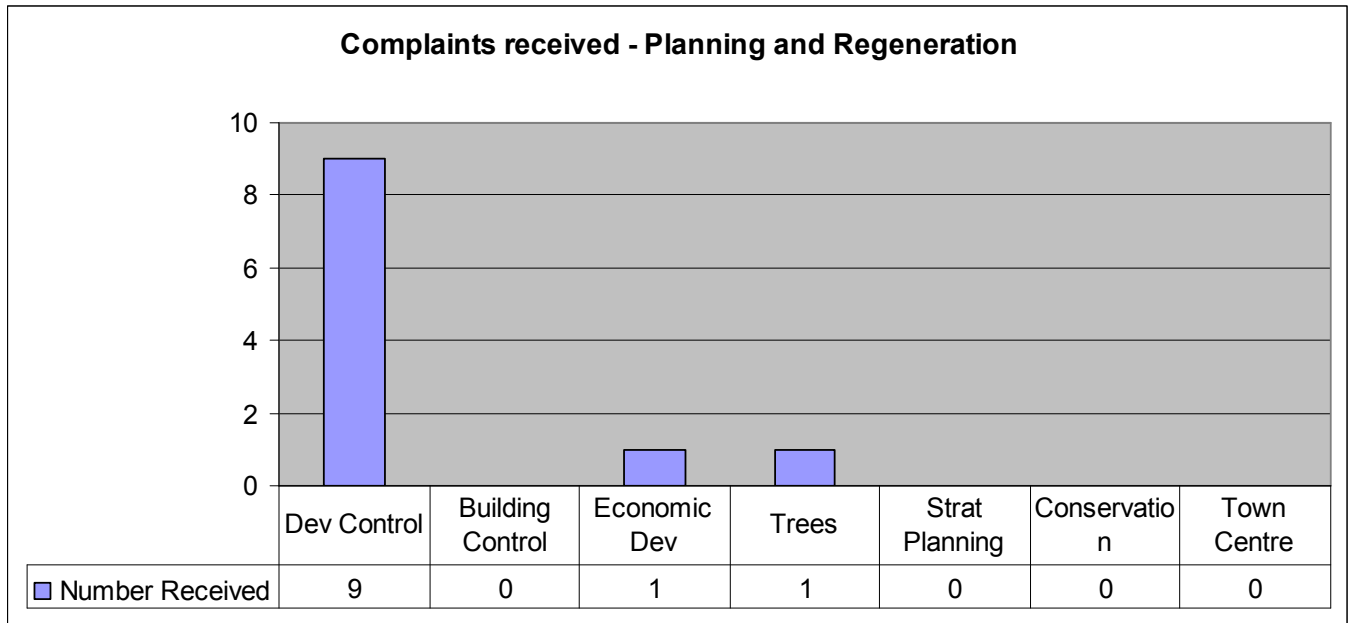


### Summary

The two complaints received by Leisure and Culture during this quarter were about parking for walkers in Sanders Park and about signage and information on parking tickets at the Dolphin Leisure Centre – both have now been rectified.

## 2.5 Complaints Received by Planning and Regeneration Dept

Figure 12

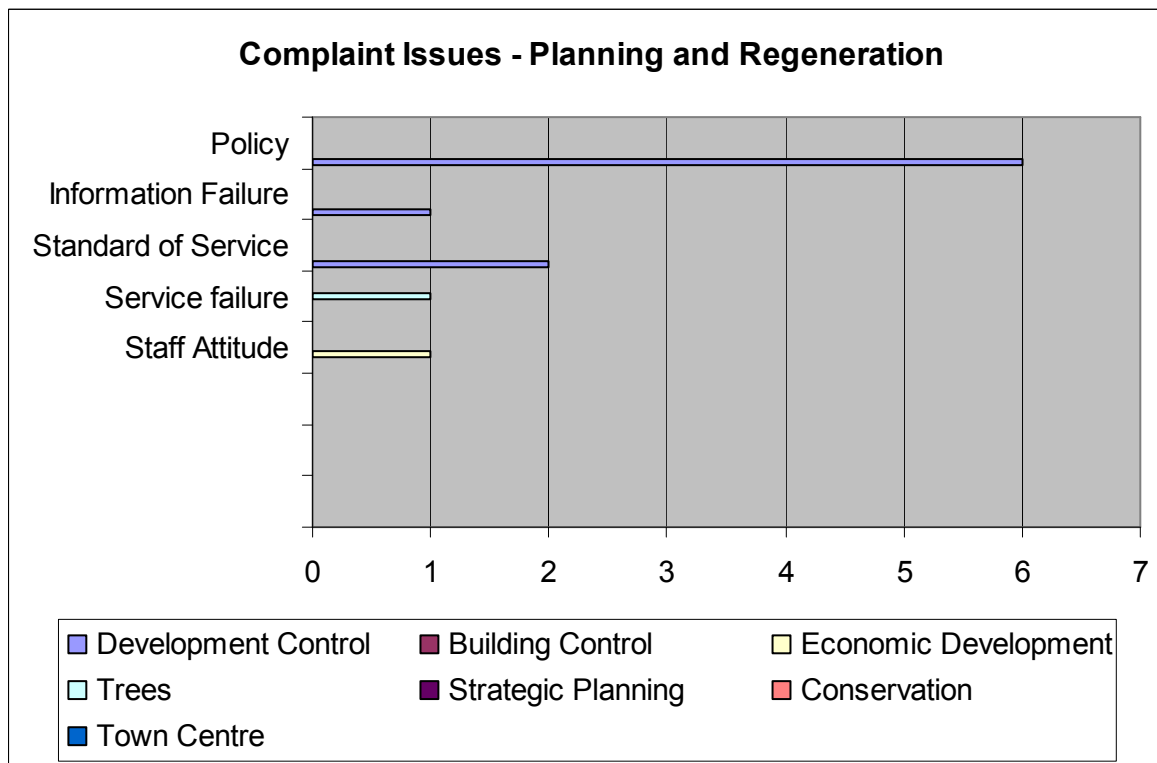


### Summary

The Planning and Regeneration Team received complaints during this quarter.

### 2.5.1 Complaint Issues

Figure 13

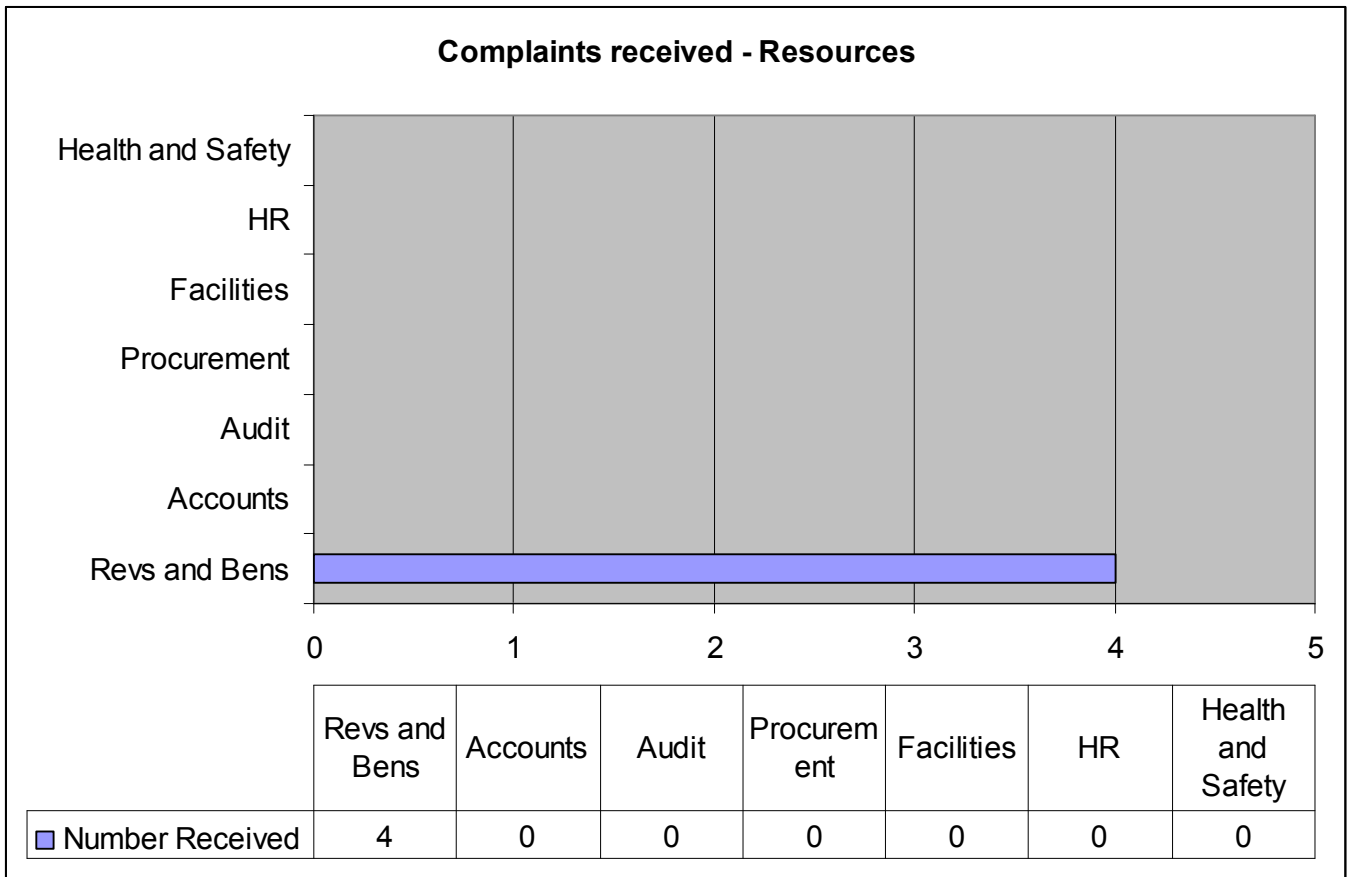


### Summary

Complaint	Numbers	Justified
Objections/ information about planning applications/	9	7 not upheld, 1 upheld, 1 partially upheld
Trees - lack of info	1	Still open
Parking of Market Van	1	Not upheld
<b>Totals</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>8 Not upheld, 1 upheld, 1 partially upheld, 1 still</b>

## 2.6 Complaints Received by Resources Dept

Figure 14

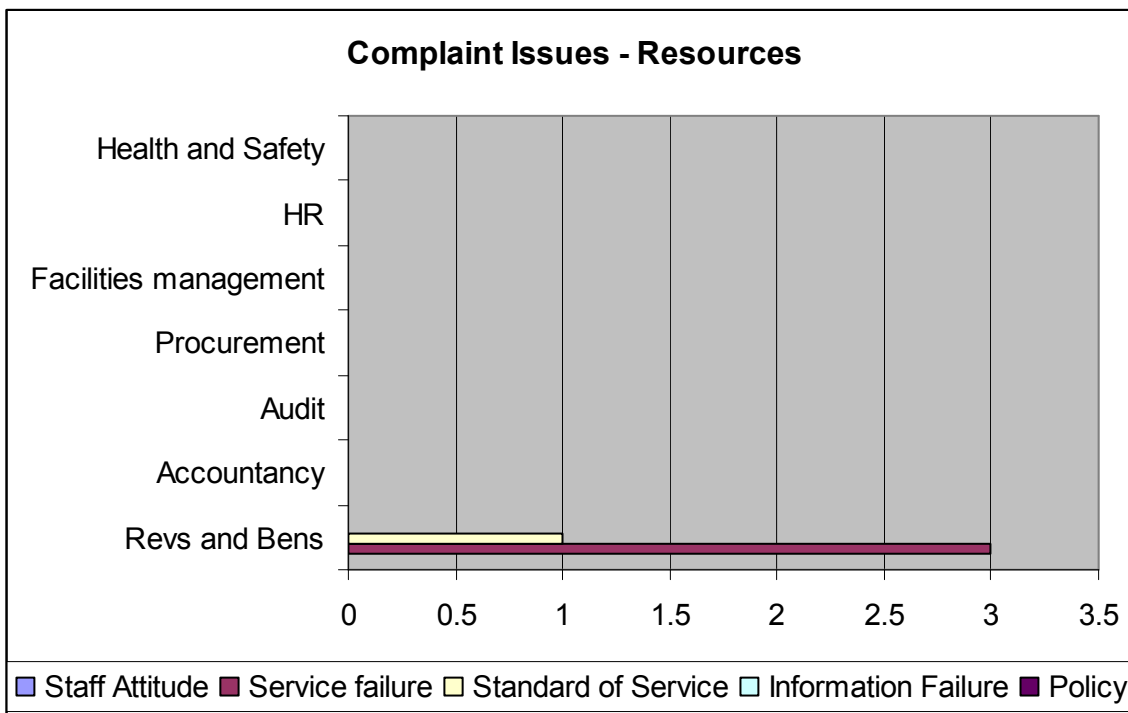


### Summary

The Resources Department received 4 complaints during this quarter.

### 2.6.1 Complaint Issues

Figure 15



### Summary

Three complaints received were about Benefit claims and 1 about Council Tax.

## **Section 3**

### **Identified Trends and Recommendations for Improvement Actions**

#### **3.1 Identified Trends**

42% of the complaints received this quarter are due to the delay in delivering new brown bins and green bins. The delays have also had a knock on effect on the number of complaints received about collection problems being 11% of the total number of complaints received.

#### **3.2 Recommendations for Improvement Actions.**

The Head of Environmental Services has recently submitted a lessons learned report to the Performance Management Board on the implementation of the changes to the recycling and garden waste services. This report addresses all the issues that have led to a significant number of customer complaints received since the introduction of the changes. Funding issues to maintain stock levels of bins, improving the delivery service, financial processes and customer records have been identified as key factors to consider for any future projects.

It is only by listening to our customers that we can find out how well we are performing. Capturing complaints and customer feedback helps us identify where we need to make service improvements. However, we need to ensure that the Council's customer feedback system is being used correctly to capture the information needed to make real changes. The Customer First Officer will be briefing the Corporate Management Team on the customer feedback policy and system so that they can encourage their teams to confidently deal with complaints and other feedback. Awareness/Refresher training is also being considered for major users of the system and new staff members.

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**TREASURY REPORT FOR APRIL – JUNE 2010**

**1. BACKGROUND**

The Treasury Management Strategy for Bromsgrove District Council has been underpinned by the adoption of the Chartered Institute of Public Finance and Accountancy's (CIPFA) Code of Practice on Treasury Management 2009

The Code of Practice recommends that members should be informed of Treasury Management activities at least twice a year, but preferably quarterly. This report therefore ensures this authority is embracing Best Practice in accordance with CIPFA's recommendations.

**2. THE ECONOMY AND EVENTS IN Q1**

- The UK continued to emerge from recession but the level of activity remained well below pre-crisis levels. The recovery is as yet fragile; GDP registered just 0.3% growth in the first calendar quarter of 2010. The final revision for 2010 Q1 GDP has been delayed by the ONS due to worries about data accuracy.
- Consumer price inflation remained well above the Bank of England's 2% target level, with a peak of 3.7% being reached in April. Year-on-year CPI for May 2010 was 3.4% and RPI was 5.1%. Temporary effects are thought to lie behind the elevated rate and inflation is expected to fall over the year due to downward pressure from spare capacity. The measure of inflation excluding indirect taxes (CPIY) came down to 1.6% year-on-year. Arguably this is a much more relevant measure of inflationary pressure for forward thinking policy makers, as changes in the VAT rate aren't sending signals about the pressure on the use of resources in the economy.
- The Bank of England's Monetary Policy Committee maintained the Bank Rate at 0.5% and Quantitative Easing at £200bn.
- The successful formation of a coalition government dispelled uncertainty surrounding a hung parliament result in May's General Election. The new government's Emergency Budget laid out tough action to address the UK's budget deficit, aiming to eliminate the structural deficit by 2014/15. This is to be achieved through austerity measures – £32bn of spending cuts and £8bn of net tax increases. Gilts have benefitted from this decisive plan as well as expected reductions in supply for each year of the forecast. The expected level of spending cuts and tax rises looks to be enough to extinguish the recent concern about inflation

expectations. Therefore, rates 'lower for much longer' remained a relevant message.

- The US Federal Reserve kept rates on hold at 0.25% and the European Central Bank maintained rates at 1%. The major ongoing worries in Europe extended from sovereign weakness in the 'PIIGS' nations (Portugal, Italy, Ireland, Greece and Spain), the exposure of the continent's banking sector to the sovereign and corporate debt of these nations and the risk of contagion extending to other countries.

### 3. INVESTMENT ACTIVITY – QUARTER 1

The Guidance on Local Government Investments in England gives priority to security and liquidity and the Council's aim is to achieve a yield commensurate with these principles.

#### Investments

	Balance on 01/04/2010 £000s	Investments Made £000s	Investments Repaid £000s	Balance on 30/06/201 0 £000s	Increase/ Decrease in Investments for Q1
Short Term Investments	8,350	3,200	2,000	9,550	1,200
<b>TOTAL INVESTMENTS</b>	<b>8,350</b>	<b>3,200</b>	<b>2,000</b>	<b>9,550</b>	<b>1,200</b>

### 4. COMPLIANCE WITH PRUDENTIAL INDICATORS

The Council can confirm that it has complied with its Prudential Indicators for 2010/11, which were set in March 2010 as part of the Council's Treasury Management Strategy Statement.

### 5. OUTLOOK FOR QUARTER 2

At the time of writing this quarterly activity report in June 2010, the outlook for interest rates was as follows:

	Sep-10	Dec-10	Mar-11	Jun-11	Sep-11	Dec-11	Mar-12	Jun-12	Sep-12	Dec-12	Mar-13
Official Bank Rate											
Upside risk		0.25	0.25	0.25	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.50
Central case	0.50	0.50	0.50	0.75	1.00	1.25	1.50	2.00	2.50	2.75	3.00
Downside risk				-0.25	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50	-0.50



The recovery in growth is likely to be slow and uneven, more “W” than “V” shaped. The Bank of England will stick to its lower-for-longer stance on policy rates.

Gilts will remain volatile, more so in the election’s aftermath.

The path of base rates reflects the fragile state of the recovering economy and the significantly greater fiscal tightening of the emergency budget. With growth and underlying inflation likely to remain subdued, the Bank will stick to its lower for longer stance on policy rates.

The potential for downgrades to sovereign ratings has receded, but the negative outlook (S&P) will remain for now.

## **6. Summary**

In compliance with the requirements of the CIPFA Code of Practice this report provides members with a summary report of the treasury management activity during the first quarter of 2010/11. As indicated in this report none of the Prudential Indicators have been breached and a prudent approach has been taken in relation to investment activity with priority being given to security and liquidity over yield.

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# Spatial Planning **peer review**

Bromsgrove District Council  
October 2009

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## Executive summary and key recommendations

### Summary

Bromsgrove District Council has gone through a difficult period since Comprehensive Performance Assessment (CPA) judgement of 'poor' in 2004.

The recent CPA inspection acknowledged that the council's vision and priorities had been "refined and now better reflect customer, stakeholder and staff ambitions." Spatial planning has a key role to deliver the council vision and priorities, which includes the Longbridge site, affordable housing, town centre regeneration and development of the town's railway station. If these represent opportunities then the challenges for planning future development are formidable with ninety-one per cent of the district being green belt.

Having made strong progress in recent years the council is moving into a new phase of improvement. This will require addressing a number of spatial planning issues. These include:

- o How to manage the green belt to accommodate future growth?
- o The council has developed a strong local vision for Bromsgrove. However, what is less clear is the council's role in the region and sub-region.
- o Joint working with Redditch is moving towards shared management teams and services. This is still at an early stage but in due course it will be important to consider the Bromsgrove-Redditch axis as a sub-regional entity and what this will mean in how it is presented to the wider region.
- o This Bromsgrove-Redditch axis provides clear opportunities for spatial planning to consider pooling resources, developing joint policy documentation and working more closely to produce council Core Strategies.
- o How will the council want to establish relationships with its regional partners, for example the Government Office West Midlands, the Regional Development Agency and the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership? What will the council want from these relationships and who will lead on these?
- o Partnership working should ensure that planning is not to be viewed as a solution by itself. Complex issues such as economic development, the needs of elderly persons, affordable housing have a number of principal partners able to contribute resources and expertise to understanding the issues and developing solutions. The council and planning should be at the centre of promoting such discussions.
- o Members are central to 'place shaping' for Bromsgrove. How will the council ensure that councilors are supported to assume this role with understanding and confidence?

- o Training and development for officers and members is vital for moving the authority forward during the next phase of improvement. This could include developing a regional vision, developing officer and member champions for specific subjects, for example Longbridge and the town centre, and giving consideration to moving towards development management approach for the planning service.
- o Some of the issues confronting the council are challenging. Addressing these internally might be difficult because of internal tensions and/or a lack of resource, for example making a policy breakthrough on ADRs. External facilitation could be an option for negotiating areas of difficulty.
- o There has been a recent history of tension at Bromsgrove of tension between officers and members. The next phase of improvement for the council is concerned should seek to address this. Staff development to develop a more positive culture should be considered. Peer mentoring for officers and members – providing support and challenge on issues and working arrangements – could also help the council move through this phase.

## **Key recommendations**

The recommendations of the peer review team are set out under the headings of the benchmark of the 'ideal' authority. The peer review team recommends that the council:

### **Achieving outcomes**

- i. Considers this report with a view to making the planning service one which is overtly supportive of and key to delivery of the council's objectives
- ii. Formally lifts the housing moratorium based on the RSS Phase Two Revision figures and the recent experience of successful planning appeals and Ombudsman report findings against the council
- iii. Develops a policy position for the development of larger sites on the edge of Bromsgrove Areas of Development Restraint (ADR), which would permit a mix of housing including affordable housing and other uses located in the most sustainable locations [The Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) has been engaged by the council, since the peer review, to assist on strategic site allocations.]
- iv. Produces a masterplan for designated ADR sites to encourage quality design and development on more sustainable sites
- v. Develops Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for planning obligations and affordable housing that clearly states council intentions for these areas
- vi. Undertakes an assessment, with Redditch, of the resources needed for both councils to work together to develop their Core Strategies for simultaneous submission

### **Integration and collaboration**

- vii. Ensures the emerging Core Strategy incorporates a vision describing Bromsgrove and its role within the region
- viii. Considers engagement with Birmingham City Council and Worcestershire County Council at strategic director level given the importance of the Longbridge and Bromsgrove town centre/railway station development for the council [Such engagement has commenced since the peer review.]

### **Leading and engaging the community**

- ix. Monitors the usage of the website and survey users to obtain feedback on the website 'useability' to inform future development
- x. Continues to monitor the Customer First priority. A good start has been made but for the planning service it is at an early stage. This should be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Executive Director.
- xi. Reviews the current member / officer working arrangements so that members are able to discharge their community leadership role, informed by professional officer advice

### **Management**

- xii. Produces a project plan (that is a revised Local Development Scheme – LDS) for the work needed to complete the Core Strategy by June/July 2010.
- xiii. Develops planning resource capacity. These could include: moving to development management\* and encouraging the resource flow from development control to policy planning and vice versa; and combining resources with Redditch, from secondments to joint investment in specialist resources e.g. urban design, planning obligation (S106) negotiations, joint planning arrangements and joint policies.  
  
[\*Development management (DM) constitutes the assessing and determining of applications more strategically and moves away from a 'plan-led system'. DM is a change in planning culture – away from reactive control of development to a more positive and proactive role for planning.]
- xiv. Addresses the practice within the council of attaching blame to the planning service. This practice needs to be carefully opened up by senior managers, with HR and possibly with external support, to fully understand the issues, how they came about and the actions needed to address these.

### **Innovation, learning and excellence**

- xv. Should ensure maximum gain from S106 negotiations from developers in the future development of ADRs. This could be assisted by considering the appointment of a specialist negotiating officer (perhaps shared with Redditch) or of buying in this expertise when required.
- xvi. The chief executive, executive director and Leader of council actively encourage members to attend the one hour time slot provided before Planning Committee for members to discuss planning issues with officers

## Shared knowledge and evidence

- xvii. Considers and develops opportunities for sharing the cost of joint studies with other local government partners in the region
- xviii. Develop better ways to capture and transfer learning. This is so the council is able to identify good practice elsewhere, to understand how this is achieved and considers application in other service areas.

## Background

The visit to Bromsgrove District Council planning service was part of a programme of reviews undertaken by the Improvement and Development Agency for local government (IDeA) and the Planning Advisory Service (PAS). A peer review is designed to help the service assess its current achievements and its capacity to change, and continue to improve.

The peer review is not an inspection; rather it offers a supportive approach, undertaken by friends – albeit ‘critical friends’ – and aims to help a council identify its current strengths as much as what it needs to improve. The planning service produced a Self Assessment using the benchmark, in advance of the review; this provided key areas for the team to focus their research.

The basis for this review is the benchmark of the ‘ideal’ authority. The benchmark is divided up into the following sections:

- Achieving outcomes
- Integration and collaboration
- Leading and engaging the community
- Management
- Innovation, learning and excellence
- Shared knowledge and evidence

The members of the peer review team were:

- David Evans, Director of Planning and Environment, West Dorset District Council
- Councillor Claire Denman, Portfolio Holder, Planning and Economic Development, Crawley Borough Council
- Richard Probyn, Planning Policy and Implementation Manager, Huntingdonshire District Council
- Deborah Hogan, Consultant, the Planning Advisory Service



- Andrew Winfield, IDeA Review Manager

The team was on site 12-14 October 2009. The programme for the onsite phase was organised in advance and included a variety of activities designed to enable us to meet and talk to a range of internal and external stakeholders. Our activities included:

- interviews and discussions with councillors, officers, service users and partners
- focus groups with middle managers and frontline staff
- a tour of the district
- reading documents provided by the authority, including the self-assessment.

We appreciated the warm welcome and hospitality provided by the council and would like to thank everybody we met for their time and contributions. The supportive way our needs were taken care of while on site deserves particular mention.

The feedback we gave the council on the last day of the review provided an overview of the key messages structured around the benchmark of the 'ideal' authority. This report builds on the initial findings and gives a detailed account of the review.

## **Context**

### **BACKGROUND**

Bromsgrove District covers a large area of nearly 84 square miles in north Worcestershire. The district is 14 miles from the centre of Birmingham.

Ninety-one percent of the district is greenbelt, which presents issues for regeneration and housing. Four radial routes pass through the district, each served by railway lines and major roads, including the M5 running north and south, the M42 running east and west, with further links to the M40 and M6.

The district's principal settlements are: Bromsgrove, Hagley, Rubery, and Wythall. It is estimated that 16,643 people travel into the district for work, with 26,112 of the population travelling out, a net commute out of 9,469. The district has no wards in the top 20 per cent most deprived in England.

### **THE COUNCIL**

The council had been viewed as a 'poor' council for some time. This was recognised by the council and in 2004 it was given a comprehensive performance

assessment (CPA) rating of 'poor' and entered into voluntary engagement with CLG. This was followed by changes in senior management and political leadership.

In 2006 the council requested a further assessment to judge improvement progress. The CPA 2007 rated the council as 'Poor' but acknowledged that considerable progress had been made. The current chief executive took up post in April 2007.

The council underwent a further CPA in 2009 and was judged as 'Fair'. The council's Annual Audit and Inspection letter (March 2009) stated that, "Since the last CPA, the Council has made significant progress in addressing the weakness previously identified. Much of the work has focused on putting the processes and 'building blocks' in place that were absent in early 2007 and these are now starting to make an impact."

A new Leader was appointed in October 2005 and the council has a majority Conservative administration, with 26 Conservatives, 6 Labour, 4 Independents, 2 Wythall Residents' Coalition and 1 unaffiliated.

The council operates a Leader/Cabinet model; supported by three non-executive boards - audit board, scrutiny steering board and performance management board - as well as standards and licensing committees. There is an officer corporate management team (CMT).

Since August 2008 the chief executive has been acting joint chief executive of Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council. The purpose of this initially year-long project was to explore opportunities for joint working and the provision of shared services. A review led to extending the Joint Chief executive arrangement (September 2009). This is a 3 ½ year fixed term contract with a specific brief to oversee the recruitment of a single management team, to serve both authorities, and the potential sharing of all services (excluding the Housing Revenue Account).

The overarching vision for the district is 'Working together to build a district where people are proud to live and work, through community leadership and excellent services.'

The council has a good strategic framework for delivering priorities. Strategic priorities are set out in a three year Council Plan, which drives the service planning process and the annual improvement plan. Improvement Plan progress is monitored monthly through exception reporting to senior officers and elected members.

The Council Plan is the key overarching document listing council vision, values, objectives and priorities, the measures of success, together with a Strategic Action Plan and a Performance Management Framework. The Council Plan is updated in April each year and for 2009-2012 sets out four objectives:

- Regeneration

- Improvement
- Sense of community and well being
- Environment.

The council and its partners on the LSP agreed to give particular focus between 2007 and 2010 to three priorities: Bromsgrove town centre redevelopment; Longbridge regeneration; and affordable housing.

The council has a net revenue budget of £11.984 million (2009/10). The Council employs 368 staff.

## **REGENERATION AND HOUSING**

The economic picture of the district is generally positive despite the current economic downturn. Unemployment levels increased to 3.7 per cent at June 2009.

The mean household income is £38,690 is the highest in the county (the county average is £35,656\*).

There are three major areas of economic regeneration within the district: the Longbridge site, Bromsgrove town centre and Bromsgrove railway station.

The population of the district is 92,300 and the Office for National Statistics project that this will increase by 20.5 per cent to 111,200 by 2031. The over 65 population totals 17,000 and is predicted to expand significantly as a proportion of the overall population with the over 80s population estimated to increase by 132 per cent by 2031.

There are 37,492 households in the district. The current iteration of the Regional Spatial Strategy is likely to require 3,000 - 7,000 households to be built in the district over the next 25 years and it is proposed that Bromsgrove district will be required to take some of Redditch Borough Council's housing allocation.

A big issue facing the district is affordable housing. The average house price is £240,867\* and 83.4 per cent of households are owner occupied, the 11<sup>th</sup> highest figure in England and Wales.

The council is operating [at the time of the peer review] a planning moratorium with only affordable housing developments being built. The Housing Strategy has a target of 80 units of affordable housing a year for the next three years.

\*These statistics were from before the economic downturn.

# Achieving Outcomes

## Strengths

- ✓ Completion of the Core strategy held up by RSS but the council made a persuasive case for increased housing allocation
- ✓ Completed work on Longbridge AAP, progress with town centre AAP
- ✓ Research studies completed and underway (SHLAA, employment, green infrastructure etc.)

## Areas for consideration

- Spatial planning needs to be at the heart of the authority
  - Core Strategy would benefit from stronger links to the SCS and Council Plan
  - Development can be promoted now that there is increasing certainty over RSS allocations
  - SPD on affordable housing and planning obligations needed to deliver council vision
  - Develop strong and ambitious programme to deliver the Core Strategy and other related policy documents
  - Take the opportunity to channel members' aspirations into planned new housing opportunities (ADRs)
- 
1. The council has worked on developing a draft Core Strategy since 2005. This provides a spatial vision and objectives that cross reference with the Sustainable Community Strategy and the Council Plan.
  2. The development of the Regional Spatial Strategy (RSS) has been delayed and this has impacted on the council in preparing a draft Core Strategy, particularly on the future housing numbers for the district.
  3. Despite the RSS delay progress has been made. The earlier RSS iterations did not allow the housing growth, in particular affordable housing, the council believed was needed. The RSS Examination in Public (EIP) was held in Spring 2009 and the Panel's report published in September 2009. The council was successful in arguing for housing numbers to be increased to 4,000. The council input led to recent Panel recommendations which now provide clarity for the Core Strategy to be progressed quickly as a key priority (RSS Panel Report, September 2009 Chapter 8 paras. 8.85 - 8.87).
  4. The centrality of spatial planning for delivering council priorities is clear in the council's Council Plan which includes the Longbridge site and town centre redevelopment as council priorities.

5. In April 2005, parts of Phoenix Venture Holdings (PVH), most significantly MG Rover and PowerTrain entered administration, resulting in the closure of the Longbridge car plant. These elements employed around 5,850 people in the West Midlands and an estimated £410m was spent with supply chain firms in the region. Regeneration is progressing with a Longbridge Area Action Plan (LAAP) developed in association with Birmingham City Council and Worcestershire County Council.
6. The LAAP was examined by the Government Inspector and found to be 'sound' subject to minor amendments in February 2009. The LAAP was adopted by the council as a Development Plan Document (DPD) in April 2009 and will guide site redevelopment over the coming 15-20 years. The LAAP includes an infrastructure tariff to fund a range of physical and community infrastructure projects, for example new park and ride stations and supporting bus services to serve south Birmingham.
7. Longbridge is important as a large site of 468 acres of which 1/3 lies within Bromsgrove district. It is proposed that up to 750 homes will be built on the Bromsgrove area and this will go some way to address housing and affordable housing needs in the district.
8. Similarly the town centre is a high priority project for the council. Bromsgrove town centre needs a major overhaul to encourage local shopping and to be able to compete with neighbouring shopping centres. The Bromsgrove Area Action Plan (AAP) was published in July 2008 following a thorough consultation programme. Taking forward the AAP will be through a Development Plan Document (DPD).

The council's Annual Audit and Inspection letter (March 2009) states that:

"The regeneration of the town centre is at an early stage and it remains a difficult and challenging project. An area action plan has been developed, and an issues and option paper completed. A joint County and District Council Project Board has been established for the town centre and a town centre project manager appointed. Negotiations to relocate the various emergency services to a new site thus freeing up sites in the town centre are underway although progress has been hampered by the listing of Parkside School."

9. Bromsgrove railway station is associated with the town centre development. The current station facilities are considered inadequate and a feasibility study is being carried out on the possible redesign of the station so that it can take bigger trains, more passengers and increased car parking spaces. This would help 'future proof' the station against any changes to transport charges that may affect Birmingham city centre. Negotiations between Network Rail and other partners are currently taking place to put together the funding package for these works. It is envisaged that this will have significant effect on Bromsgrove due to the planned Cross City Line electrification being extended to the town and will bring it closer to the economic orbit of Birmingham.
10. Research studies have been completed or are underway. These will be important for informing the final Core Strategy document and associated policy development. A green infrastructure study is being undertaken. A

joint Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has been completed with Redditch. An employment land study and a retail study have been undertaken. A transport study is being considered for options appraisal.

11. Despite this the peer review team do not feel that planning was yet at the heart of the council. This could be explained by a number of factors:

- the moratorium on housing since 2003 [the council intends to formally end this moratorium]
- the delay in progressing the RSS
- there is often not a senior officer presence at Planning Committee and the elected members may miss this visible service lead
- the Strategy Manager is the council lead on planning policy and has led for the council at meetings on Longbridge and on the RSS. The review team consider that given the importance of these matters to the council a director lead might offer greater strategic authority and demonstrate that planning matters are led from the most senior officers of the council
- the LDF Working Group has not met since March this year. A view was expressed by some members that the LDF was not clearly prioritised within the council as a key programme to deliver council priorities.

Whatever the reasons it is essential that spatial planning moves to the centre of the council's working arrangements as it is planning that will be required to deliver many of the council's priorities, for example the Longbridge site and town centre redevelopment. The Core Strategy will provide the planning land use levers for future housing and economic development to deliver the objectives of the SCS, the Local Area Agreement (LAA) as well as the council's own priorities.

12. With the increasing certainty over the likely housing numbers for Bromsgrove set out in the RSS Phase Two revision there is a clear opportunity for planning officers and the council to plan ahead. However, with the revised figures the council no longer has a five year supply of land that is suitable, available and achievable i.e. deliverable and could end up with planning by appeal, as highlighted in a recent precedent. In that appeal for five two-storey dwellings (37 Western Road, Hagley) the Planning Inspector stated that, "...the Council's approach to the question of housing land supply is unnecessarily cautious in...continuing to base its requirements solely on the adopted RSS" (September 2009). [Appeal decision reference APP/P1805/A/09/2101976.] Development should now be promoted by lifting the housing moratorium and taking the opportunity of producing a masterplan for designated ADRs to encourage quality design and development on more sustainable sites.

13. The policy as currently applied in the Local Plan encourages the development of exception housing, particularly with the moratorium on development of other types of housing. Developing larger sites on the

edge of Bromsgrove (ADR) would be preferable to building in rural areas in the green belt and lead to less friction and criticism from residents. Sites in ADRs would permit a mix of housing, including affordable housing. This could be 'pepper potted' throughout a site, instead of in one large tranche on the edge of a village, and be located in the most sustainable locations. This would go some way to satisfy member aspirations to build affordable housing and avoid the criticism, highlighted in the recent Ombudsman (Complaint number 07B13868, June 2009) and appeal cases (see paragraph 12 above). The current ADR allocations were developed in the late 1990s so may need to be reviewed for soundness as part of the development of the Core Strategy.

14. Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) on planning obligations are needed to ensure that social infrastructure (schools, open space and community facilities) and affordable housing are provided on masterplanned sites. This is important to avoid negotiating planning obligations where affordable housing is not provided on site as part of mixed development. Some money from previous planning obligations was commuted for off site provision of affordable housing that would have produced less affordable housing than if provided on site. The value of land without affordable housing on site increases considerably and a developer /landowner would profit from this if other obligations were not sought.
15. Planning obligations should also be sought from smaller developments and from developers in the town centre to provide environmental enhancements such as new floorscape and seating.
16. The council recognises that it has not made the best use of planning powers to deliver affordable housing (Housing Strategy 2006-2011, p56) and is committed to developing Supplementary Planning Guidance (SPG) to introduce, "lower affordable housing thresholds and more demanding levels of affordable housing contribution." [The review team had sight of a draft SPD on Affordable Housing so it should be relatively straightforward to present this to council for speedy adoption.]
17. Now that the RSS detail is emerging the council should move to develop a strong and ambitious programme to deliver the Core Strategy and other related policy documents
18. The Government Office West Midlands (GOWM) was critical of aspects of the draft Core Strategy and the council will have to address this. GOWM has indicated the council cannot ignore the 3,000 homes for Redditch to be provided in the district (allocated by the RSS) nor can Redditch push on their core strategy before further joint work is done to agree where this growth is to be located. Discussions have been held with Redditch to set up a joint board, involving members, to take a strategic overview of cross border developments. Momentum is also being generated by the shared chief executive arrangement, across the two councils, and the push to share management teams and services. Both councils should undertake an assessment of resources needed for both councils to work together to develop their Core Strategies for simultaneous submission and examination

by the same Inspector. This should lead to the development of a joint project plan (LDS) that would identify how the town centre AAP, and the SPDs will be achieved



# Integration & Collaboration

## Strengths

- ✓ Joint working with Redditch, Stratford-on-Avon and Worcestershire CC (and Birmingham) – able to build on
- ✓ Joint Chief executive with Redditch offers opportunity for improved collaboration over future development proposed by RSS on boundary with Redditch
- ✓ Council is trying to bring forward vision of development at Longbridge
- ✓ Good relations at senior level between council and BDHT
- ✓ HMA (with BDHT) to understand housing demand and need for future development

## Areas for consideration

- Not convinced council has a clear view of its role in the region
- Council appears not to be effectively engaged – and less able to influence - with key regional partners (AWM, GOWM etc.)
- Bromsgrove had difficulty engaging with Birmingham due to different size and scale – importance given to the Longbridge development
- Danger that Redditch Core Strategy moves forward out of sync with Bromsgrove Core Strategy and ‘potentially unsound’
- External partners not always clear on planners’ professional position on affordable housing – need to develop understanding/relationships

19. The joint working with neighbouring councils on the RSS, Longbridge and the town centre development provides a firm foundation for developing the identity of Bromsgrove within the region. This will be enhanced by the proposals for the northern arc of three councils (Bromsgrove, Redditch and Wyre Forest) in Worcestershire to work together on economic development and develop a North Worcestershire Economic Strategy. The council has established good working arrangements with Birmingham City Council on the Longbridge AAP and also with Worcestershire County Council on this and the LAA. This record of partnership working with neighbouring councils provides a firm platform for developing future partnership initiatives, regional working arrangements and shared services/resources. This is also recognised in the CPA report (March 2009) with the council, “...playing a more positive role in local and regional partnerships from which it was previously absent.”

20. The joint chief executive arrangement with Redditch offers both councils an opportunity for improved collaboration on developing Core Strategies and the future development proposed by the RSS on the boundary with Redditch. The latter will be important to resolve for both councils.

21. The council is working to bring forward a vision of development at Longbridge. This is important as Longbridge is one of the council's priorities. An Area Action Plan (AAP) has been developed in association with Birmingham City Council and Worcestershire County Council. (See paragraphs 5 and 6 above.)
22. The council's housing stock was transferred to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) in 2004. BDHT are the largest social landlord in the district managing over 3,000 dwellings. The team were told that relations between the council and BDHT had been strained but, as a result of council efforts and senior meetings between the two organisations, these have greatly improved. This was confirmed by BDHT and the council. These are supported by ongoing quarterly meetings held between the chief executive, Leader and BDHT.
23. There is a RSL Liaison Group that meets every month, which includes BDHT, West Mercia RSL, Worcestershire County Council, strategic housing and planning officers and members. This group considers strategic housing needs and opportunities for land use with support from the Homes and Communities Agency for rural development.
24. The council developed a Housing Market Assessment (HMA) with BDHT and the South Housing Market Partnership (April 2007), which includes planning and housing authorities. The council also commissioned a HMA for the district which was produced in October 2008. The council acknowledges in its Housing Strategy 2006-2011 that this had been an area of weakness but is now committed to conducting future survey work on a regular basis with partners. The HMA provides the council – and partners – with invaluable information to understand housing demand and need to plan for future development. This was put to practical effect to inform an amendment to an existing planning approval at Perryfields Road to provide appropriate scale and type of dwellings the HMA identified as being needed.
25. However, the review team was not convinced the council has a clear view of its role in the region. For example, what should the district's relationship be with Birmingham, what is it that Bromsgrove will offer the region as a 'unique selling point'? Bromsgrove's LDF Vision in the draft Core Strategy (p8 October 2008) clearly set out a district-wide vision for Bromsgrove by 2026. While this is understandable in terms of the LDF it does seem to the review team to miss the opportunity of describing a vision of Bromsgrove within the region. The review team recommend that this be developed for the Core Strategy.
26. The council appeared to the review team not to be effectively engaged at a senior level with key regional partners, for example the Regional Development Agency - Advantage West Midlands (AWM), GOWM etc. In an interview it became apparent that the council was not "knocking on the door of AWM". Similar views became apparent in an interview with GOWM who stated that the council appeared, "reluctant to engage with Government Office – this may be due to issues with members who appear to want to have flexibility about where development goes" and appear reluctant to deal with cross boundary issues adjoining Redditch.

27. The council needs to continue engaging with Birmingham. With the importance of the Longbridge development it is essential that high level strategic engagement is achieved. This is in the interests for both councils, not least in terms of employment and commuting, with Bromsgrove having the largest single direction movement to the city in the county. The Local Transport Plan 2006-2011 (Worcestershire County Council) makes clear the importance of transport links, and the county council commitment to support enhancing Bromsgrove Railway Station and Bromsgrove town centre. The review team recommend that the council consider engagement with Birmingham City Council and Worcestershire County Council on these matters at strategic director level.
28. There is a possibility that the development of the Redditch Core Strategy progresses with Bromsgrove Core Strategy some way behind. It would be clearly preferable for the two authorities to work in tandem to the same timetable with a view to simultaneous submission. This 'joined up working' also is likely to be expected by the Planning Inspectorate. However, Redditch is keen to press ahead and may not wait for Bromsgrove. The council should ensure that both councils work together to ensure their timetables are aligned and that Bromsgrove has the resources to deliver to this.
29. On the site visit it was apparent that some significant affordable housing schemes had been delivered. However, some partners and members expressed the view that the council planners were not supportive of affordable housing. This appeared to be focused on proposed development of affordable housing sites in the green belt that did not meet the "very special circumstances" test in PPG2 (Green Belts). The review team raise this because it is a perception held in some quarters that the council may wish to seek to correct.

## Leading and engaging the community

### Strengths

- ✓ The roles and responsibilities of members have been reinforced through the Code on Conduct, member/officer protocol, training
- ✓ Improved working relationship between members and officers.
- ✓ The council are taking positive steps towards engaging with communities (SCS quantitative analysis, LDF Statement of Community Involvement)
- ✓ Recent introduction of public speaking at Planning Committee is welcomed by the community
- ✓ The website has provided new opportunities for residents to engage with the planning service.

### Areas for consideration

- Planning needs to become an enabling service
- Need to monitor recent customer interface arrangements to ensure that they meet community engagement needs
- The council should review the current member / officer working arrangements so that members are able to discharge their community leadership role with a clear understanding of professional officer advice
- There is a perception that a small minority of councillors are behaving in a “disruptive or confrontational way”

30. The roles and responsibilities of members have been clarified through recent provision of core documentation, for example: a Code of Conduct; a Description of Councillors Roles; and a member: officer protocol. Specifically on planning there is now a ‘Code of Practice – Planning Services’, contained within the council’s constitution. Planning Committee members are now required to undergo specified training. The review team were told by members that they now had a clearer understanding of spatial planning and their role in decision making.

31. Members and officers interviewed believe that there is a good working relationship and that this has improved in recent times. The most recent Audit Commission Annual Audit and Inspection Letter (March 2009) states, “Member capacity continues to improve.” The council has been active in promoting this. In addition to the training described above there are: briefing sessions involving the chair of Planning Committee with officers from Development Control and the legal team. The Head of Service meets regularly with the portfolio holder to discuss service matters. The council’s portfolio holder also encourages members to raise planning issues or potential interests with planning/legal officers.

32. The council are taking positive steps towards engaging with communities, informed by the council’s Community Engagement Strategy 2008-2009

and means the council is better able to ensure priorities meet residents' needs. The quantitative analysis of the district, which informed the development of the Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) and the LDF Statement of Community Involvement Work, underpins this. The council have used various methods to engage with the community, including: a Quality of Life survey conducted in 2008, building on previous customer panel surveys; working with partners such as the Town Centre Regeneration Steering Group; active engagement with Town and Parish Councils at Partnerships and Communities Together (PACT).

33. The council ran its first children and young people's convention in 2007. It uses a community bidding approach for the equalities and diversity forum, and runs a budget jury, enabling local people to decide how delegated money should be spent. Key issues, to emerge from involving the equalities and diversity forum, are the regeneration of the town centre with suitable disabled access, extended hours of the shop mobility service, the need for a community transport scheme and the redevelopment of the railway station.
34. Community leadership is developing well. The council funded two pilot area committee schemes or local neighbourhood partnerships (LNP) during 2007/08, and allocated £4,000 to each. During 2008/09 this was increased to £15,000 each. A third LNP was proposed for the Hagley and Rural area. [Budget pressures have since led to ending LNP funding for financial year 2010-2011.]
35. The council trialled public speaking at Planning Committee in 2006. This was well received and welcomed by the community and formally adopted in 2007. It was mentioned positively by a service users' focus group, some parish councils, and members.
36. The website has provided new opportunities for residents to engage with the planning service and members commented positively on this. The review team found it easy to navigate and use. . The parish council focus group generally thought this was an improvement. The planning service users' focus group also supported it. The website is complemented by good quality information leaflets and brochures including: contacting Development Control, obtaining planning advice from the Customer Service Centre and a planning guide for householders. It is recommended that the council monitor the usage of the website and survey users to obtain feedback on the website 'useability' to inform future development.
37. However, planning is not currently viewed – rightly or wrongly - as an enabling service. The review team received a number of comments from focus groups and members of staff. A not untypical comment was that, "planning is dragging its feet" in corporate working and delivery. An example was alleged advice from planning suggesting that an AAP for Bromsgrove Town Centre could not be developed in advance of the Core Strategy when subsequent officer and member research resulted in examples of such AAPs. This has contributed to concern on being able to trust and rely on officer advice. A frequent comment made to the review

team was that Planning appeared to be hiding behind their regulatory function. To illustrate this many members want new SPDs to reflect changing community need, for example extensions to nursing homes in the green belt to reflect demographic changes. However planners are seen to be 'hiding' behind the RSS, Planning Policy Statements (PPSs) and LDF requirements. Correct or not, this is a very damaging perception for a planning service and is symptomatic of underlying cultural strains that need to be better understood. More on this is contained in paragraph 48.

38. Customer First is a priority for the council. However, the CPA report stated that, "customer focus is not embedded throughout the council" and that, "specific needs of customers are not being met consistently by all services." Information gathered by the team suggests that this is an area for further work for Planning. More needs to be done to understand the customer service requirements, to monitor customer contact and to ensure the council and service users are in ongoing dialogue. Some of this work is contained in the Planning and Environment Services Business Plan but this tends to set performance response targets and not qualitative measures. None of the Corporate Customer Standards in the business plan are reported in the monthly Performance Report. There may be benefit in the Executive Director and head of service having more involvement in this area and by the service capturing more qualitative information, for example spot surveys of planning users.
39. The review team picked up a deep sense of member frustration at being unable to champion and deliver community priorities and their feeling that planning service was constraining them. This became palpable when members spoke of feeling that the council has been talking about town centre development for more than 5 years and they are still talking about it. Another concern of members picked up during the review was around controlling the growth in numbers of takeaway food outlets. The council should give consideration to this growth, how this is managed elsewhere and whether control in this area is required by a Supplementary Planning Document (SPD). Around the broader issue of political frustration senior officers and elected members are recommended to give consideration to reviewing current working arrangements and the member community leadership role in relation to delivery of council priorities.
40. There is a perception that a small minority of councillors are behaving in a disruptive manner. This was picked up in the Audit Commission's CPA report (March 2009). This was referred to in focus groups and interviews during the peer review. A recent example was the police being called to a council meeting in July to restore order. This is damaging to the council's public image, especially in light of the council's sign up to the LGA's Reputation campaign. Much work has been conducted by the council to improve behavioural issues, in particular by training and development. This is an area of importance for the council and needs to be worked on continuously by the chief executive, the Leader, group leaders and the CMT. This might be usefully supported by the provision of peer mentoring.

# Management

## Strengths

- ✓ Considerable improvement achieved – now moving to the next phase of this journey
- ✓ Clear strategic framework (SCS, Council Plan, the LSP linking to the LAA)
- ✓ The LDF is developing to a point of enabling the council vision
- ✓ Major increase in delegated authority over the last 5 years
- ✓ Successful implementation of Customer Service Centre and Surgery arrangements

## Areas for consideration

- Develop clarity on member : officer roles and responsibilities
- Resources needed to develop Core Strategy and deliver quality new development
- CMT support for spatial planning to assume 'place shaping' role
- Use partnerships to gain understanding, consensus and support delivery

41. The council has made significant improvement. Progress is acknowledged in the recent Audit Commission CPA and Annual Audit and Inspection Letter (both dated March 2009) which refers to the processes and "building blocks" being in place that were previously absent. The council is now moving into a new improvement phase. This is supported by managerial and political leadership that understands the importance of planning for Bromsgrove and has a clear vision for the future.

42. The council was designated a 'Standards Authority' for 2007-2008 due to Best Value Performance Indicator (BVPI) underperformance. In response it has worked to an Improvement Plan with progress reported to CMT and Cabinet. Since then service Business Plans have been used to set out national targets for processing planning applications, complemented by local performance indicators.

43. The strategic planning framework and the hierarchy of plans are clear, as are their references across. The SCS 2008 to 2011 was developed by the council, working with partners. Its vision is: 'We will make Bromsgrove District a better place to work, live and visit by driving forward change'. The SCS was updated in October 2008 to ensure a fit to the new LAA. The SCS priorities include Town Centre redevelopment (including transport: railway station redevelopment, housing and Longbridge regeneration. The Bromsgrove Partnership (the LSP) has adopted the six LAA objectives.

44. Progress on RSS has been slow and this has impacted on the council's ability to progress the Core Strategy. In addition there have been some tensions with neighbouring councils (Redditch and Stratford-on-Avon) and

Government Office West Midlands (GOWM). The pace has been a source of frustration for the council; especially it depends on spatial planning to enable the delivery of the council's vision. However, progress is picking up and the RSS is approaching finalisation. This means that the council can now look to the Core Strategy being completed by June/July 2010. The review team recommend that a project plan (that is a revised Local Development Scheme – LDS) is developed for the work needed to complete the Core Strategy to this timetable.

45. The council has successfully managed a major shift in delegated authority over the last 5 years. This is important to balance the respective roles of officers and members and will assist the processing of applications and the resources required for this. Just as important this rebalancing means that the planning service can involve members in more important and controversial applications. The team picked up that some members were not entirely content with this shift. This is understandable as the former role was seen as more actively involved in 'shaping Bromsgrove'. However, the shift in delegated authority is positive and officers should work to support members to understand their new role and the importance of this.
46. Staff spoke positively of the new Customer Service Centre (CSC), which the planning service migrated to on 1 October 2009, and the Planning Surgery. This provides an opportunity to both better manage workloads and give face to face time to applicants. The early signs are that this service is valued by customers. A survey of planning users was used to inform the offer of support provided by the CSC. It will be important to monitor CSC activity and user feedback and to build on this for the future.
47. The council has a very clear vision for Bromsgrove and this is articulated in the SCS, the Council and the LAA. However, this is a more inward looking vision and does not position the council in the wider sub-region/region context. For example, this might describe Bromsgrove in relation to: its relationship to Birmingham, its 'fit' within the wider county council area, the 'use' of the greenbelt (the "lungs" of the West Midlands), the district's view of itself on economic development and regeneration etc.
48. Member and officer roles have changed. This has happened nationally since the implementation of the Local Government Act 2000. These changes need to be understood and supported so that officers and members can adapt to new roles and responsibilities and new ways of working together. The team picked up blame being attached to planning but this was not being opened up for better understanding and resolution. This contributed to an unhealthy atmosphere and internal sniping. This was one of the key features of the review and this is potentially highly damaging to the service, the council and its officers and members. It is essential that this is opened up by senior managers, with HR and possibly with external support, to fully understand and to seek to correct it this.
49. A top council priority should be to finalise the Core Strategy, which will provide the platform for many council objectives to be delivered. There is a clear opportunity to link with Redditch to combine resources (there are already staff secondments taking place), to consider joint investment in



specialist resources e.g. urban design, joint planning arrangements, joint policies. In the future this could lead to a joint Core Strategy across the two councils.

50. If the council decides that the Core Strategy is a priority then it must ensure that resources can deliver this. The head of service's view is that resources are sufficient for Bromsgrove's housing RSS allocation of 4,000 new homes but not enough for this and the Redditch 3,000 allocation in Bromsgrove. An added difficulty is that it appears planning resources have reduced in recent years. For example, the team were told that the housing moratorium led to a turnover of planners leaving to be involved in "real planning work" with other councils. The recent job evaluation had a negative impact and contributed to staff moving to other authorities in the area. The review has recommended a project planning approach via a revised LDS to inform the council on the resources required.
51. Council uncertainties, frustration and attaching of blame needs to be addressed. The team believe that this should come from corporate support for spatial planning to assume a 'place shaping' role. There is an emerging timeline to support such a move. It is intended to establish a shared Bromsgrove/Redditch SMT by 1 April 2010. This could lead to shared heads of service by July-September 2010 with a signed off RSS by June/July 2010. The council should consider establishing a programme to submit a Core Strategy by June 2010 and incorporate within this corporate support for spatial planning to assume a corporate 'place shaping' role. This is an organisation cultural issue that is also picked up in paragraphs 37 and 48.
52. Development management may help move spatial planning to a more prominent 'place shaping' role. Development management (DM) constitutes the assessing and determining of applications more strategically and moves away from a 'plan-led system'. DM is a change in planning culture – away from reactive control of development to a more positive and proactive role for planning. It would necessitate changes in structure and the allocation of resources but would provide a freer interplay between traditional development control and policy teams. With the RSS now entering the final stages and able to inform the Core Strategy, this may be an opportune time for the council to consider a service shift to development management.
53. Members informed the team of concerns for future services, for example care villages. The team felt the approach has tended to prematurely ask the planning service to arrive at planning solutions. Instead a partnership approach may be more appropriate. For example, the council has set up Partnership Board to look at housing for older people involving representatives of the council, BDHT and the county council. This is a useful model to consider. Different organisational perspectives; demographic and geographic data projections; projected care needs etc. will be best understood by involving principal partners, including Primary Care Trust (PCT), Social Care, Age Concern etc. Such partnerships are well placed to arrive at a collective understanding and ownership of the issue and its resolution. It is at this point to then ask planning how it might contribute towards this.

# Innovation, learning and excellence

## Strengths

- ✓ DC staff run regular training sessions for members covering areas such as General Permitted Development and probity
- ✓ Planners have supported the council in achieving level 3 of the Equality Framework for local government
- ✓ The council/service has been exposed to external support through voluntary engagement with CLG, IDeA and other local authorities = support and challenge

## Areas for consideration

- The planning service needs to be supported to assume an more enabling and politically aware role
- S106 work will need skills/expertise to maximise benefits for the council
- Members should take advantage of the 1 hour slot allocated prior to Planning Committee
- Learning from customer engagement e.g. answers to complaint letters are reportedly not always satisfactory and lead to further complaints
- Improved consultation arrangements Parish councils to better in participate in the planning process
- Progress could be made on peripheral, short-term improvement work in the town centre prior to the adoption of the AAP

54. The council's Management Development Strategy (2006) commits management development to, "...deliver service improvement by creating a knowledgeable and highly skilled management team..." This is reinforced by the Modern Manager Framework that sets standards for managerial performance.

55. Training provision seems well developed for officers and members. Members confirmed they are happy with the training received to date and that this is making them more informed on planning matters. Recent training has been run in-house by staff for members. The CAPS Uniform system has recently been introduced and all staff have received training on this. The council has supported staff training at the University of Central England (UCE) and continuing professional development (CPD) via County and Districts Planning Officers Group (CADPOG).

56. Personal development reviews (PDRs) are undertaken every six months for staff and form an integral part of the business system by assessing work loads, performance against targets and identifying training needs. Following PDR interviews a training and development plan is produced. Most of the staff we talked to could identify the 'golden thread' in

understanding how their specific role and objectives contribute to the service plan and up through to the SCS and Council Plan.

57. There is currently no planning enforcement expertise in the council's legal team. The new enforcement officer is in the process of putting together a formal procedure pack with the aim of providing a legal framework. This will help to speed up the enforcement process and provide officers with clarity. A draft Enforcement Policy has been prepared. Members are keen to see enforcement available to the planning service. The council are recommended to establish the above arrangements and monitor their application. In view of member concern on enforcement it may be worth reporting to CMT and cabinet.
58. Equalities represent one of the council's four key values. Planning was commended by internal colleagues as actively supporting equality and diversity. The council has achieved Level 3 of the Equality Framework for local government in April 2009 and is working with other councils in Worcestershire on this. The newly designed, more accessible website content management system (Ameda C) has been implemented which improves website use but also gathers user feedback for continuing design and development. The location of the new Customer Service Centre offers easier customer access to the planning service.
59. The council acknowledges that it used to be inward looking but this has changed and it is receptive to the opportunities of support, learning and challenge from other organisations. When in voluntary engagement the CLG lead was permanently located within the authority. The council invited a team from Walsall to act as a critical friend in 2006. The IDeA has been involved in providing a range of improvement support, including a peer review of customer services. The council has wholeheartedly engaged with partnership working through the LSP and LAA formal arrangements and on areas of importance, for example Longbridge and the town centre development.
60. Planners are perceived in some quarters as not being innovative and being risk averse. This view was expressed by members, officers and one developer. Members have described the system as an "obstacle course" put in the way of development. An example offered was the case of Mouldsley Hall old peoples' home development where applications were repeatedly refused. The perception was that planners were determinedly not allowing development that, through persistence, was eventually approved. This point relates to those made in paragraphs 37, 48 and 51 above and points to cultural issues that need to be addressed. These negative perceptions are being reinforced over time, with planning staff describing a "heads down" bunker outlook.
61. The view was expressed that the council had not been successful in obtaining the most gain from developers in S106 negotiations. This is an area of expertise often missing in councils and with the prospect of housing moratorium coming to an end it may be worth considering the appointment (perhaps shared with Redditch) of a designated Planning Obligations S106 officer with negotiation experience. A view was

expressed to the team that the council had not been good at publishing information about how the S106 monies are spent. It may be worth the council considering a publicly available system to provide information on S106 funded schemes.

62. The council has recently introduced a one hour time slot before Planning Committee for members to discuss planning issues with officers. Unfortunately so far no members have taken up this offer. This is a good opportunity to clear matters before going into a public arena and can be valuable preparation for the smoother running of a planning committee. The peer review team recommend that members be encouraged by the chief executive, executive director and Leader of council to attend these sessions. Further support might come from group leaders, the portfolio holder and the chair of planning committee.
63. Comments were made to the review team that responses to complaint letters are not satisfactory and provoke further complaints. One comment made was that the handling of complaints was managed in a "high handed" manner and that the service should show more customer sensitivity. The review team have no evidence to confirm or deny this but it may be an area for further consideration.
64. The review team were told that there was a lack of formal training given to parish councils on the online planning system. The online consultation process was felt not to be user friendly and parish councillors, who are required to comment on multiple applications and plans, found it frustrating having to re-enter their contact details for each submission. Further discussions with parish councils on training support would go some way to maintaining good relations.
65. Peripheral works for the town centre, such as replacement of paving and street furniture, have been suggested by a number of sources, including Worcestershire County Council, pending the commencement of full scale redevelopment. This would provide a 'quick win' for members and members of the public following the stalling of the town centre development and listing of Parkside School.

## Shared knowledge and evidence

### Strengths

- ✓ Strategic Housing Market Assessment provides comprehensive picture of housing needs in the sub regional context
- ✓ SCS and Council Plan are underpinned by the Bromsgrove profile
- ✓ SHLAA in place, AMR published annually
- ✓ Exploring potential for joint planning documents with Redditch

### Areas for consideration

- Sharing of joint studies with other local government partners
- More systematic way of gathering learning so that it can be shared across the organisation

66. The Strategic Housing Market Assessments are a positive step to providing the council with an understanding of housing need and the location for this. The council is committed to ensuring the HMAs are kept up to date and they will be invaluable for the Core Strategy and the council's Housing Strategy.

67. The council's Sustainable Community Strategy and Council Plan are directly linked to the spatial planning vision set out in the draft Core Strategy. The strength of these key strategies is confirmed by the Audit Commission in the CPA report stating that, "Community ambitions link well with and support county wide ambitions."

68. The Strategic Housing Land Availability Assessment (SHLAA) has been completed (April 2009) and identifies potential areas for future housing development. [Local authorities are required to identify broad locations and specific sites that will enable continuous delivery of housing for at least 15 years from the date of adoption of the LDF. Authorities are expected to provide this robust information in the form of a SHLAA, which will form a key component of the LDF evidence base. This evidence is needed to help support the delivery of sufficient land for housing to meet district housing requirements, as determined by the RSS. This will be important for ongoing development of the Core Strategy and local discussions with residents, landowners and developers.] The RSS Phase Two Revision (September 2009) may mean the council has to review the SHLAA in view of changing housing numbers.

69. Working relations have already been established with Redditch Borough Council from the LDF preparations and responses to the RSS. This has been consolidated by the shared chief executive arrangements. This provides a platform for further joint service working and developing joint planning documents.

70. There are also important opportunities to share in the cost of joint studies with other local government partners such as the county council, neighbouring district councils, the Regional Improvement and Efficiency Partnership and the Regional Development Agency (Advantage West Midlands) on matters such as economic development, development economics and the development and assessment of alternative sites for development. This could also include specific subject areas such as the SHLAA (see paragraph 66 above), a Strategic Flood Risk Assessment, and Employment Land Review etc.
71. This report has acknowledged the improvement progress made by the council in a short time. The priorities of improvement suggest to the review team that there has been less work conducted to systematically gather learning so that it can be shared across the organisation. While this is entirely understandable given the priorities of the council it is recommended that for the next phase of improvement that attention is given to this.

## Contact details

For further information concerning the peer review of planning in Bromsgrove District Council please contact Andrew Winfield, the IDeA's peer review manager:

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More information on peer reviews and the work of the Improvement and Development Agency and Planning Advisory Service please visit [www.idea.gov.uk](http://www.idea.gov.uk) or [www.pas.gov.uk](http://www.pas.gov.uk).

If you would like to receive this report in large print, Braille or another format please email [guy.head@idea.gov.uk](mailto:guy.head@idea.gov.uk)

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**July 2010 Position Statement and Action Plan from October 2009 Spatial Planning Peer Review**

Key Recommendation	Officer Comments	Suggested Actions	Who is Responsible	Timescale	Challenge
<p>The recommendations of the peer review team are set out under the headings of the benchmark for the 'ideal' authority. The peer review team recommends that the Council:</p> <p><b>Achieving outcomes</b></p> <p>i. Considers this report with a view to making the planning service one which is overtly supportive of and key to delivery of the council's objectives</p>	<p>Officer agree</p>	<p>Remind officers of the importance in the role of Planning Services in the delivery of Council objectives to include reminder from HoS that Planning policy prep. and the D.C. process are key tools for implementing the Council Plan and Sustainability Community Strategy</p> <p>Alterations to format of Planning Committee reports so that, where applicable, the proposal is presented in the context of the Council Plan or Sustainable Community strategy (SCS)</p> <p>Ensure synergies between SCS vision and objectives and those of</p>	<p>Ruth Bamford</p>	<p>HoS to meet with Director</p>	

		emerging planning policy		of Policy, Performance and Partnerships quarterly		
ii.	Formally lifts the housing moratorium based on the RSS Phase Two Revision figures and the recent experience of successful planning appeals and Ombudsman report findings against the council	Officers agreed and this has already been achieved via Report to LDF working Party, delivered on the 15 <sup>th</sup> April 2010	N/A	Mike Dunphy	N/A	
iii.	Develops a policy position for the development of larger sites on the edge of Bromsgrove Areas of Development Restraint (ADR), which would permit a mix of housing including affordable housing and other uses located in the most sustainable locations [The Advisory Team for Large Applications (ATLAS) has been engaged by the council, since the peer review, to assist on strategic site allocations.]	The revocation of the RSS has created huge uncertainty in the planning system, particularly with regard to housing targets and the current policy position on ADRs. Officers currently continuing with work to justify site allocations in preparation for the imposition of a new planning system.	Ensure Council engages fully in consultation processes of new planning legislation.  Publish policy position for ADRs in Draft Core Strategy.	Mike Dunphy  Mike Dunphy	TBC  November 2010	To influence the content of the new planning system  To ensure development of the ADRs benefits the district as much as possible
iv.	Produce a masterplan for designated ADR sites to encourage quality design and development on more sustainable sites	Indicative masterplans already prepared by developers; further advice to be sought from key stakeholders.	Consult urban designer on the content of the indicative masterplans, and if necessary commission independent master plan to be prepared.	Mike Dunphy	Draft Core Strategy 2 to be published in November for consultation	Ensure new developments are high quality and sustainable but also deliverable. New residential development needs to be delivered in order to begin to address

					the imbalance in the housing market	
v.	Develops Supplementary Planning Documents (SPDs) for planning obligations and affordable housing that clearly states council intentions for these areas	Affordable housing SPD prepared and consulted on although not adopted due to the consultation responses questioning the legitimacy of the SPD	Seek legal advice on the adoption of the affordable housing SPD and the creation of a planning obligations SPD ahead of core Strategy.  Supplement existing local plan policies.	Ruth Bamford Mike Dunphy	July 2010	To find a way to create new policy quickly to fill gaps and update old planning policies.
vi.	Undertakes an assessment, with Redditch, of the resources needed for both councils to work together to develop their Core Strategies for simultaneous submission	Initial work with RBC undertaken, however unclear at this stage if emerging planning system will require close working on planning policy with RBC	Through the Joint HoS both Councils will monitor the appropriateness of working together on planning policy preparation.	Ruth Bamford	Ongoing	To ensure the Core Strategy is found sound and approved by the Planning Inspectorate
<b>Integration and collaboration</b>						
vii.	Ensures the emerging Core Strategy incorporates a vision describing Bromsgrove and its role within the region	Core Strategy already contains a vision although not specific to region. Abolishment of regional planning likely to diminish importance of stating regional position.	Redraft Core Strategy vision, and ensure all Core Strategy policies clearly deliver this vision	Mike Dunphy	November 2010	To ensure the Core Strategy is found sound and approved by the Planning Inspectorate
viii.	Considers engagement with Birmingham City Council and Worcestershire County Council at strategic director level given the importance of the Longbridge and Bromsgrove town centre/railway station development for the council [Such engagement has commenced since the peer review.]	Engagement already implemented	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A

<p><b>Leading and engaging the community</b></p> <p>ix. Monitors the usage of the website and survey users to obtain feedback on the website 'useability' to inform future development</p>	<p>When Peer review visited (Oct 2009), changes had <u>just</u> been undertaken to website to reflect County-wide approach.</p>	<p>Planning and regeneration service to review structure and content of Webpages</p> <p>Work with Communications dept, ICT to set up user survey.</p> <p>Use website to advertise department more – explain our regulatory function and promote our achievements. (S106)</p>	<p>Helena Plant Dale Birch Mike Dunphy</p>	<p>Meeting in Quarter 2.</p> <p>Survey in Quarter 3.</p>	<p>Survey annually</p>
<p>x. Continues to monitor the Customer First priority. A good start has been made but for the planning service it is at an early stage. This should be regularly monitored and reviewed by the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Executive Director.</p>	<p>Since the peer review, Development Control has undertaken a customer satisfaction survey, and Strategic planning have completed their customer first action plan.</p>	<p>Implement Customer First Action Plan.</p> <p>Piggy back Agents' Forum idea in order to learn agents' views as customers.</p> <p>Improve qualitative rather than quantitative measures for customers.</p> <p>Explore training opportunities that may be available corporately for Customer actions in Regulatory environment may be available Corporately.</p>	<p>Helena Plant</p>	<p>Customer First Action Plan Q2. Hold Agents' forum end Q2.</p> <p>Liaise with Chairman and seek support from Legal Services</p> <p>Explore alternative measures of success</p>	<p>Seek to hold Agents' Forum quarterly</p>
<p>xi. Reviews the current member / office working arrangements so that members are able to</p>	<p>Officers agree that there is a need for good systems of working arrangements with</p>	<p>Introduce pre-app protocol to enable Members to be involved.</p>	<p>Helena Plant</p>	<p>Report to CMT and Cabinet Q3.</p>	

discharge their community leadership role, informed by professional officer advice	Members. Furthermore officers could review information that is available to Members and identify possible gaps and advise members of information availability	Maintain monthly meetings of HoS Portfolio holder and Leader  Officers to review information that is available to Members and identify possible gaps and advise members of information availability	Ruth Bamford		
<b>Management</b>					
xii. Produces a project plan (that is a revised Local Development Scheme - LDS) for the work needed to complete the Core Strategy by June/July 2010.	New LDS submitted prior to change of government, GOWM have confirmed timetable is acceptable	Prepare Core Strategy in line with published LDS	Mike Dunphy	Draft to be published November 2010	To ensure the Core Strategy is found sound and approved by the Planning Inspectorate
xiii. Develops planning resource capacity. These could include: moving to development management* and encouraging the resource flow from development control to policy planning and vice versa; and combining resources with Redditch, from secondments to joint investment in specialist resources e.g. urban design, planning obligation (S106) negotiations, joint planning arrangements and joint policies.  [*Development management (DM) constitutes the assessing and determining of applications more	Consideration of DM approach is included as Key Deliverable in Business Plan.  Work associated with this KD will underpin this benchmark.	Implement KD in service plan re. development management  Under current working arrangements for both Councils, HoS should encourage resource plan.	Ruth Bamford	Ongoing	

	strategically and moves away from a 'plan-led system'. DM is a change in planning culture - away from reactive control of development to a more positive and proactive role for planning.]					
xiv.	Addresses the practice within the council of attaching blame to the planning service. This practice needs to be carefully opened up by senior managers, with HR and possibly with external support, to fully understand the issues, how they came about and the actions needed to address these.	New HoS has not experienced planning service being blamed although has included actions to ensure it does not happen.	Maintain monthly meetings of HoS Portfolio holder and Leader  Introduce Members' involvement in pre-applications discussions  Planning reports altered to include SCS and corporate plan issues where applicable  Encourage early informal Member rapport with case officers / managers about planning applications	Ruth Bamford		
<b>Innovation, learning and excellence</b>						
xv.	Should ensure maximum gain from S106 negotiations from developers in the future development of ADRs. This could be assisted by considering the appointment of a specialist negotiating officer (perhaps shared with Redditch) or of buying in this expertise when required.	Legal Advice sought on ability to prepare planning obligations SPD. Planning officers have attended negotiation skills training.	To have appropriate planning policy in place to receive S106 obligations  Investigate appointment of specialist negotiator for significant planning applications	Ruth Bamford Mike Dunphy  Mike Dunphy Helena Plant Dale Birch	Subject to legal advice  As required	To ensure viable development takes place in difficult financial circumstances which contributes fully to the aims of the Council
xvi.	The Chief Executive, Executive	This is well promoted by	Promote pre committee	By officer	ASAP	To have good

<p>Director and Leader of Council actively encourage Members to attend the one hour time slot provided before Planning Committee for Members to discuss planning issues with officers</p>	<p>officers – need Members to understand the role of the pre-Committee meeting as an aid to focussed discussion.</p>	<p>site visits</p> <p>Actively encourage Chair to promote attendance before formal committee starts .</p> <p>Draw out examples from the meeting that could have been addressed at the pre-Committee meeting</p>	<p>leading site visits.</p> <p>Planning Chairman.</p> <p>Planning Chairman</p>		<p>attendance at this pre-meeting slot.</p>
<p><b>Shared knowledge and evidence</b></p> <p>xvii. Considers and develops opportunities for sharing the cost of joint studies with other local government partners in the region</p>	<p>Already happens to some extent (training shared with other LPA's) via groups such as DC Forum</p> <p>Joint Strategic Flood risk assessment commissioned for BDC and RBC</p> <p>BDC have worked closely with BCC on Longbridge APP for past 5 years sharing costs where necessary</p>	<p>When joint studies required – first consideration to be potential for sharing with local government partners</p>	<p>All to note.</p>	<p>When situation arises</p>	<p>To identify savings as a result.</p>
<p>xviii. Develop better ways to capture and transfer learning. This is so the council is able to identify good practice elsewhere, to understand how this is achieved and considers application in other service areas.</p>	<p>Officers do share knowledge informally in the office, but the process could be improved and formalised.</p>	<p>To provide a framework for understanding the characteristics of an excellent planning authority and to promote learning and implementation with officers and members</p>	<p>Ruth Bamford</p>		

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Appraisal

# BROMSGROVE TOWN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

CONSULTATION DRAFT  
NOVEMBER 2009



BROMSGROVE  
DISTRICT COUNCIL



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This is a consultation draft of the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area Character Appraisal. Comments are welcome and should be sent to the Strategic Planning Team, Bromsgrove District Council, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA. Email [conservation@bromsgrove.gov.uk](mailto:conservation@bromsgrove.gov.uk) or telephone 01527 881326



# 1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 *The purpose of a Conservation Area Character Appraisal is to identify the factors and features which make an area special, based on an in-depth assessment of an area's buildings, spaces, evolution and sense of place. This is the first step in developing a management plan for the continued preservation and enhancement of a Conservation Area. An appraisal evaluates the positive, neutral and negative features of the area and suggests opportunities for improvement. It is not unusual for the boundary of a Conservation Area to fluctuate over time as the area evolves, and an assessment of the current and potential boundaries is normally part of the appraisal process.*



1.2 *The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area was originally designated by Worcestershire County Council in 1968 containing "Area A High Street" and "Area B St John's". The boundary was extended in 1983 and again in 1989 to include the Spadesbourne Brook, the Strand, Crown Close, 9-15 New Road, 64-78 Worcester Road and Hanover Street. At some point the use of Areas A and B ceased and the area is formally designated as one complete Conservation Area.*



1.3 *This appraisal of the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area was carried out in July 2009 in accordance with the guidance given by English Heritage in their 'Guidance on Conservation Area Appraisals' publication. Although produced by the Council, local societies and residents will be encouraged to contribute to and comment on the draft document. This will result in a well rounded assessment of the area incorporating local knowledge, perceptions and suggestions.*



1.4 *The draft appraisal will be made available on the Council's website, in the local library, at the Customer Service centre in the Dolphin Centre and the Council House to ensure that it reaches a wide audience. There will also be a small exhibition in the main foyer of the local library to explain the purpose of the document and collect local comments.*





*Aerial view of Bromsgrove Town Centre*

## 2.0 PLANNING POLICY CONTEXT

*2.1 A Conservation Area is defined in the 1967 Civic Amenities Act as “an area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which it is desirable to preserve or enhance”. It is not the purpose of a Conservation Area to prevent development, but to manage change in a positive and proactive way that benefits current and future generations.*

*2.2 Conservation Area status means that a special form of Planning Permission called Conservation Area Consent is required for the total or substantial demolition of any building over 115m<sup>3</sup> in size, the demolition of a boundary wall over 1m in height next to the highway or 2m elsewhere and the removal of any agricultural building constructed before 1914. There is a general presumption against the loss of buildings which make a positive contribution to the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. Additional controls are also placed over trees within the area, meaning that an owner must submit a formal notification of works to the Council six weeks before starting work.*



2.3 *The primary legislation governing Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas is the Planning (Listed Buildings and Conservation Areas) Act 1990. This legislation includes certain statutory duties which the Council as Local Planning Authority must uphold. S69(1) of the Act requires Local Planning Authorities to designate any areas which they consider to be of special architectural or historic interest as Conservation Areas, and under s69(2) to review such designations from time to time. The Council has a further duty under s71(1) to formulate and prepare proposals for the preservation and enhancement of its Conservation Areas from time to time.*

2.4 *When assessing applications for development within designated Conservation Areas, the Local Planning Authority must pay special regard to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of the Conservation Areas under s72(1) of the Act. This does not mean that development will necessarily be opposed, only that this should not be detrimental to the special interest of the wider Conservation Area. Specific guidance relating to development within Conservation Areas can be found within PPG15 Planning and the Historic Environment or the draft replacement PPS which is currently out for consultation. Both these documents are published by the Department for Communities and Local Government, at national government level.*

2.5 *The Bromsgrove District Local Plan adopted in 2004 contains a series of specific policies relating to the historic environment (see Appendix 4). These policies help guide the Local Planning Authority when assessing planning applications, to ensure that new developments and alterations preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Conservation Area. The Council is also in the process of producing an Area Action Plan (AAP) for the town centre which will set out the Council objectives for housing, employment, transport, retail etc over the next 15-20 years. This Conservation Area Character Appraisal will form a key part of the evidence supporting the AAP.*





### 3.0 DEFINITION OF SPECIAL INTEREST

3.1 *The special interest of a Conservation Area is defined by more than its appearance and includes the atmosphere, texture, sense of place and setting as well as more obvious qualities such as groups of historic buildings. Notable buildings and the spaces between buildings set an overall context for an area, but a designated Conservation Area should be more than just a collection of attractive buildings.*



3.2 *The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area contains an assortment of notable historic buildings dating from predominantly the 18th and 19th centuries but with some earlier surviving timber framed buildings. A range of architectural styles is represented from English vernacular, to restrained Georgian and more elaborate Victorian Gothic buildings. This variety of elevational treatments and styles demonstrate high quality construction and craftsmanship, giving a rich texture to the town centre, and are tangible reminders of the town's past prosperity.*



3.3 *The narrowness of the historic building plots, varied rooflines and the overall height of the buildings give an overall impression of vertical emphasis, and a strong sense of enclosure. The more modern developments unfortunately detract from this being generally set back from the established building line, sometimes a storey lower and include detailing which gives a horizontal rather than vertical emphasis. These infill sites do at least give opportunities for redevelopment in the future without requiring the loss of more historic buildings.*



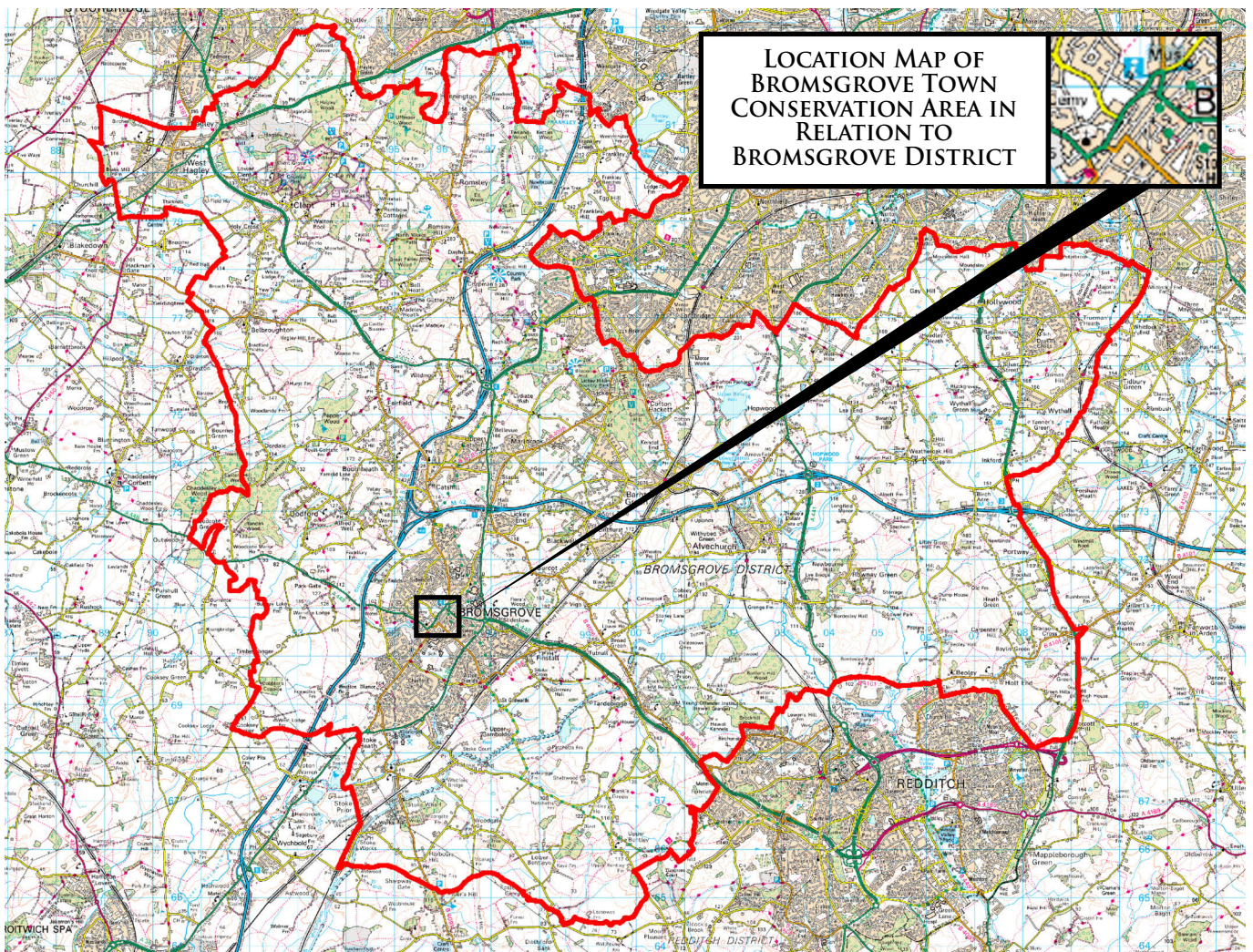


## 4.0 ASSESSMENT OF SPECIAL INTEREST

### 4.1 Location and Setting

*The Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area is located in the centre of the town, which itself lies in the South West of the District of Bromsgrove, approximately 15 miles South West of Birmingham and 15 miles North East of Worcester. The High Street follows the medieval plan comprising the main South-West/North-East route between Worcester and Birmingham. The Spadesbourne Brook defines the boundary to the West (although the more recently realigned Market Street is now the more obvious boundary) and the predominately 20th Century Windsor Street is the boundary to the East.*

*The medieval street pattern, including burgage plots and the Market Place (where the High Street is noticeably wider) are still visible, and define the later phases of expansion in the town centre.*



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## 4.2 Historic Development and Archaeology

The main axis of the town is the Roman Road between Droitwich and Wall, and Bromsgrove was probably the site of an Anglo Saxon Minster. A 'reeve' (an official elected annually by the serfs to supervise lands for a lord) and a 'beadle' (a parish constable of the Anglican Church often charged with duties of charity) are recorded as being employed in 1086 which indicates that Bromsgrove was an important Royal manor. The town of Bromsgrove developed in the second half of the 12th Century, with the right to have a weekly market being granted in 1200. The town would seem to have been very prosperous at this time, however this prosperity diminished shortly afterwards.



In 1533 records show that Bromsgrove had an established trade in narrow cloth and friezes, which thrived into the 18th century. From the 17th century the manufacture of nails became the predominant industry. Bromsgrove continued to flourish in the 19th century, with nail production and button making being the main industries. The Birmingham and Gloucester Railway Company's line from Cheltenham to Gloucester opened in 1840, and later that year the completion of the Lickey Incline Plane allowed the town to be connected to Birmingham by rail.



Historic maps taken from Council archives

The High Street and immediate vicinity clearly exhibit a number of medieval elements. The churchyard lies immediately to the West of the town on an area of raised ground overlooking the main road. This area may have been the site of an earlier Anglo Saxon Church, but the earliest remnants in the existing Church date from the 12th century. The street system in and around the High Street is very clearly medieval, consisting of the main South West/North East route between Worcester and Birmingham which is the High Street itself. From this road two roads go off to the West (Kidderminster Road and Stourbridge Road) and one to the East (Stratford Road). These roads are probably of medieval date along with Hanover Street and St John Street, which lead to the Church. The 1830 tithe map shows many small lanes leading from the High Street to the backs of burgage plots, many of which are medieval in origin, with narrow frontages to the High Street.



*The weekly market, originally granted in 1200, was likely to have been held in the wider part of the High Street, a common feature of medieval high streets. The street market was re-established in 2008, located along the High Street with occasional specialist farmers' and continental markets.*

### 4.3 Key Views

*The elongated pattern of development within the town centre means that it is not possible to view the Conservation Area in its entirety from any one point. Key views can be identified however within each character zone, and from outside the Conservation Area boundary through to the main retail areas (see Map 2). Views of the Grade I listed St John's Church are also possible from gaps between the buildings on Worcester Road and from the Market Place. Unfortunately, the poorly landscaped area on Mill Lane detracts from views through to the Spadesbourne Brook. The view from High Street to Market Place has been spoilt by the loss of the old Town Hall in the 1930s and its replacement with a bulky modern office building.*

### 4.4 Prevailing and Former Uses

*The original medieval burgage plots resulted in a number of narrow units, with significant ancillary accommodation to the rear, some now in unconnected uses. The rear workshops were originally part of the nailmaking industry in Bromsgrove. The upper floors of some buildings (particularly at the Southern end of the High Street) are relatively grand indicating that they were originally constructed as houses for wealthy merchants. Unfortunately many of the ground floors have been altered extensively and often unsympathetically to accommodate modern retail uses.*

*The buildings within the Bromsgrove Town Conservation Area are now predominately in retail use with a mixture of A1, A2, A3, A4 and A5 uses - traditional retail, financial institutions and some pubs and cafes. Some upper floors are in ancillary use, office space and storage; many others are vacant which has led to some condition and maintenance problems. Worcester Road is very much a secondary street to the High Street, with smaller local retail units.*



## 4.5 Character Zones

Although the area has an overall character as a complete Conservation Area, five main character zones can be identified.

Zone 1 is centred on *The Strand*, which is physically separated from the rest of the Conservation Area by the busy junction at Stratford Road. Zone 2 contains the primary shopping area along the High Street. Zone 3 stretches along Worcester Road from the junction with Market Place and has a tighter building line with narrower building plots than along High Street. (Zones 2 and 3 do blur together on the Eastern side of the High Street). Zone 4 is centred in and around St. John's Church and it is suggested that this should be re-designated as a separate Conservation Area. Finally Zone 5 is the two small areas to the East of Windsor Street on Chapel Street and New Road.

Some examples of key buildings are identified in the assessment of each character zone and also in Map 2 attached as an appendix. It should be made clear that this is not a definitive list and as trends in conservation change some buildings which are now identified as having a neutral or negative impact could be more valued in the future. The identification of specific buildings in this document will not prejudice the determination of an application for Conservation Area Consent or redevelopment by the Local Planning Authority.

## 4.6 Architectural Character and Key Buildings

### Zone 1: *The Strand* Architectural Character

This character zone terminates the Conservation Area boundary and is notable in views through and into the wider Conservation Area, contributing to its setting. The buildings around *The Strand* are almost all historic and date from the 18th and 19th centuries with various later additions and alterations. The varied roofline and use of dormer windows adds interest to this group of notable historic buildings, many of which retain their original timber sliding sash windows.





Unfortunately the road layout has undermined this group value significantly although the retention of the island containing the Grade II listed building, adds some coherence and connection between the two sides of the Strand. The small public space created in front of 2 Stourbridge Road with the reinstated 'Sanders Horse Trough' is underused because of the lack of pedestrian links and unattractive position in the centre of a busy road. Overall this section of the Conservation Area is unfriendly to pedestrians. Improvements to the pavement widths, parking layout, road markings and surface materials would soften the appearance and enhance the setting of the surrounding historic buildings.

Proliferation of signage is also a problem in this part of the Conservation Area, particularly on the corner of Stratford Road, and a balance needs to be sought to adequately advertise retail businesses on the edge of the town centre with preserving the character and appearance of the Conservation Area.

### Zone 1: The Strand Key Buildings

The Queens Head PH is Grade II listed and dates from the early 19th century with a later extension to left hand side. The central stone doorcase with pediment and carved woman's head are interesting features at ground floor level with recessed 10 pane sliding sashes above with rather heavy rusticated lintels. The row of buildings next to the Queens Head (beyond the 1970s pastiche infills) at No. 25-27 The Strand are also Grade II listed, and were once timber framed but have been now re-fronted in red brick. Remnants of the timber frame have been found at the former Mitre Inn, a 19th century cider house which has now been converted to offices.

2 Stourbridge Road, in an island in the centre of the Strand, is now the offices of Thomas Horton but was originally built in 1701 as a gentleman's residence known as Cock Hall. In 1723 the building became the town's first workhouse and then a tannery - possibly the reason why this part of the town was once known as Rotten Row. The horse trough in front of the building was recently reinstated to its original position, after several years in Sanders Park.





*On the other side of The Strand is a range of listed and unlisted historic buildings dating from the 18th, 19th and 20th centuries, unfortunately let down by the blank frontage to No's 22-24 and poor quality signage to the retail units. The Grade II listed building at No's 6 to 12 The Strand dates from the 18th century with added Victorian dormers and surviving timber sliding sash windows. The adjacent building at No's 2 to 4 The Strand (now the Strand Centre) is a 20th century mock classical building, which wraps around the corner into Stratford Road terminating views out of the High Street.*



*Further past The Strand facing onto Birmingham Road is the former Town Museum and the Grade II listed building at No. 28 which is now a dentist's surgery. The Museum closed earlier this year and a new use for the building has yet to be found. This area was looked at for removal from the Conservation Area boundary, but discounted as there is still a historic connection with The Strand.*

## **Zone 2: High Street**

### **Architectural Character**

*Many of the High Street buildings are of extremely good architectural quality with a high number of statutorily listed buildings and an equally significant number of unlisted buildings that make a positive contribution to the Conservation Area. Although this quality is rarely evident at ground floor level, it is still evident when looking at the upper floors.*



*Several historic styles and periods are represented in this part of the Conservation Area. The oldest buildings date from the 17th Century and are timber framed, some of which have been re-fronted at a later date - but evidence of the earlier structure remains internally or to the rear. There are numerous good examples of later periods of architecture such as Georgian, Victorian and Edwardian. There are also a significant number of vernacular buildings characterised by being two or three stories high, the upper storey comprising an attic space with a dormer window.*



*From the rear of the High Street evidence of the original burgage plots can be seen in various places. Backland redevelopment has destroyed many of these plots, and where there has been significant redevelopment on the High Street several plots have been completely lost. The modern buildings present generally do not make a positive contribution to the High Street. On the East side the building line has been set back, probably to achieve a road widening scheme prior to the pedestrianisation of the High Street. No's 62 to 68 High Street is a typical 1950's scheme that can be described as having a neutral impact on the High Street. Other poor modern developments have been added around Mill Lane and at the North East end of the High Street.*



*Apart from the disruption noted above, the building line is generally consistent along the High Street, widening out at the St John's Street/Market Place end. Buildings are also of a generally consistent height being largely 3 storeys but there are several examples of ground floors with a first floor and attic, with a dormer window. There are rare examples of older two storey buildings as most of the two storey buildings are modern.*



## **Zone 2: High Street**

### **Key Buildings**

*The High Street character zone contains a high number of notable listed and unlisted historic buildings. 126-130 High Street (Grade II listed) was built in 1851 in blue brick with pale buff diaper pattern brickwork, tiled roof and stone mullioned windows. The timber bargeboards have both trefoil and quatrefoils patterns, and add significant interest to the upper level of the building. 120 High Street (Grade II listed) is an 18th century building in the Georgian style with a low pitched pediment, moulded cornice and camber headed dormers. The ground floor has unfortunately been compromised by the addition of a modern shopfront which is not in keeping with the character of the building*



*The Lloyds TSB Bank at 112 High Street (Grade II listed) dates from the early 19th century and is in a Regency style with classical stone portico and Doric columns. This building forms a key group with No's 104-112 High Street including the timber framed 16th century building at No's 108-110 High Street. This was constructed in 1533 and is the oldest building in the Conservation Area, although it has some later 19th century alterations including the shopfronts. This building was once the Unicorn Inn and the horn details can still be seen on the gables now adorned by Victorian bargeboards*



Opposite the bank is a fine collection of 18th and 19th century buildings which have significant group value as well as being individually Grade II listed. The Red Lion PH at No.77 includes what was once the Roper Nail Warehouse to the rear, which originally formed part of a historic courtyard bordered by nail workers' cottages.



The timber framed former Hop Pole Inn on New Road (Grade II listed) now known as Tudor House, was originally built in the High Street in 1572 but was later dismantled and relocated to this site in 1865. The upper floors retain the original framing with central jettied gable and carved bargeboards, but various features were added upon its reconstruction including the Gothic style porch and the chimneys.



The Golden Cross, 20 High Street (unlisted) was originally a 19th century coaching inn, but was substantially rebuilt in 1932. The brass menu holders on the front elevation were designed by the Bromsgrove Guild.

1 High Street (Grade II listed) dates from the early 17th century, as evident in its fine timber framing with fleur-de-lis motifs, but has been altered throughout the 19th and 20th centuries. The shopfront is particularly unsympathetic and the building's new position adjacent to a major road junction has seriously compromised its setting.



### Zone 3: Worcester Road Architectural Character

The High Street character zone contains a high number of Worcester Road is a continuation of the High Street running South West, after Market Place/St John Street. The West side of Worcester Road is predominately Victorian with mainly three storey buildings of brick construction beneath pitched tiled roofs. There are some simple decorative details to the windows, including some projecting first floor bay windows. Ground floors are predominantly retail including takeaway restaurants, whilst the upper floors are mostly used for storage or vacant.





The poor quality 1950's building on the corner of Worcester Road and St John's Street is highly visible given the prominent location where the High Street is at its widest, and where it turns the corner into St John's Street. To the East side of Worcester Road is a mix of older listed buildings, unlisted Victorian buildings (similar to those on the West side) the 'Lurve' nightclub and a Hyundai Garage. Overall the feel of Worcester Road is very much of a secondary/tertiary commercial street, but with the potential to be improved. There are various important views here through to the Market Hall Site and the St John's Church beyond.



It is proposed that No's 57-63 and 85-87 Worcester Road (odd) including Bromsgrove School, No's 62-78 Worcester Road (even), No's 1-3 Hanover Street and No's 1-12 Hanover Place be omitted from the Conservation Area boundary. Apart from a few listed buildings, the rest of the properties at this far end of the Conservation Area are of limited architectural quality having been extensively altered and make no contribution to the special interest of the wider area. This part of the Conservation Area has also been severed visually by the addition of the main road junction at Hanover Place, providing an obvious end stop to a revised Conservation Area boundary.



### Zone 3: Worcester Road

#### Key Buildings

There are only a few listed buildings in this part of the Conservation Area, interspersed with attractive unlisted historic buildings and some more neutral additions.

No.7 Worcester Road is Grade II\* listed and forms a notable group with 3 and 5 Worcester Road which are Grade II listed. No.7 is now known as Kembrey House and converted to offices. The building dates from the late 18th century and has interesting curved windowheads with fluted keystones and a pedimented doorpiece with Doric columns to the ground floor.



The group of unlisted buildings at No's 4 to 16 Worcester Road are mostly three storeys with a variety of architectural detailing at upper levels. Unfortunately the character of some of these buildings has been undermined by the poor quality shopfronts below, but they do retain sufficient architectural interest above ground floor to be worthy of retention.







No's 33, 35 and 37 Worcester Road are Grade II listed and date from the 18th century. The fine timber shopfronts date from the early 20th century and add interest to the wider streetscene. Consent has recently been granted to link No's 33 and 35 into one restaurant unit, preserving the external appearance of two individual units whilst bringing the building back into economic use.

The larger terrace of unlisted buildings towards the end of the Conservation Area have been harmed by the introduction of PVC windows to the upper floors and a series of inappropriate modern shopfronts and poor quality signage. There are a few surviving timber bay windows but these properties make a limited contribution to the character or appearance of the wider Conservation Area



#### Zone 4: St. John's

The area around St. John's Church has a distinct character from the rest of the town centre as well as being physically divorced from it by a busy road. It is therefore proposed that this character zone be re-designated as an independent Conservation Area, with its own separate appraisal document.





## Zone 5: New Road/Chapel Street

The two small areas around New Road and Chapel Street were considered for removal from the Conservation Area boundary but discounted as they do contain some interesting historic buildings. The area beyond Tudor House on New Road includes two detached Victorian villas which retain their original sliding sash windows. These properties could potentially be at risk of demolition if the conservation area protection was removed. On Chapel Street can be found two Grade II listed buildings - the Congregational Chapel and associated Sunday School plus an unlisted 19th century terrace unfortunately undermined by the addition of PVC windows. The Congregational Chapel dates from 1833 and is in the Greek Revival style with a stuccoed façade and large arched windows. The former Sunday School (now the United Reform Church Hall) was built in 1852 and is a single storey, red brick building with blue brick dressings and tall arched windows similar in style to the church windows.



### 4.7 Building Materials

The predominant building materials within the Conservation Area are red brick and clay tiles with a number of notable timber framed buildings – some with wattle and daub, some with brick infill panels. There are also a number of buildings to the rear of the High Street constructed in sandstone and a few painted brick buildings.



A large number of buildings have decorative detailing in stone including keystones, quoins and window detailing, notably on the high status buildings at the Market Place end of the High Street, but even the later Victorian buildings have stone cills and lintels to break up their elevations. There are some examples of decorative brickwork, notably the Slug and Lettuce PH which is constructed in blue brick with light brick polychromatic detailing (unusual for the area). The Lloyds Bank in the High Street makes use of sandstone but only in detailing, it is predominately red brick.



Window frames are generally timber. Some buildings have frames that are flush with the external brickwork, typical in early Georgian architecture. There are also examples of vernacular buildings with dormer windows in the attic space, as at 89 to 93 High Street.



Roofs are almost without exception covered in clay tiles and are steeply pitched; some of the Georgian buildings have parapets, whilst the more modern buildings are flat roofed.



## 4.8 Public Realm



The existing poor quality public realm affects both the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and detracts from its historic setting. At present there is a mix of brick paviors and concrete paving slabs throughout the Conservation Area and some oddly random strips of buff concrete paving. There is no obvious pattern or delineation between 'pavement' and 'road space', and a lack of maintenance has resulted in a rather shabby appearance. Vehicles still use the High Street for deliveries which has resulted in a proliferation of protective barriers and bollards, to the detriment of the wider streetscene.



The existing street furniture appears to be randomly located, with street signage, bins, seating and trees obscuring some of the possible views through the Conservation Area. Most of this was installed in 1905 and has been poorly maintained adding to the run down appearance of what should be an attractive retail area.

At intermittent intervals, particularly on the West side of the High Street, are alleyways of varying width leading to the rear of the buildings. This is a remnant of the historic burgage plots and courts to the rear of buildings once used as workshops etc. Some small areas of cobbles survive here and should be preserved as part of any future resurfacing project.



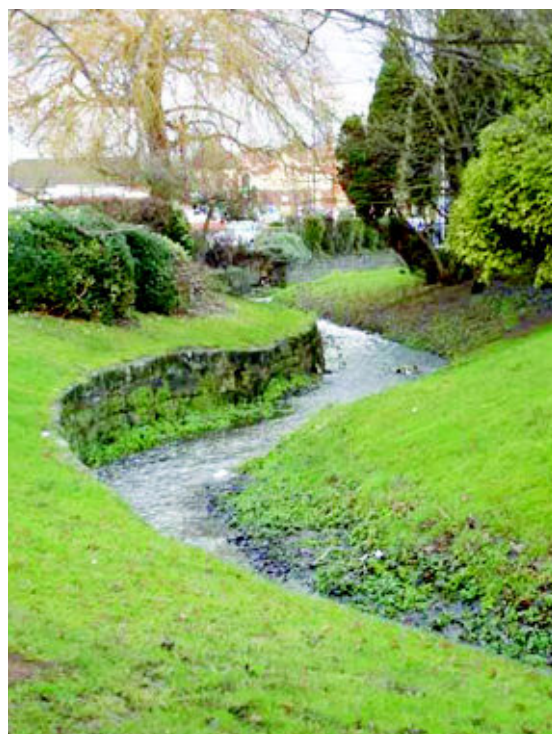
In general the public spaces within the Conservation Area have a tired feel that detracts from the appearance of the historic buildings. Changes to the basic surface material, the legibility and hierarchy of spaces, working with pedestrian desire lines rather than thwarting them as part of a wider 'wayfinding' strategy and removing traffic from the High Street would greatly enhance the Conservation Area.

## 4.9 Important Trees and Green Spaces

The Conservation Area only has one significant green space around the Bus Station area and the adjacent section running along Crown Close/Market Street to the Market Place junction. Whilst this area is of considerable amenity value relative to the built environment of the rest of the town centre, the effect is reduced considerably at times due to the close proximity of the busy traffic running along Market Street and the considerable noise and dust that results.

The Spadesbourne Brook runs along the whole length of the Conservation Area from the rear of properties on The Strand down to Hanover Street in the South-East. The larger part of the brook course has been heavily canalised and culverted with several sections disappearing completely. Despite this, the brook still retains considerable value for biodiversity and provides an essential wildlife corridor through the town centre for a number of species including Brown Trout and Water Voles, both of which have been recorded where the course passes through the Bus Station site.

Only about 10% of the channel within the Conservation Area is naturalized and of both wildlife and amenity value. 30% of the course is hidden within closed culverts beneath roads & buildings and 60% in steep sided canal sections providing little opportunity for wildlife habitat other than that 'passing through'. Within this, the naturalized area at the Bus Station site provides an important 'stepping stone' for wildlife using the corridor but this 1km section still forms fairly hostile territory for most species. Naturalization of additional sections of the brook course would greatly improve this situation and increase the biodiversity value both locally and for wildlife habitats further up and down the brook. In particular, aiding and allowing Water Vole colonies to intermix can be a vital factor in their survival.







Three other areas within the Conservation Area boundary are notable for their amenity value as a result of their possession of both some tree cover together with seating areas. These are the area adjacent to Strand House and Cupitts Jewellers, a small area on the corner of Market Place and Market Street, and the High Street itself. At the two sites at The Strand and the Market Place, the presence of large mature trees provides a contrast with the built environment and a shading and cooling effect on hot summer days. The trees also contribute significantly to improved local air quality. The amenity of all three sites suffers considerably however, from traffic noise & dust as a result of their close proximity to major roads through the town centre.



Along the High Street itself, a number of trees have been planted over the last 30 years as part of past improvements. Although nearly 50% of those trees originally planted have been lost and not replaced, those that remain contribute to the amenity of the area by providing shading and improved air quality in summer, a medium for Christmas lights in winter, and visual amenity all year round. The current trees do cause a few problems, however, such as the obscuring of site lines for both amenity value and CCTV purposes, maintenance and issues of encroachment close to nearby buildings, and the effects of roots on paving and surfacing. For the most part, these problems are the consequence of poor planning, design and tree species selection in previous years which has resulted in incompatible positioning of trees, CCTV cameras and other street furniture. Unsuitable positioning and surfacing around trees has directly led to trees damaging paving and also tree loss. All of these problems can be reduced or avoided by correct selection, siting & design of new replacement trees.

## 4.10 General Condition of the Area and Buildings

*There are 2 buildings in the Conservation Area which could be classified as 'at risk', 22-24 High Street and 73-75 High Street and generally the condition of the historic buildings in the area can be described as fair to good. The main condition issues arise from the disuse of upper floors leading to deterioration of windows, rainwater goods and roof materials.*

*The condition of the area as a whole as previously discussed is let down by the poor quality and ill maintained public realm.*



## 4.11 Challenges and Opportunities

*The main challenge facing the Conservation Area is the continuing deterioration of the public realm, which has had a consequential impact on the retail offer within the Town Centre. Local users and visitors expect an attractive wandering space coupled with a varied high quality retail mix - neither of which Bromsgrove is currently providing. The negative perceptions of the town centre as a run down, unattractive place to visit must be addressed if Bromsgrove is to compete with surrounding market towns in the future.*



*The groundscape requires to be completely reconsidered and a homogeneous scheme conceived. As part of this the street furniture should also be rethought, removing excessive visual clutter, and grouping bins, seating, telephone booths etc in a more considered way. As a minimum the removal of some of the redundant poles for CCTV and unnecessary signage to reduce street clutter should be undertaken - this would require minimal expenditure. A more comprehensive public realm improvement programme would be required to have a more dramatic impact on the atmosphere of the town centre, possibly funded through a Townscape Heritage Initiative.*







*The challenge of improving the quality of the shopfronts and signage should be addressed in conjunction with improvements to the public realm. This would require a tighter adherence to the Council's adopted guidance on shopfronts - raising the bar on the quality of works expected. The designation of an area of special advertisement control should also be explored to remove permitted rights for any signage in certain parts of the Conservation Area. Most of the modern shopfronts bear little relationship to the historic buildings above, and a lack of consistency in style, proportions of signage, materials and colour schemes is evident. Few historic shopfronts survive and the possibility of offering grants for their repair should also be explored.*



*The number of infill modern developments in the town provides an opportunity for redevelopment without sacrificing any surviving important historic buildings. For example, the 1970s retail development around Mill Lane, the block on the East side of the High Street at the junction with Stratford Road, and 80-102 High Street which are all of a poor architectural quality. The redevelopment of the Market Hall site, although outside the Conservation Area, could set the tone for high quality contemporary design which complements the wider historic context of Bromsgrove.*

## 5.0 CONSERVATION AREA BOUNDARY



*The proposed revised boundary for the Town Centre Conservation Area removes the area west of Worcester Road beyond Hanover Street as this area has a limited relationship with the rest of the town centre and all the valuable historic buildings are already listed. It is also proposed that the St. Johns area be redesignated as an individual conservation area, in recognition of its unique and distinctive character and physical severance from the rest of the town centre.*

*Map 1 showing the areas to be removed from the boundary of the Conservation Area is included as an appendix to this report.*

## 6.0 MANAGEMENT PROPOSALS

*Appendix 3 includes a draft management plan for the area. This is not an absolute list but outlines the main issues which need to be addressed and possible tasks and timescales. It should be made clear that the Council cannot give a definite commitment to undertake these tasks, which will ultimately depend on future financial and staff resources.*

*The main management issues which need to be addressed are:*

- *Quality of the public realm*
- *Quality of shopfronts and signage*
- *Effective maintenance of historic buildings*
- *The increasing number of vacant retail units*
- *Vacant upper floors of historic buildings*
- *Advertising of the street market*
- *Marketing of the town's heritage*
- *Environmental improvements to Spadesbourne Brook*

*It is anticipated that the Council would explore partnership funding schemes with Worcestershire County Council, English Heritage or the Heritage Lottery Fund to pursue some of these issues and challenges in a coordinated way.*

## 7.0 PUBLIC CONSULTATION

*Before final publication this document will be subject to a six week public consultation period to gather views on the assessment of the area, the proposed boundary changes and the draft management plan. The comments received shall be summarised and included in the final document for public interest.*





A black and white photograph of a multi-story brick building facade. The building features several tall, narrow, double-hung windows with dark frames and white lintels. Ornate, dark-colored iron brackets are mounted on the brickwork between the windows. The perspective is from a low angle, looking up at the building. A black rectangular box is overlaid in the upper right corner, containing the word "APPENDICES" in white, serif, all-caps font.

# APPENDICES



# APPENDIX 1

## *List of properties within the revised Conservation Area Boundary*

*Davenal House Surgery, 28 Birmingham Road*  
*Former Bromsgrove Museum, Birmingham Road*  
*St. James Court, The Strand*  
*1-27 The Strand (odds)*  
*2-20 The Strand (evens)*  
*Strand House, 2 Stourbridge Road*  
*18-22 Market Street (evens)*  
*1-135 High Street (odds)*  
*2-140 High Street (evens)*  
*2-12 Mill Lane*  
*1-6 Chapel Street*  
*1-15 Church Street (odds)*  
*4-12 Church Street (evens)*  
*1,2,4,5,6 New Road*  
*Cleggs Entry (to rear of 15 High Street)*  
*2-6 Market Place*  
*1 George Street*  
*1-55 Worcester Road (odds)*  
*2-60 Worcester Road (evens)*

## APPENDIX 2

### *Listed buildings within the revised Conservation Area Boundary*

*1 High Street (Grade II)*  
*2 & 4 High Street (Grade II)*  
*7 & 9 High Street (Grade II)*  
*14 & 16 High Street (Grade II)*  
*18 High Street (Grade II)*  
*22 & 24 High Street (Grade II)*  
*25 & 27 High Street (Grade II)*  
*29 & 31 High Street (Grade II)*  
*33 & 35 High Street (Grade II)*  
*46 High Street (Grade II)*  
*47 High Street (Grade II)*  
*48 & 50 High Street (Grade II)*  
*49 High Street (Grade II)*  
*52 High Street (Grade II)*  
*67 High Street (Grade II)*  
*69 & 71 High Street (Grade II)*  
*Red Lion PH, 73 & 75 High Street (Grade II)*  
*85 High Street (Grade II)*  
*87a High Street (Grade II)*  
*89 High Street (Grade II)*  
*89a High Street (Grade II)*  
*91 & 93 High Street (Grade II)*  
*95 High Street (Grade II)*  
*104, 104a & 106 High Street (Grade II)*  
*108 & 110 High Street (Grade II)*  
*112 High Street (Grade II)*  
*120 High Street (Grade II)*  
*126-130 High Street (Grade II)*  
*1 & 3 New Road (Grade II)*  
*The Queens Head PH, 1 The Strand (Grade II)*  
*6 to 12 The Strand (Grade II) officially listed as*  
*146-148 High Street*  
*21 & 23 The Strand (Grade II) officially listed as*  
*141 & 143 High Street*  
*25 & 27 The Strand (Grade II) officially listed as*  
*145 & 145a High Street*  
*Strand House, 2 Stourbridge Road (Grade II)*  
*3 Worcester Road (Grade II)*  
*5 Worcester Road (Grade II)*  
*7 Worcester Road (Grade II\*)*  
*33, 35 & 37 Worcester Road (Grade II)*

## APPENDIX 3

### *Management and Enhancement Proposals*

Priority	Task	Timescale
<i>Public Realm Improvements</i>	<p><i>Better maintenance of existing street furniture</i></p> <p><i>Remove any redundant lighting/CCTV poles and signage</i></p> <p><i>Seek funding for wider public realm improvements through the Townscape Heritage Initiative (HLF)</i></p> <p><i>Develop a wayfinding or signage strategy to better address pedestrian needs and improve links to the train and bus stations</i></p>	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p> <p><i>To be confirmed with relevant authorities</i></p> <p><i>Deadline for application November 2010</i></p> <p><i>By end of 2010</i></p>
<i>Shopfront Improvements</i>	<p><i>Secure County Council grant funding for reinstatement of traditional shopfronts</i></p> <p><i>Apply for Partnership Schemes in Conservation Areas grant through English Heritage</i></p> <p><i>Investigate designation of area of special advertisement control</i></p> <p><i>Explore possibility of a local development order to allow easier changes of use</i></p> <p><i>Investigate any unauthorised shopfronts and signage, and take enforcement action where appropriate</i></p>	<p><i>By April 2010</i></p> <p><i>By April 2010</i></p> <p><i>By April 2010</i></p> <p><i>By April 2010</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing</i></p>
<i>Improve condition of historic buildings</i>	<p><i>Identify Buildings at Risk and develop a strategy for their repair</i></p>	<p><i>End of 2010</i></p>
<i>Improve retail offer</i>	<p><i>Work with owners of vacant retail units to find new tenants</i></p> <p><i>Investigate initiatives to make use of the upper floors such as 'Living Above the Shop', in conjunction with the Housing Section at BDC, or a local housing association.</i></p> <p><i>Update notice board at Mill Lane more regularly and provide information leaflets on market</i></p>	<p><i>Ongoing</i></p> <p><i>Investigate by April 2010 to introduce in next 12 months</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing</i></p>
<i>Improve marketing of Bromsgrove's heritage</i>	<p><i>Find new home for Tourist Information Centre</i></p> <p><i>Improve interpretation panels and reproduce town trail leaflets</i></p> <p><i>Take part in Heritage Open Days</i></p> <p><i>Foster better links with the Bromsgrove and Victorian Societies</i></p>	<p><i>To be investigated as part of the Town Centre AAP production</i></p> <p><i>Investigate by April 2010 to introduce in next 12 months</i></p> <p><i>September 2010</i></p> <p><i>Ongoing</i></p>
<i>Environmental Improvements to Spadesbourne Brook</i>	<p><i>Arrange volunteer clean up day - possibly linked with Youth Offending Service</i></p>	<p><i>By April 2010</i></p>

## APPENDIX 4

### *Bromsgrove District Local Plan - adopted January 2004*

- S20 Main Shopping Location*
- S23 Shopfront Enhancement*
- S24 Retention of Traditional Shopfronts*
- S24A Original Features on Shopfronts*
- S25 New Shopfronts*
- S26 Shopfront Fascias*
- S27 Standards of Fascia Design*
- S27A Projecting Signs*
- S27B Design and Materials within Conservation Areas*
- S35A Development in Conservation Areas*
- S36 Design of development within Conservation Areas*
- S37 Demolition in Conservation Areas*
- S39 Alterations to Listed Buildings*
- S39a Demolition of Listed Buildings*
- S41 Listed Buildings in Shopping Areas*
- S42 Shopfronts in Conservation Areas*
- S43 Traffic Calming Schemes*
- S44 Reinstatement of Features in Conservation Areas*
- S45 Improvements to Conservation Areas*
- S46 Areas of Special Advertisement Control*
- S47 Advertisement Control*
- C17 Retention of existing trees*
- C19 Tree Preservation Orders*
- C36 Preservation of Archaeological Resources*
- C37 Excavation around Archaeological Remains*
- C38 Development Criteria for Archaeological Sites*
- C39 Site access for Archaeologists*
- E4 Extension to existing Commercial Uses*
- E9 Criteria for New Employment Development*
- E10 Retail or Recreational Uses on Employment Land*
- RAT4 Retention of Open Space*
- RAT33 Visitor Facilities*
- ES2 Restrictions on Development where Risk of Flooding*
- ES11 Energy Efficiency in Buildings*

### *Worcestershire County Structure Plan*

- CTC.5 Trees and Woodlands*
- CTC.6 Green Open Spaces and Corridors*
- CTC.8 Flood Risk and Surface Water Drainage*
- CTC.17 Archaeological Sites of Regional or Local Importance*
- CTC.18 Enhancement and Management of Archaeological Sites*
- CTC.19 Areas and Features of Historic and Architectural  
Significance*
- CTC.20 Conservation Areas*
- CTC.21 Reuse and Conversion of Buildings*
- D13 Mixed Use Developments*
- D26 Office Development*
- D31 Retail Hierarchy*
- D43 Crime Prevention and Community Safety*

## APPENDIX 5

### Glossary

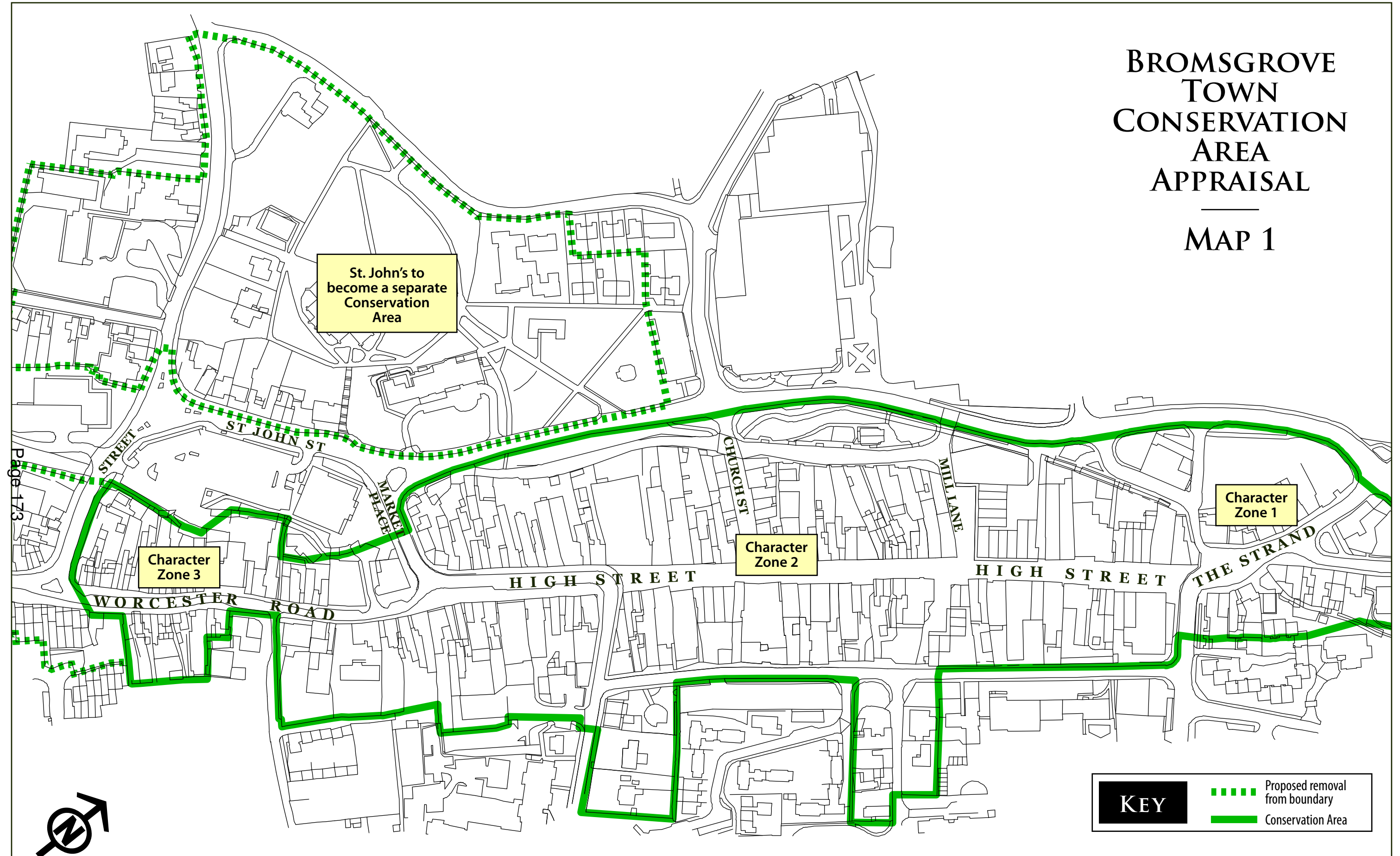
<i>Listed Building</i>	<i>A building of special architectural or historic interest included on a national register. English Heritage is responsible for adding new entries to the statutory list.</i>
<i>Conservation Area</i>	<i>An area of special architectural or historic interest, the character or appearance of which, it is desirable to preserve or enhance. Local authorities are responsible for designating new Conservation Areas.</i>
<i>Bargeboards</i>	<i>An angled decorative timber board at eaves level (see Slug and Lettuce, 126-130 High Street)</i>
<i>Burgage plot</i>	<i>A medieval term describing a long strip of land, with the narrowest section facing the street</i>
<i>Camber headed</i>	<i>A slightly curved window head</i>
<i>Canalized</i>	<i>Contained with artificial man-made sides</i>
<i>Classical</i>	<i>An architectural style from ancient Rome and Greece, revived in the Georgian period. Detailing is simple and refined with columns, moulded doorcases and sash windows. (see Davenal House, 28 Birmingham Road)</i>
<i>Cornice</i>	<i>Projecting moulding often found at eaves level, or as part of a pediment</i>
<i>Culvert</i>	<i>A man-made channel beneath a road or building</i>
<i>Diaper pattern</i>	<i>Repetitive decorative arrangement of bricks, often in diamond shapes or squares.</i>
<i>Doorcase</i>	<i>A moulded case or frame lining a doorway</i>
<i>Doric columns</i>	<i>The plainest of the three types of columns found in classical architecture, with simple vertical flutes and an unornamented capital. (The three types are Doric, Ionic and Corinthian)</i>
<i>Dormer</i>	<i>A window projecting from the roof (see 33-37 Worcester Road)</i>
<i>Edwardian</i>	<i>Dates from 1901-1910</i>
<i>Fleur-de-lis</i>	<i>A stylised lily with three pointed leaves (see 1 High Street)</i>
<i>Georgian</i>	<i>Dates from 1714-1830</i>
<i>Gothic</i>	<i>An architectural style from 12th to 16th centuries but revived in the late Victorian period. Typical details include elaborate tracery, heavily mullioned windows and pointed arches.</i>
<i>Jettied gable</i>	<i>Projecting upper storey overhanging the lower floors, often a feature of timber framed buildings (see former Hop Pole Inn, New Road)</i>
<i>Keystones</i>	<i>A wedge shaped block found at the centre of an arch (see 120 High Street)</i>

## *Glossary continued*

<i>Medieval</i>	<i>Dates from 950-1547</i>
<i>Mullioned windows</i>	<i>Vertical posts separating the sections of a window, usually in stone or timber</i>
<i>Naturalize</i>	<i>Make more natural</i>
<i>Pediment</i>	<i>Low pitched moulded triangle often found over doorways or windows and at roof level. (see Strand Centre, 14-18 The Strand)</i>
<i>Polychromatic brickwork</i>	<i>A feature of Victorian Gothic architecture, using a variety of alternating colours of brickwork</i>
<i>Portico</i>	<i>A feature of classical architecture, moulded projecting hood on supporting columns to form an open sided porch (see Lloyds TSB Bank, 112 High Street)</i>
<i>Quatrefoil</i>	<i>A tracery detail in the shape of a flower with four lobes separated by cusps. A trefoil has three lobes.</i>
<i>Quoins</i>	<i>Angular often slightly raised stones added to the corner of a building (see 18 High Street)</i>
<i>Regency</i>	<i>Dates from 1810-1820</i>
<i>Rusticated</i>	<i>Roughened texture added to stonework with sunken joints (see The Queens Head PH, The Strand)</i>
<i>Stucco</i>	<i>An external plaster finish, often finely textured</i>
<i>Tannery</i>	<i>A building where animal skin and hide is tanned</i>
<i>Victorian</i>	<i>Dates from 1837-1901</i>
<i>Wattle and daub</i>	<i>Sticks and twigs interwoven to form a panel packed with plaster and then limewashed. Commonly found in timber framed or thatched buildings.</i>

# BROMSGROVE TOWN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

## MAP 1





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Map not to scale

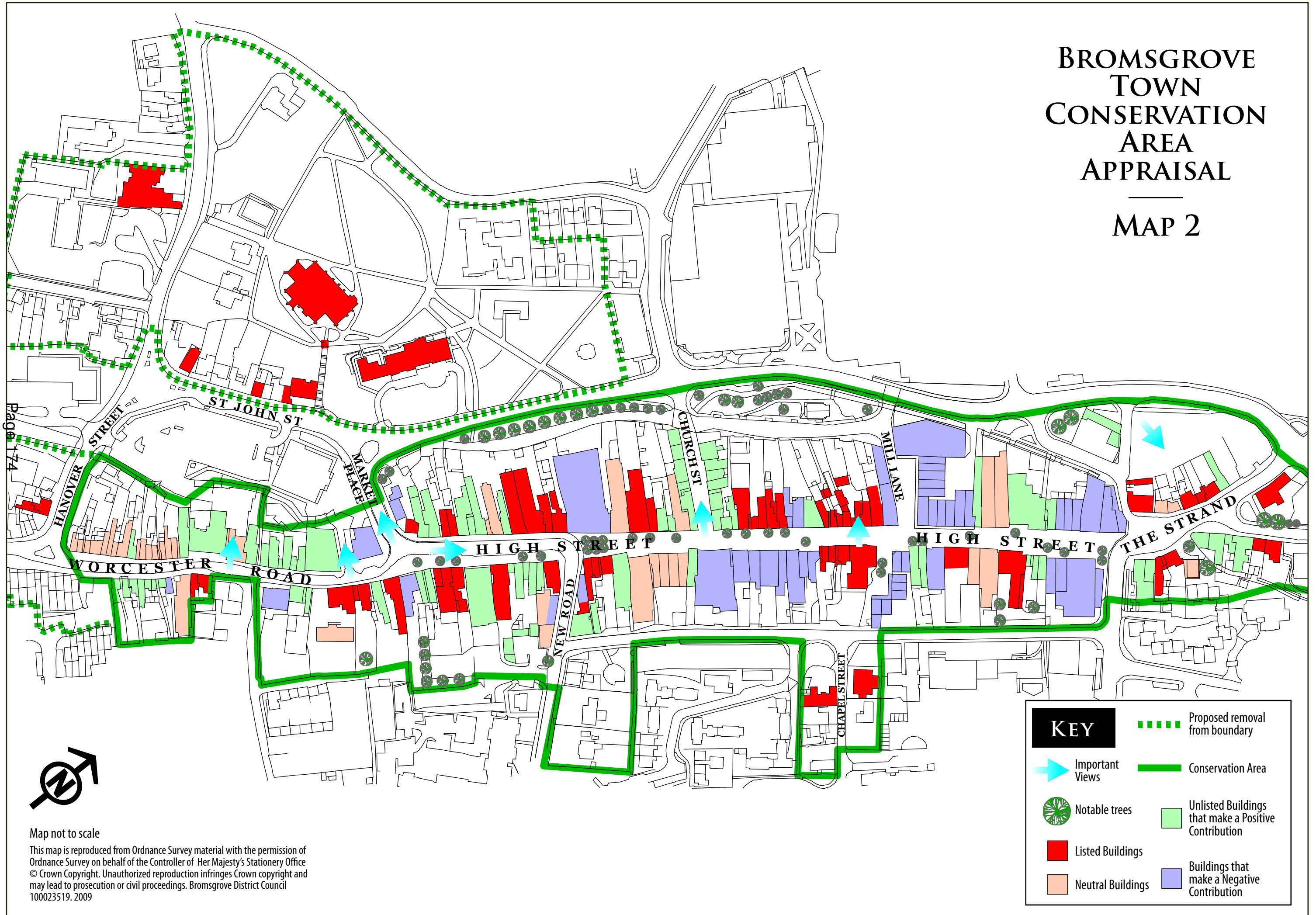
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<b>KEY</b>	 Proposed removal from boundary
	 Conservation Area



# BROMSGROVE TOWN CONSERVATION AREA APPRAISAL

## MAP 2



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KEY	
	Proposed removal from boundary
	Important Views
	Notable trees
	Listed Buildings
	Neutral Buildings
	Conservation Area
	Unlisted Buildings that make a Positive Contribution
	Buildings that make a Negative Contribution

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CD, audio tape and computer disc.**



**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT  
COUNCIL**

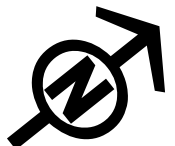
HEAD OF PLANNING  
AND ENVIRONMENT SERVICES  
THE COUNCIL HOUSE,  
BURTON LANE,  
BROMSGROVE B60 1AA

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# FRONTAGE IMPROVEMENT SCHEME PHASE 1 TARGET AREA



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KEY	
	Notable trees
	Conservation Area Boundary
	Listed Buildings
	Unlisted Buildings that make a Positive Contribution

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Frontage Improvement Scheme Phase 1



61 High St



63 and 65 High St



67 High St



69 and 71 High St



73 and 75 High St



79 High St



Frontage Improvement Scheme Phase 1



81-83 High St



85, 87 and 87a High St



89 High St



89a High St



91 and 93 High St



95 High St



97 High St

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

### SHARED SERVICES BOARD

24<sup>th</sup> June 2010 at 5.30pm

### COMMITTEE ROOM 2, REDDITCH TOWN HALL

#### Notes

#### Present

Cllr Gandy (in the Chair) and Cllrs Braley and Hartnett (Redditch BC)  
Cllrs Hollingworth, Colella, Denaro and Peters (Bromsgrove DC).

#### Observers

Cllrs Banks and Pearce (Redditch BC).

#### Officers

Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley and Steve Skinner (Notes).

#### 1. Apologies

There were no apologies for absence.

### CONFIDENTIAL

#### 2. Minutes

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board were confirmed as a correct record.

#### 3. Matters Arising

Brief updates were provided in relation to the Target setting and Audit Commission items.

On the latter, Mr Dicks advised that the legal framework agreed between Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils was more than most other Councils currently had in place and that no other authorities had established fall-back positions at the current time.

#### 4. Shared Services Progress Report

Mr Dicks introduced this item and responded to matters raised by Members:

i) Single Management Team

The final appointee, Amanda de Warr, new Head of Customer Services, was arriving in early July from Wychavon DC.

Mr Dicks advised that the Team was working very well together and gave him confidence that they would become a very effective Management Team serving the 2 Councils.

ii) Elections Team

Experience at the General & Local Elections had been that the new arrangements had essentially worked well. The main issue had been the operation of the new shared computer system.

In terms of quantifying improvements in registration and/or turnout, it was agreed that it was impossible to gauge this year whether it was new activities, or the General Election, which had increased numbers. Means would be sought to measure improvements wherever possible.

iii) Community Safety

This continued to operate satisfactorily.

iv) ICT

This arrangement was formally going live on 1<sup>st</sup> August. The Team Manager post was out for recruitment as neither previous Manager had been successful at recruitment for the vacant post. In the interim, Mark Hanwell, was acting up in place of the Manager.

Mr Dicks advised that severance costs would be brought to Members in a future report.

v) Lifeline

Mrs Hanley advised that, for a range of reasons, the Lifeline Shared Services implementation had been a complicated one, but that it had ultimately been successful.



TUPE transfer of staff had taken place on 4<sup>th</sup> of January. There had been no need for any compulsory redundancies, but eight staff had requested and been granted Voluntary Compulsory Redundancy. The Bromsgrove Control Centre had closed in June, and there had been full continuity since from Redditch premises.

Members congratulated Officers on what had appeared to them to be a seamless change. Once again, a summary of the final costs would be submitted to Members in a later report.

vi) Payroll

Members noted that Wyre Forest DC had made an approach regarding Redditch and Bromsgrove running their Payroll too.

vii) Procurement

There was little more to report at the current time (later item below refers).

viii) Climate Change

There was little more to report at the current time. At present it was felt that given the different positions of both Councils that separate Advisory Panels were retained.

ix) Economic Development

John Staniland was the lead Director for this at RBC and the proposal had gained RBC Council approval.

Members reaffirmed their intention and the need to maintain local 'theme groups' in each Council (called 'Economic Advisory Panel' in Redditch).

x) Joint IRP (Independent Remuneration Panel)

It was noted that Bromsgrove had already agreed the proposal for a Joint IRP across County. Redditch would be considering this on 28<sup>th</sup> June.

xi) Regulatory - WETT

These services had transferred and staff had been TUPE'd across on 1<sup>st</sup> June. A Head of Service, Steve Jorden, had been appointed. The Joint Committee had been appointed, comprising two members from each participating authority. Legal agreements had been signed before the launch. Members noted the significant inputs from key Officers to make this happen on time.

Work had now begun on 'Systems Thinking' and the 'Transformation' approach. All Councils were currently on different systems, so one solution would be the procurement of a single computer system.

xii) Audit

Audit Services had been transferred to Worcester City Council and the Manager's post was out to national advert.

xiii) Property Services

Staff TUPE transferred to Worcestershire County Council on 1<sup>st</sup> June.

xiv) WETT – Where Next?

Officers advised that further developments were currently on hold while the other projects were being implemented. It might perhaps be necessary to consider all services over time, but Mr Dicks queried whether Members had anything to propose now?

Members considered: Waste where the split between collection and disposal seemed arbitrary at present.

Members also queried Highways / Highways maintenance. There was general agreement there might be some scope in that area.

Members wondered whether Youth Services might be worth considering. Members suggested that this might be devolved down, rather than shared on the basis that District-level Members might be in a better position to target the available resources where they were needed.

xv) Section 6 - Sharing of Costs

Members noted the Appendices which detailed financial performance. Mr Dicks advised that the costs shown were in-year, not cumulative, and asked that any detailed questions be presented to Jayne Pickering for response.

xvi) Human Resources

Officers reported that there was still a very good relationship with Trade Unions. Redditch and Bromsgrove branches of Unison had agreed to merge.

Work on the harmonisation of employee terms and conditions continued.

**It was AGREED that**

**the report and the oral updates to the report be noted.**

**5. Shared Services and Transformation / Programme**

With reference to the reports and appendices before the Board, Mr Dicks sought endorsement of the proposed Shared Services / Transformation Programme. He advised that, at the end of the programme for those services that were planned to be taken through the Transformation process, that shared service structures would be reviewed following the transformation.

Mrs Hanley emphasised the need to avoid staff going through too many different processes re changed structures. But suggested that, as Environmental Services were very prominent and frontline, some services did need to be realigned to get them fit for the transformation process. Some further proposals would therefore be brought forward in the interim.

Members agreed there might be some 'quick wins' which might be considered, for example, rationalisation of waste collection in areas where Redditch was closer. Mr Dicks confirmed that some of these opportunities were already being taken.

Some Members considered they needed to better understand 'Transformational Thinking' / 'Systems Thinking' and urged that a seminar be set up to explain these processes further.

Mr Dicks added that these processes did not start till September, and he advised of staff consultation processes, particularly with a view to identifying any particular pinch points.

He pointed out that the current proposals were only a start, and that the situation would be reviewed again after 12 months.

**It was RECOMMENDED that**

- 1) the use of the WMIEP (West Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership) Systems Thinking change methodology for the transformation of service areas be approved; and**
- 2) the proposed programme of service areas to be considered for Shared Services / Transformation between the two**

**Councils, as detailed in the Appendix to the report, be approved.**

**6. Procurement**

Mr Dicks asked the Board to consider whether Procurement should be pursued as a shared service? He suggested that this might be rolled out across Worcestershire, but also possibly draw in a Warwickshire authority which had expressed interest. The aim was to improve resilience and the available skill set.

Whilst supporting the principle, some Members expressed a degree of concern that this might make the service too big & remote.

It was suggested that there should perhaps be a penalty to authorities who chose to join in late, which Officers supported.

Mr Dicks advised that a couple of districts might not join in and that, at this stage, he was seeking endorsement of broad principles only.

A further report would be brought to Members in due time.

**It was RECOMMENDED that**

**the proposal be agreed in principle.**

**14. Other Business**

There was no other business for this meeting.

**15. Next Meeting**

**It was AGREED that**

**the next meeting be held on Thursday 19<sup>th</sup> August 2010, commencing at 5.30 pm, at Redditch Town Hall (Committee Room 3).**

*(Cllr Hollingworth offered his apologies in advance).*

**The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm and closed at 7.05 pm.**

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL**

**SHARED SERVICES BOARD**

**24<sup>th</sup> June 2010**

**SHARED SERVICES / TRANSFORMATION PROGRAMME**

**1. SUMMARY**

- 1.1 This report presents for consideration by the Shared Services Board a draft proposal for the future programme of shared service and transformation between Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils. It also outlines the change methodology to be used by Bromsgrove and Redditch Council's to deliver the programme of transformation.

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 It is recommended that the Shared Services Board:
- 2.1.1 approve the use of the WMIEP systems thinking change methodology for the transformation of service areas; and
- 2.1.2 discuss and agree the proposed programme of service areas to be considered for Shared Services / Transformation between the two councils.

**3. BACKGROUND**

- 3.1 In June 2008, both RBC and BDC agreed to the appointment of a Shared Chief Executive with effect from 1<sup>st</sup> August 2008. As part of the agreement to share a Chief Executive a number of opportunities for developing other shared services were identified and have been progressed eg: the single management team.
- 3.2 In order to continue to progress the shared service and transformation agenda SERCO were engaged, in 2009, to deliver a report outlining the case for joint and shared working between Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils. The findings from the Serco report have been included in the proposed three year programme for shared services/transformation. This is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 In addition to the SERCO document a further analysis of services has been undertaken to assess the potential benefits of systems thinking / transformational activity. The analysis plotted the potential savings and service improvements (as a result of systems thinking) against the ease of implementation. The output from this analysis has also been used to inform the draft programme plan.
- 3.4 In order to further influence the development of the programme plan, visits were made to Warwick District Council and to Staffordshire Moorlands /

High Peak Borough Council. Warwick District Council has done a lot of work on transformational / systems thinking and has achieved some significant improvements to performance in both Benefits (Housing and Council Tax) and Housing Repairs. Staffordshire Moorlands and High Peak Councils also have a single Chief Executive and a single management team and share a number of services. It is clear from the reference site visits and from discussions with other Shared Chief Executives that no council has yet combined the two approaches of transformational thinking and shared services as BDC and RBC are proposing to do.

- 3.5 The West Midlands Improvement and Efficiency Partnership have also been extremely helpful and supportive in the development of the proposed programme and have provided four days of 'systems thinking' support and training to the Single Management Team. The training has enabled CMT to have a better understanding of the systems thinking approach and how it can be used to maximise the potential benefits of shared services and transformation.
- 3.6 Following completion of the analysis and site visits it is felt that there are six service areas that would benefit from transformational system thinking (before the implementation of any shared service). These areas are as follows:

**Year 1**

Revenues and Benefits (although these will be undertaken jointly due to the cross over of the issues / working practices it is worth recognising that they are distinct areas)

WETT Regulatory Services

**Year 2**

Planning

Depot Services (Refuse Collection, Recycling, Street Cleansing and Grounds Maintenance)

**Year 3**

Housing

Community Services/Community Cohesion

- 3.7 It is worth noting that the whole council will be affected by transformational / systems thinking however with regard to the service areas outlined above it is felt that it is crucial that these service areas are "transformed" before a shared service is considered.
- 3.8 The shared service aspect of the programme plan (Appendix 2) is based on the same three year timeline and would see a number of services being shared whilst the above transformation activity was carried out.
- 3.9 In considering the proposed shared services / transformation programme the Board are asked to note the following:
- The programme is flexible and may change to take account of opportunities as and when they arise e.g., when posts become vacant

- The programme will need to be reviewed to take account of any future developments in the WETT (Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier) programme. The WETT Programme Board will have an away day on 25<sup>th</sup> June to develop proposals for the next phase of the programme – the Board may wish to consider areas that they would like put forward.
- Members will note that it is suggested that the Programme start from September 2010 although initial work may be undertaken before then. This is to enable the views of staff to be taken into account – staff briefings will be held week commencing 28<sup>th</sup> June to outline the proposed programme. It will also enable us to recruit to the Shared Service / Transformation team which will support areas going through reviews.
- Whilst Appendix 1 includes the potential savings identified by Serco in the initial business case members should note that these are not necessarily the savings that will be delivered by the area in question.
- There may also be the need for interim management structures in some service areas to ensure that services operate effectively on a day today basis and that there is capacity to carry out the transformation work. However, these changes will be minimised to reduce the impact on staff.

#### **4. KEY ISSUES**

##### What is Systems Thinking?

- 4.1 Systems thinking is an approach to changing the way we deliver our services. The approach adopts a whole system, or, end to end, view of how we deliver our services and includes the analysis and impact of: external pressures eg: from central government, what our customers want, how we currently deliver our services, the difference between work demand and failure demand, how we could change/improve the way we deliver our services and how we can measure the improvements.
- 4.2 This approach is currently being used by a number of other local authorities to deliver significant service improvements and efficiencies. These include: Warwick District Council, Stoke on Trent City Council, Dudley MBC and Stafford County.

##### Transformation Team

- 4.3 Another key issue to be considered is the management of the programme to ensure that it is delivered on time and to plan. This will need to be addressed through the additional transformation / shared service resource that was outlined in the original single management team proposals. Further work to establish this team will be required prior to the delivery of the programme plan.

#### **5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

- 5.1 None arising directly from this report, although indirectly the intention of the programme plan is for each service area to deliver efficiencies/savings and improvements in service quality.

**6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS**

6.1 None

**7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS**

7.1 None

**8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES**

8.1 Each Council will need to ensure any proposals support its own Council Objectives.

**9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS**

9.1 None arising directly from this report. However, it is envisaged that risks will be mitigated and controlled as part of the programme and project governance.

**10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS**

10.1 No direct impact on the Customer arising from this report, although indirectly the intention of each area is to deliver efficiencies/savings or improve service quality to the ultimate benefit of the customer.

**11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS**

11.1 None arising directly from this report. These will be addressed as each proposed service area is considered for sharing or transformation.

**12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT**

12.1 Value for Money and delivery of efficiencies is the main driving force behind the shared service/transformation programme.

**13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY**

13.1 None

**14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS**

14.1 None arising directly from this report. However, it is envisaged that any HR implications will be included as part of the programme and project governance.

**15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS**

15.1 None arising directly from this report. However, it is envisaged that there may be short term performance implications in some service areas while the programme is being delivered.



**16. COMMUNITY SAFETY IMPLICATIONS INCLUDING SECTION 17 OF CRIME AND DISORDER ACT 1998**

16.1 None

**17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS**

17.1 None

**18. LESSONS LEARNT**

18.1 The analysis method of plotting savings/service improvements against ease of implementation was discussed at an Action Learning Set with other Shared Chief Executives who endorsed the approach. However, it was also felt that two other factors should be considered: Take advantage as and when opportunities arise e.g. through vacant posts and be aware of the impacts of more than one shared service / transformational activity within one service area.

**19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT**

19.1 None

**20. WARDS AFFECTED**

All Wards

**21. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 Shared Services / Transformation Timeline – supporting information  
Appendix 2 Proposed Shared Services / Transformation Timeline

**22. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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Kevin.dicks@redditchbc.gov.uk  
Tel: (01527) 881400

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## Agenda Item 4 - Appendix 1

## Proposed Shared Service / Transformation Programme - supporting information

Head of Service Area	Service	Potential Saving as per Serco Business Case	Ease of Sharing (1 = easy, 10 = difficult)	Now / Sooner / Later (as per Brian Holland's work)	Other Comments
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Policy incorporating:  - LSP - Performance Management & Improvement  - Policy (excluding service specific strategy) - Consultation & Community Engagement  - Communications, Marketing and Promotion (including oversight of web content) - Customer Insight - Special Projects - Inspections (CAA etc)	Between £60k - £80k	2	Later (for joint LSP) Sooner  Sooner Sooner	There are a number of vacant posts / secondments at RBC which would make this relatively easy to share  Implementation of single performance management framework across the 2 councils.would streamline processes and reduce
	Corporate Administration/ Central Post Opening	Not quantified	8		Would need to be supported by transformational / systems thinking and be reviewed as part and parcel of each shared services review and overall review conducted at the end of the programme when other areas have been reviewed
	Civic Support (BDC)	Negligible	5		Roles at both councils incorporate other elements which can't easily be separated and it is felt that any review should be incorporated as part of any administrative review.
	Climate Change / Agenda 21(Energy	N/A	N/A		Already shared

	Printing & Reprographics	Nil (but felt could achieve £30k)		Now	This was included within ICT as part of the Serco business case and as such can't be split out but it is felt there are savings to be achieved from sharing the services. Felt that it would be best to leave this until later in the programme in order for the Shared ICT programme to be progressed plus any Shared Communications Team to bed in.
Head of Business Transformation	I.C.T.	N/A	N/A	Sooner (but certain aspects such as software were later)	Already being shared
	Land and Property Gazetteer / GIS / Street Naming and Numbering	N/A	N/A		As part of ICT Shared Service
	Information Management, Freedom of Information, Data Protection, Records Management	N/A	N/A		As part of ICT Shared Service
	Organisational Development (including Workforce Planning and Succession Planning)	Not quantified separately included within HR as 1.5 FTE	1	Now	Post is vacant at RBC which provides an immediate opportunity to share this resource. Delivery of training would need to be addressed as part of this / consideration of HR Shared Service.
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Transformation, Business Process Re-engineering and Lean Systems	N/A	N/A		Separate resource identified within implementation of single management team which will be split over the two councils.
	Legal Advice & Services	£44k	4	Now	Advice from other Shared Chief Executives is that Legal and Financial Services should be towards the end of any programme given the input to the rest of the shared services agenda.
	Election & Electoral Services, Periodic Electoral Review	N/A	N/A	Now	Already shared
	Democratic Services & Member Support	£100k	5	Now	Vacant post at RBC in O&S (seconded to LSP). Felt that this should be considered alongside Legal due to the overlapping nature of the roles.

**Appendix 1**

Head of Resources	Member Development	N/A	N/A		Included in Democratic Services & Member Support but opportunities will be taken to share the costs of training / development opportunities (where appropriate between the 2 councils)	
	Equalities & Diversity	Nil	4	Now	No permanent resource at RBC to undertake this. Felt that this should be reviewed alongside Policy given the community engagement aspects that are currently undertaken by the postholders at BDC and RBC.	
	Civic Support (RBC)	Negligible	5		Roles at both councils incorporate other elements which can't easily be separated and it is felt that any review should be incorporated as part of any administrative review.	
	Accounts & Financial Management & Advice	£108k	5		Crucial to ensuring costs are accounted for adequately between the 2 councils. Experience from other Shared Chief Executives would suggest that this is looked at towards the end of the programme.  In order to maximise the potential benefits of a Shared Finance function consideration may need to be given in advance of a Shared Financial System.	
	Corporate Income & Debt Management	N/A	N/A	Sooner	Included as part of Financial Management	
	Procurement	N/A	N/A	Now	Already shared - business case developed as part of WETT programme for this to be rolled out at district level across the County and then possibly across Warwickshire. Proposal that BDC / RBC host.	
	Revenues & Benefits	£87k	8	Later	Service would benefit from being part of transformation programme - shared service to be investigated as part of the transformation process once changes to system are known and structure can be reviewed.	
	Audit	N/A	N/A	Now	Already being shared	
	Risk Management	N/A	N/A		Processes to be aligned in order to reduce resources required - to be picked up by Internal Audit Shared Service.	

Payroll	N/A	N/A	N/A	Already shared
Property, Assets & Facilities Management	N/A	N/A	Now	Already shared
Human Resources & Welfare	£54k	4	Sooner	On speaking to other shared Chief Executives they all felt that this should be one of the first to be considered for sharing between the 2 councils as it is crucial to the future shared services programme. Given the ongoing work on T&Cs it is felt that consideration of a Shared service for HR should wait until adfter this is concluded.
Training & Development (Day to day)	Not quantified separately included within HR as 1.5 FTE	1	Now	Delivery of training would need to be addressed as part of consideration of HR and OD as a Shared Service.
Health & Safety	Not quantified separately included within HR as 1.5 FTE	1	Now	Consider as part of HR
Customer Service Centre	£116k from year 4	8	Sooner	This would need to be considered by the new Head of Service and is complicated by the Worcestershire Hub partnership. Needs to be increased focus on putting more services through the Hub (particularly at RBC). Felt that the impact on CSC / One Stop Shops would be fundamental as part of the Transformation Programme and that the 6 deep interventions should be concluded before this is reviewed as a Shared Service.
One Stop Shops Cashiers Customer First Customer Access and Customer Engagement Reception Services Complaints	In above In above In above In above In above In above			Would look to align processes in order to make it easier and less bureaucratic

Appendix 1

Head of Leisure and Cultural Services	Leisure/Sports Centres/Dual Use Facilities	£44k	4	Later	BDC transferred Leisure Centre to a Trust from 1st April. RBC building Abbey Stadium - therefore possibilities for sharing are limited but can be reviewed later.
	Sports and Recreation Development	N/A	3	Now	Not specifically identified but could benefit from early sharing.
	Arts Development	N/A	3	Now	Not specifically identified but could benefit from early sharing.
	Children & Young People, Play	N/A	N/A		No specific resources to address this
	Health Education/Interventions	N/A	N/A		No specific resources to address this
	Parks and Open Spaces	N/A	3		Not specifically identified but could benefit from early sharing as part of wider service area
	Allotments	N/A	3		Not specifically identified but could benefit from early sharing as part of wider service area
	Museum	N/A	10		BDC to transfer museum - limited sharing opportunities but can be picked up as part of overall shared services review for Department
	Events	N/A	10		Can look to share management time etc in the management / organisation of events and pick this up as part of shared services review of department
	Community Centres	N/A	3		RBC only
	Theatre	N/A	3		RBC only - can look for some shared approaches across areas as part of the shared services review of department
	Countryside Centre	N/A	3		RBC only
	Sponsorship	N/A	3		Not specifically identified but could benefit from looking to achieve sponsorship early and pick this up as part of shared services review of department
	Head of Environmental Services	Refuse & Recycling (inc. Waste Management, Policy, Promotion, Management)	£98k	3	Later

Street Scene / Street Cleansing	156k	4	Later	Includes operational support (according to Serco report. To be incorporated into review of Refuse and Recycling.
Grounds Maintenance/ Landscaping	In above			
Highways	In above			
Cesspools/Sewers	In above			
Public Conveniences	In above			
Fly Tipping, Bill Posting	In above			
Abandoned Vehicles	In above			
Engineering Design	In above			
Street Naming and Numbering (operational)	In above			
Car Parks/Civil Enforcement Parking	N/A	3		RBC only operate limited car parks. BDC to consider CEP. Wider shared service with other Worcestershire Districts to be considered as part of this programme.
Cemeteries / Crematorium	£33k	2	Sooner	Potential service improvements from more effective management of 2 areas
Land Drainage	N/A	N/A		Included within Serco as part of Environmental Health - needs urgent attention due to the lack of resilience at both Councils. For BDC / RBC this will be undertaken by Regulatory Shared Service but will be considered across the County as the implications of the Pitt Review become clearer.
Community Cohesion (Older and Young People) / Social Inclusion	N/A	N/A		No specific resources to address this. To be addressed as part of later review of service area when other shared services have bedded in. Could also benefit from being part of the Transformation Programme?
Community Safety	N/A	N/A		Already shared. Community Safety will be reviewed in Autumn to see how Shared Service is progressing - consideration can be given at that stage to widening this out across North Worcestershire.

Head of Community Services



Appendix 1

Anti Social Behaviour Team	N/A	N/A	N/A		Only applies to RBC at present could be integrated with Community Safety in future and rolled out across the 2 areas? To be addressed as part of later review of service area when other shared services have bedded in. Would need to consider / address issues of ASB team funding (from HRA)
CCTV & Lifeline Operation & Development Voluntary Sector & Community Networks, Grant Aid	N/A	N/A	N/A	Later	Already being shared Budget for grant officer at RBC - could benefit from working across the 2 areas. To be addressed as part of later review of service area when other shared services have bedded in.
Strategic Transport	N/A	N/A	N/A		No specific resources to address this. To be addressed as part of later review of service area when other shared services have bedded in.
Community Transport / Dial A Ride	N/A	N/A	N/A	Now	Only just been implemented at BDC - could potentially join the service areas together for greater efficiencies / service improvements. To be addressed as part of later review of service area when other shared services have bedded in.
Bus Passes / Concessionary Fares	N/A	N/A	N/A	Now	To be transferred to County Council with effect from 1st April 2011
Housing Strategy and Enabling (including Private Sector Housing and Disabled Facilities Grants)	Nil	4		Sooner	Complicated by HIA transfer to Festival - to be addressed as part of later review of service area when other shared services have bedded in.
Shopmobility	N/A	5		Sooner	Included within community transport - felt to be some benefits from sharing. To be addressed as part of later review of service area when other shared services have bedded in.
Children's Centres	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	RBC Only
Strategic Planning (Planning & Local Development Framework)		8		Later	Given the ongoing work with the RSS would suggest that this is left until later and be part of the Transformation Programme.

Head of Planning and Regeneration

Development Control (including Planning Enforcement)	£91k	4	Sooner	Service would benefit from being part of transformation programme - shared service to be investigated as part of the transformation process once changes to system are known and structure can be reviewed.
Building Control	£65k	2	Sooner	Benefits in looking at this across North Worcestershire early in the programme. Consideration would also need to be given to joining the existing South Worcestershire Building Control function.
Land Charges	£10k	2		Given the issue about Land Charges this should be considered early in the programme.
Emergency Planning / Business Continuity	N/A	N/A		Not considered as part of Serco business case but felt this requires urgent attention that will lead to more resilience but not necessarily savings given the limited resources that each council have in this area
Conservation	N/A	N/A	Now	Included in planning
Tree Officers (TPO's)	N/A	N/A	Sooner	Included in planning
Economic and Tourism Development (including Business Centres and Markets)	N/A	N/A	Sooner	To be implemented across North Worcestershire
Housing Revenue Account activities including DLO for Housing	N/A	N/A		RBC only but would benefit from Transformational / Systems thinking approach.
Homelessness	N/A	N/A		Included in Housing
Capital Improvements	N/A	N/A		Included in Housing
Housing Options	N/A	N/A		Included in Housing
Housing Performance and Database	N/A	N/A		Included in Housing
St David's House	N/A	N/A		Included in Housing
Right to Buy	N/A	N/A		RBC Only







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