



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 5TH JANUARY 2011
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. Apologies
2. Declarations of Interest
3. Minutes (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board (Pages 5 - 8)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
5. North Worcestershire Joint Committee (Pages 9 - 18)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
6. Shared Services Board (Pages 19 - 22)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes

7. Audit Board (Pages 23 - 28)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
8. Verbal updates from the Leader and/or other Cabinet Members on any recent meetings attended in an ex-officio capacity (Pages 29 - 30)
9. Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/2012 - 2013/2014 (Pages 31 - 38)
10. Customer Experience Strategy (Pages 39 - 66)
11. Bromsgrove Partnership's Annual Report (Pages 67 - 72)
12. Review of Lickey End Parish Council - Use of Funds (Pages 73 - 80)
13. Longbridge - Memorandum of Understanding (Pages 81 - 86)
14. The Marketing of Bromsgrove (Pages 87 - 92)
 - Appendices For Item 9 - Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/2012 - 2013/2014 (Pages 93 - 98)
 - Appendix For Item 10 - Customer Experience Strategy (Pages 99 - 120)
 - Appendix For Item 11 - Bromsgrove Partnership Annual Report (Pages 121 - 132)
 - Appendices For Item 13 - Longbridge Memorandum of Understanding (Pages 133 - 162)
15. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting
16. To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) 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 paragraphs 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>	
17	1 and 3	"

17. To receive the confidential minutes of the meeting of Shared Services Board held on 9th December 2010 (Pages 163 - 238)

- (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

26th January 2011

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 1ST DECEMBER 2010 AT 4.00 P.M.

PRESENT: 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, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillors D. L. Pardoe and C. R. Scurrall

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Mr. H. Bennett, Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. G. Revans, Mrs. S. Sellers and Ms. R. Cole.

88/10 **APOLOGIES**

An apology was received from Councillor R. D. Smith.

89/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor Mrs. J. Dyer M.B.E. declared a personal interest during the discussion on Agenda Item 8 (verbal updates on meetings attended). This was in relation to the update from Councillor Mrs M. A. Sherrey JP on the Annual General Meeting of the Bromsgrove Citizens' Advice Bureau, during which reference was made to the Basepoint project as Councillor Mrs Dyer was a Trustee of that project.

90/10 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting held on 3rd November 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

91/10 **SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Scrutiny Board held on 26th October 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

92/10 **OVERVIEW BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview Board held on 2nd November 2010 were submitted. It was noted that the Overview Board had made recommendations on the Incremented Parking Tariff and these would be considered in conjunction with Agenda Item 12.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

93/10 **PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of Performance Management Board held on 15th November 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the minutes be noted;
- (b) that in relation to the recommendations contained at 38/10 regarding Homelessness, it be noted that discussions were ongoing regarding ring fencing of the Homelessness Grant funding and that the Portfolio Holder was aware of the potential issues around homelessness and the actions required to ameliorate these.

94/10 **EQUALITY AND DIVERSITY FORUM**

The minutes of the meeting of the Equality and Diversity Forum held on 12th August 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

95/10 **VERBAL UPDATES FROM THE LEADER AND/OR OTHER CABINET MEMBERS ON ANY RECENT MEETINGS ATTENDED IN AN EX-OFFICIO CAPACITY**

Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey reported on the Annual General Meeting of Bromsgrove Citizens' Advice Bureau.

Councillor G. N. Denaro reported on a development meeting he had attended in relation to the Birmingham and Solihull Local Enterprise Partnership.

96/10 **BROMSGROVE MUSEUM**

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposed change to the terms and conditions previously agreed in relation to the transfer of Bromsgrove Museum to the Friends of the Museum (the Friends).

It was reported that since the previous Cabinet decision in October 2009, the Friends had sought funding for the purchase of the museum but had advised that potential funders were not able to commit to the project because of the claw back provision imposed as part of that decision. The Friends had therefore requested that the claw back provision be removed.

The Cabinet considered the likely costs for the Authority which would arise from the retention of the Museum and the potential for the project to contribute to the Council's priority of development and regeneration of the Town Centre.

RESOLVED that the Bromsgrove Museum be transferred to the Friends on the terms and conditions agreed on 7th October 2009, at the current market value and that the disposal be free of restrictions.

97/10 **CLIMATE CHANGE STRATEGY**

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed adoption of a common Climate Change Strategy with Redditch BC.

Members were reminded that the Climate Change Act 2008 placed the Secretary of State under a duty to ensure that the net carbon account for 2050 was at least 80% lower than the 1990 baseline. It was reported that the Government may well require Local Authorities to meet statutory targets for carbon reduction.

It was noted that it was intended to re-visit the Climate Change Strategy in twelve months' time and to amend the Strategy slightly if necessary. The Strategy would be renewed completely in three to four years.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the recommendations of the Bromsgrove DC Overview Board as contained in appendix 2 to the report be approved and the comments from the Redditch BC Overview and Scrutiny Committee as contained in appendix 3 to the report be noted;
- (b) that the Climate Change Strategy as contained in appendix 1 to the report be approved;
- (c) that following repayment of the loan, 100% of the savings achieved from the Salix project be re-invested in climate change work and that in principle, this approach be extended to future similar "spend to save" Climate Change projects but that these be considered on a case by case basis;
- (d) that the following policy be included in the Draft Planning Core Strategy and the Climate Change Strategy:

"for any new developments which the Council undertakes, for example building a new public leisure centre, consideration of whole life costs of the building are considered and, as part of this, all new public buildings will aim to exceed the nationally set BREEAM standard".

98/10 **REVIEW OF PAY ON FOOT CAR PARKING**

The Cabinet considered a report on the possibility of re-introducing the incremental tariff on the Councils "Pay on Foot" car parks.

The Portfolio Holder for Community Services, Councillor M. J. A. Webb reported on the background to the proposal and in particular the apparent public demand for the re-introduction of the incremental tariffs and the cost implications of this.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the incremental charging system as detailed in the report be re-introduced and that officers be tasked with undertaking a review of the car parking provision, the charging structure that supports this and the extent to which alternative methods of service delivery can be achieved

in this area, with a view to the provision of a more sustainable and cost effective car parking provision as part of the current shared service review;

- (b)(i) that the cost implications of re-introducing incremental charging and the consequential effect this will have on the Medium Term Financial Plan for 2011/2012 be noted;
- (b)(ii) that this deficit be managed by the Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources as part of the wider budget setting process for future years.

RECOMMENDED that £45,000 be released from balances to ensure a balanced budget for 2010/2011 in respect of the incremental charging scheme.

99/10 **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2011/2012 TO 2013/2014**

The Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Resources reported that officers were still working on the Medium Term Financial Plan and whilst she could give a presentation at this stage Members may wish to discuss the matter further at the January Cabinet meeting.

The Cabinet felt it would be more beneficial to defer discussion at this stage.

100/10 **COUNCIL TAX BASE CALCULATION 2011/2012**

Consideration was given to a report on the requirement under the Local Authority (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992 for the Authority to determine a Council Tax Base for the forthcoming financial year.

RESOLVED that in accordance with the Local Authorities (Calculation of Council Tax Base) Regulations 1992, the Council's Tax Base 2011/2012, assuming a collection rate of 99%, be calculated at £36,548.42 for the area as a whole and that the calculation for each Parish be as set out in appendix 1 to the report.

101/10 **LAUREL GROVE/BEECH ROAD PLAY AREA**

The Cabinet considered a report in relation to proposed improvements and enhancements to play and ancillary facilities at Laurel Grove/Beech Road, Recreation Ground. It was reported that the work could be funded from Section 106 monies.

RECOMMENDED that the scheme be included in the Forward Capital Programme for 2010/2011 and that officers be requested to undertake the works required before the "claw back" point is reached.

The meeting closed at 5.00 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY, 23RD NOVEMBER 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Colella (Chairman), D. L. Pardoe (Vice-Chairman),
R. J. Deeming, C. R. Scurrall, Mrs. C. J. Spencer, C. B. Taylor,
C. J. Tidmarsh and L. J. Turner

Officers: Ms. A. De Warr, Mr. M. Carr and Ms. A. Scarce

31/10 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors A. N. Blagg,
Mrs. M. Bunker and Mrs. R. L. Dent

32/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

No declarations of interest were received.

33/10 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board held on
5th October 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

34/10 **CABINET RESPONSE TO THE INQUIRY INTO THE ALVECHURCH MULTI
USE GAMES AREA (MUGA)**

An apology for absence was received from Cllr M. Webb, Portfolio Holder for
Community, who was to present the Cabinet Response to the Inquiry on the
Alvechurch Multi-Use Games Area.

RESOLVED that the consideration of the Cabinet Response to the Inquiry on
the Alvechurch Multi-Use Games Area be deferred to the next meeting of the
Board.

35/10 **WORCESTERSHIRE HUB JOINT SCRUTINY TASK GROUP - FINAL
REPORT**

The Board received a report from Worcestershire County Council Overview
and Scrutiny Performance Board on the Worcestershire Hub. The report
outlined the review of the Worcestershire Hub and made 22 recommendations
to Worcestershire County Council (WCC) Cabinet, including some which
related to the County's statutory partners, including Bromsgrove District
Council.

The Chairman asked the Head of Customer Services for a succinct definition of what the “Worcestershire Hub” was and its relationship to Bromsgrove District Council. She defined the Hub as “the partnership through which we provide joint access to council services”. It was the “umbrella” under which the County Council and district councils within the Worcestershire area provided access to their services. Within this umbrella, Bromsgrove District Council managed its own Customer Services Centre, at the Dolphin Centre.

Malvern Hills, Worcester City and WCC had shared customer services accessed through the Hub. It was explained that the Worcestershire Hub call centre at Perry Wood dealt with customer enquires for those local authorities that had a shared services agreement; this did not include Bromsgrove District Council (BDC).

Overview and scrutiny committees throughout the County had been invited to participate in the WCC Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board Task Group investigation, by nominating a representative to be co-opted onto the Task Group. Participating local authorities were: WCC, BDC, Malvern Hills District Council, Redditch Borough Council, Worcester City Council, Wychavon District Council and Wyre Forest District Council.

Councillor Taylor was the BDC co-optee and gave a presentation on the investigation and commented on its effectiveness.

The terms of reference for the Task Group were:

- the development of the Worcestershire Hub, including the Worcestershire Hub Shared Service,
- how to make the Worcestershire Hub fit for purpose in the future,
- differences in provision across Worcestershire, what they are and why they exist,
- what are the gaps in provision and what are the opportunities?

The Task Group ran from 5th November 2009 and was due to report to WCC Cabinet on 25th November 2010. Evidence hearings had been held between January and July 2010, with 9 Task Group meetings and site visits.

Overall the Task Group report had concluded that:

- there was a need for clear evidence about the benefits to encourage the remaining district councils to join the Hub,
- service transformation was essential and that the Hub should be at the heart of service transformation, and
- a co-ordinated approach to customer service across the county to enable savings and minimise duplication should be encouraged.

The Chairman asked the Head of Customer Services the cost to BDC of being part of the Hub umbrella, considering that it managed its own customer services. She said that it did not cost the Council anything and that it paid for its own call centre. WCC contributed to the running costs and some of the

staffing costs of the Bromsgrove Customer Services Centre, as the centre dealt with customer enquiries relating to County services.

Councillor Taylor commented that the governance of the Worcestershire Hub was very complicated and that there was some confusion. He commented also that the scrutiny process had been very difficult, that there had been difficulties in obtaining key information and that some of the members of the Task Group were members of the Hub Shared Services governance board, which would seem to be a conflict of interest. It was felt that, as a joint scrutiny, the process should not be followed again in the future.

It was enquired as to whether the report and recommendations were implicitly seeking greater integration of district councils towards the shared services model under the Hub. Councillor Taylor was of the opinion that it was and Recommendation 3 of the report specifically asked each authority and the Worcestershire Hub Shared Service to review governance arrangements across the Worcestershire Hub Partnership with the aim of moving towards a single governance structure. There was a consensus against Bromsgrove District Council being part of the shared customer services within the Hub, particularly in view of the much higher performance of the Council's customer services compared with the Worcestershire Hub. It was also commented that it was desirable to keep things as local as possible, as customer services benefited from local knowledge.

The Scrutiny Officer clarified the proper process for the consideration of scrutiny reports and recommendations from external scrutiny committees, but stressed that it was not clear what process was expected by WCC in this case, as no process had been provided or was available. He said that a Joint Scrutiny Protocol was in the process of being drafted and agreed by WCC and that this was due to be considered at the informal meeting of the Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Network. He clarified that it was most usual that when external scrutiny committees made recommendations to executive bodies other than their own executive, these would be referred from the scrutiny committee directly to the partner agency executives and not through the scrutiny committees of each organisation. In this case it would be possible for WCC to write to BDC's Cabinet and other district councils to ask them to consider the report and recommendations and provide an Executive Response.

The Chairman undertook to raise the concerns about the scrutiny process followed in respect of joint overview and scrutiny committees at the forthcoming Worcestershire Scrutiny Chairs and Vice Chairs Network meeting.

RESOLVED that the report and recommendations of the Worcestershire County Council Worcestershire Hub Scrutiny Task Group be noted.

36/10 **WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board considered the Joint Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme. It was noted that the consideration of the Core Strategy as part

of the planning topic may be delayed from 4th January 2011. The consideration of the Council Budget may also be deferred from that meeting.

The Chairman reminded the Board there was an informal Budget briefing on 30th November 2010 at 6pm.

37/10 **QUESTIONS TO WITNESSES 4TH JANUARY 2011**

The Board considered questions to witnesses for the next meeting on 4th January 2011. It was requested that a question be put on planning enforcement; to provide a summary outline of the process for enforcement and the performance of enforcement, for the consideration of the planning topic. It was also requested that any capital bids and revenue expenditure for Bromsgrove Urban and Rural Transport (BURT) be considered within the consideration of the Budget.

The meeting closed at 7.10 p.m.

Chairman

WORCESTERSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCILS AND COUNTY COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

THURSDAY, 25TH NOVEMBER 2010 AT 4.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Bromsgrove District Council: Councillor P. Whittaker
Malvern District Council: Councillor Mrs. B. Behan
Redditch Borough Council: Councillor M. Braley
Redditch Borough Council: Councillor G. Vickery
Worcester City Council: Councillor Mrs. L. Hodgson (Vice-Chairman)
Worcestershire City Council: Councillor S. Clee
Worcestershire City Council: Councillor Mrs. E. Moffett (substituting for Councillor D. Prodger, MBE)
Wychavon District Council: Councillor Mrs. A. Mackison (Chairman)
Wychavon District Council: Councillor A. Dyke
Wyre Forest District Council: Councillor Mrs. A. Hingley (substituting for Councillor J. Baker)
Wyre Forest District Council: Councillor M. Hart

Observers: Mr. V. Allison, Deputy Managing Director with key responsibility for Treasury Management Services, Wychavon District Council, Mr. I. Pumfrey, Head of Customer and Environmental Services, Malvern Hills District Council, Mr. S. Birch, Head of Trading Standards and Mr. S. Wilkes, Business Manager, Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Invitees: Mr. I. Edwards, Regulatory Services Project Manager

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. C. Felton, Mr. S. Jorden, Ms. C. Flanagan and Ms. P. Ross

The Chairman welcomed Members, substituting Members, officers and Invitees to the meeting. She asked Members to take time after the meeting to view the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Roadshow display.

The Chairman then welcomed the newly appointed Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Business Manager to the meeting as an observer.

23/10 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors Mrs. M. Bunker, J. Baker, F. Lankester, R. Madden and D. Prodger, MBE.

24/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

25/10 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee held on 9th September 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee held on 9th September 2010 be approved as a correct record, subject to:

Councillor D. Prodger, MBE being shown as present during Minute No's 10/10 to 18/10 and not Councillor G. Vickery;

that it be noted that the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services was still to progress with providing Committee Members with their individual authorities current performance measures and that he would confirm with Committee Members the process for receiving performance measures; and

that with regard to Minute Number 16/10, paragraph two be amended to read:

The Regulatory Services Project Manager informed the Committee of the risk to the original stage two timescales following the adoption of the Systems Thinking Transformation approach. He responded to Members' concerns and highlighted that the delays would not impact on the overall savings within the business case or the project deadline.

26/10 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES - 'DRAFT' PROTOCOL FOR REFERRAL OF DECISIONS**

The Committee gave consideration to the draft protocol for referral of decisions to member authorities. The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services informed Members that a system would ensure recommendations from the Joint Committee followed each member authority's decision making process. It was noted that the final minutes would be emailed, for information, to those officers who represented the member authorities on the Management Board and not the Project Board.

RESOLVED that, subject to the above mentioned amendment, the protocol for referral of decisions to member authorities be approved.

27/10 **PROJECT PLAN UPDATE**

Mr. I. Edwards, Regulatory Services Project Manager provided Members with a summary of progress against plans for the period 10th September 2010 to 25th November 2010. He informed Members that business as usual had been maintained throughout a challenging yet productive period of the project. Positive feedback had been received on the 'Chance to Shine' roadshows. Members were asked to note that the Staff Survey outputs and analysis would be available early December and not November as stated in the report. Around 14 Change Champions had been identified across the service and were in the process of being recruited.

The Regulatory Services Project Manager provided the Committee with an update on the risk reported during the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 10th September 2010, ICT & Transformation work stream timescales. The Committee was informed that the new service delivery model originally planned for October 2010 would now be delivered in early 2011. The Regulatory Services Project Manager referred the Committee to the Worcestershire Regulatory Services High Level Implementation Plan and in doing so, reiterated the risk with regard to ICT & Transformation. Actions were being taken to mitigate that risk, including additional resources, but there was still a risk to the timescales. A further report would be taken to the Project Board meeting on 8th December 2010.

Following further discussion on key communication for the service, the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services informed the Committee that he had liaised with Chief Executives and Portfolio Holders as a starting point of Member engagement. The Committee agreed that the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services and the Regulatory Services Project Manager be tasked to engage all Members via the roadshows being taken to member authorities Licensing Committee Meetings and through Member Development Officers.

28/10 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES 2010 - 2011 BUDGET UPDATE**

The Committee considered a report which detailed the financial position of the Regulatory Services function with a projected outturn to the end of the financial year 2010/2011.

The Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resource, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council introduced the report and informed the Committee that, as part of the compilation of the report, estimated figures had been accrued for expenses incurred by partner authorities on behalf of the service for which information and recharges had not yet been fully received.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services responded to Members' questions regarding 'Contractors' (other contractors/consultants) and informed the Committee that some authorities had 'in house' services for dog warden/kennelling/pest control whilst other authorities contracted out these services.

Further discussion followed on procurement. The Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resource, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council responded to Members' questions and informed the Committee that strict procurement rules would be adhered to and that Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council's, Procurement Advisor would provide advice and support to all member authorities to ensure value for money.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the current financial position of the service be noted;

- (b) that any savings occurring from the first year's service provision be ring fenced and used to fund redundancy and transformation in coming years; and
- (c) that the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resource, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council be tasked to provide a full schedule of spend to the next meeting of the Joint Committee to be held in February 2011.

29/10 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES - DRAFT SERVICE PLAN 2011/ 2012**

The Committee considered a report on the Worcestershire Regulatory Services 2011 / 2012 service plan which set out the priorities and outcome measures for the next financial year and the basis for the following 2 years.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services informed the Committee that under the Worcestershire Shared Service Partnership Service Level Agreement, the Worcestershire Regulatory Service (WRS) was required to submit a 3 year service plan. During the meeting of the Joint Committee held on 9th September 2010, the Joint Committee had endorsed the WRS proposed aims and objectives as detailed in the report. The plan sought to focus on the outcomes and only measure what was important to the customer and what was required statutorily.

At the request of the Chairman, the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services informed the Committee of the Local Better Regulation Office (LBRO) workshop he had attended with the Chairman of the Joint Committee and their 'Outcomes and Impacts' Toolkit.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services responded to Members' questions on individual member authorities existing service plans, local service delivery, future uniformed standards and best practice being followed.

In response to questions from the Vice-Chairman the Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services agreed with the need to look at local issues and to incorporate them into the Service Plan. The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services informed the Committee that changes to Licensing Policies would be discussed and agreed by member authorities' Licensing Committees. The Legal Services Manager, Redditch Borough Council informed the Committee that changes were not being driven by WRS but by statutory regime and legislation. The Vice-Chairman requested that the Legal Services Manager ensured this was highlighted to all member authorities.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services confirmed that the Management Board, Stakeholders and Members would be involved in shaping the service plan.

RESOLVED that the report be noted and that the contents of the service plan as set out in Appendix A to the report be endorsed.

30/10 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES - BUDGET 2011/2012 - 2013/2014**

The Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resources, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council apologised to Members for the late submission of the revised recommendations and Appendix for the Regulatory Services Budget 2011/2012 – 2013/2014 report to the Committee.

Members' attention was drawn to the amendment on Appendix 1 to the report where the 'Budget Total as per Legal Agreement', Proposed Budget 2013/2014 should read £5,869 and not £6,315 as shown.

The Chairman announced that, in light of the revised recommendations and Appendix for the Regulatory Services Budget 2011/2012 – 2012/2014, which had been made available to her immediately prior to the meeting; she was prepared to adjourn the meeting for around ten minutes to allow Members to read the revised documents.

Accordingly, the meeting stood adjourned from 4.55pm to 5.05pm.

Having re-convened, the Committee then considered the revised recommendations and Appendix. The Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resources, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council informed Members of the figures for the direct operating budget for 2011/12 – 2012/14 and provided Members with an explanation on the figures shown against 'Savings to be identified following restructure'.

The Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resources, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council informed the Committee that following the approval of the formal agreement it had been identified that five posts had not been transferred. The Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resources, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council and the Chief Executive, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council, responded to Members' questions regarding the five identified posts.

Following further discussion it was:

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the direct operating budget for 2011/12 – 2013/14 be approved as follows:

2011/12	£6,314,546
2012/13	£5,868,796
2013/14	£5,868,796
- (b) that the Worcestershire Treasurers Group be requested to consider the financial implications of the post implementation staffing changes and that the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resources, Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council be tasked to report back to the next meeting of the Joint Committee the impact of

these adjustments on the cost shares for each member authority for 2010/11 - 2013/14.

- (c) that it be noted that the one-off costs for change (including costs of staff termination) as included in the 2010/11 Business Case would not form part of any future budget considerations and that these would be paid in line with the cost sharing allocations as stated in the Legal Agreement (Schedule 4 pt 2).

31/10 **WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES (WRS) FLEXIBLE WORKING AND ACCOMMODATION**

Members' attention was drawn to the recommendations within the revised covering report which had been circulated prior to the meeting.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services introduced the report which detailed the findings of the review undertaken of the combined Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) working practices in order to move towards a flexible and mobile approach to its field operation. The report provided a detailed business case and explained the rationale behind the move to flexible working across WRS and the benefits that such working and single site occupancy would bring.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services responded to the concerns expressed by some Members regarding the proposed preferred location, Wyatt House, Worcester City. He informed the Committee of the need to locate the service within the local government family and that both public sector and commercial properties had been considered whilst also taking into account key factors such as geographical location, accessibility, public access, infrastructure and future needs of the service.

The Chairman informed the Committee that staff had informed her of how well the pilot had gone and how much more work they were able to achieve with home working.

Following further discussion on the revised recommendations it was:

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the introduction of flexible and mobile working across the whole of Worcestershire Regulatory Services in line with this report, be approved:
- (b) that approval in principle be given to the consolidation of Worcestershire Regulatory Services into a single office site within the local government property estate, and that authority be delegated to the Management Board to negotiate and agree a lease for the occupation of Wyatt House subject to satisfactory completion of contractual arrangements and agreement in accordance with resolution (c); and
- (c) that the S. 151 Officers of each individual Member Authority agree the necessary financial arrangements to ensure that the overall cost of accommodation is reduced below that in the Detailed Business Case

for Worcestershire Regulatory Services and that no individual Member Authority suffers significant financial detriment.

32/10 **WORCESTERSHIRE FOOD CHOICES PROJECT - IMPROVING HEALTHY OPTIONS IN FOOD OUTLETS ACROSS THE COUNTY**

The Committee considered a report which detailed the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) priority to protect public health and the former Worcestershire Local Area Agreement, Health and Well-being targets.

The Head of Worcestershire Regulatory Services introduced the report and in doing so informed Members that by working in partnership with Worcestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT), funding had been secured to the value of £50,000 to deliver a nutrition project in food outlets across the County.

RESOLVED: that the report and the potential to secure future funding opportunities be noted.

33/10 **UPDATE TO PRESS RELEASE PROTOCOL**

The Committee considered a report detailing how press releases and messages to customers from Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) had been reviewed in order to ensure that messages were consistent and where relevant County Wide messages would be directed via the named contact at Worcestershire County Council, with the Joint Committee Chairman being the spokesperson.

RESOLVED: that the update to the Press Release Protocol be noted and approved.

34/10 **NEXT MEETING**

Members considered the date and time of the next meeting.

RESOLVED: that the Committee Services Officer be tasked to organise the next meeting of the Joint Committee to be held during February 2011.

The meeting closed at 6.01 p.m.

Chairman

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WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE
PROTOCOL FOR REFERRAL OF DECISIONS TO MEMBER AUTHORITIES

- Minutes of each Joint Committee to be drafted and agreed with the Chairman and Head of Regulatory Services within 10 working days.
- The Committee Services Officer who supports the Joint Committee to email the final minutes, for information, to the members of the Joint Committee and those officers who represent the member authorities on the Management Board.
- The Committee Services Officer to email the final minutes to the Democratic/Committee Services Manager of each member authority who shall ensure that the minutes are submitted to the next possible meeting of their authority's Executive/Cabinet.
- In the event that all matters within a set of minutes are resolved items the Executive/Cabinet will receive the minutes for information only.
- In the event that a set of minutes contains any recommendations, the Committee Services Officer will provide each authority's Democratic/Committee Services Manager with a full copy of the relevant report(s). Any such report(s) shall accompany the minutes when submitted to the Executive/Cabinet.
- The Executive/Cabinet shall consider and determine each recommendation which falls within its delegated powers. If a matter does not fall within its delegated powers, the Executive/Cabinet shall make a recommendation to the full Council. The Democratic/Committee Services Manager shall be responsible for ensuring that any recommendations from the Executive/Cabinet are referred to their full Council.
- The Democratic/Committee Services Manager for each member authority shall email the Committee Services Officer who supports the Joint Committee to confirm that recommendations have been considered and whether they were approved.
- The Committee Services Officer shall maintain appropriate records of recommendations and the outcome from each member authority.
- In the event that a recommendation is not approved by all member authorities, the Head of Regulatory Services shall report the outcome to the next possible meeting of the Joint Committee for information and consideration of any consequential action.

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL AND REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL

SHARED SERVICES BOARD

9th December 2010 at 5.30pm

THE TOWN HALL, REDDITCH

Present:

Councillors Carole Gandy (Chair), Michael Braley, Bill Hartnett and Malcolm Hall (Redditch Borough Council)
Councillors Roger Hollingworth, Steve Colella, Geoff Denaro and Stephen Peters (Bromsgrove District Council).

Also in attendance (Observers):

Cllrs Andrew Brazier, Adam Griffin (end of meeting only) and Jinny Pearce (RBC)

Officers: Hugh Bennett, Sue Hanley and John Staniland.

Notes: Steve Skinner.

1. APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received on behalf of Chief Executive, Mr Dicks.

2. MINUTES

The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 14th October 2010 were agreed as a correct record.

3. MATTERS ARISING FROM THE MINUTES

There were no matters arising, other than as recorded under the separate agenda items below.

4. PROGRESS REPORT

Mrs Hanley presented the Progress report and took questions / provided clarifications on matters as they arose. Mr Staniland also spoke on several of the items.

During discussion, specific mention was made of the following key matters:

a) IT Services

Members noted the progress as reported and mentioned particularly the imminent implementation of the new 'bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk' domain name and e.mail address. In response to questions, Officers confirmed though that Members' e.mail addresses would remain separate for Bromsgrove and Redditch, at very little additional cost, and that websites would remain their entirely separate identities.

b) CCTV / Lifeline

Members asked about the opportunity to further expand the CCTV / Lifeline service, noting the current relationship with the County Council. Officers agreed that reports would be brought back before the Board if any such opportunities arose.

c) Future Programme

Members noted that there was a potential to accelerate some services through the Shared Services and/or Transformation process as more became known about the developing economic pressures on local government, but always subject to Members' further decision.

d) North Worcestershire Economic Development (NWED) project

Mr Staniland advised that preparatory work was near to completion on this proposal and it had originally been hoped to bring a report to this meeting of the Board. A special meeting of the Board for the 4th January 2011 had recently been agreed to go through the Business Case in order to avoid slippage re a projected commencement date.

It was noted that staff consultation had finished only the previous week. However, staff were very much on board and participating fully. A report would hopefully be available for issue before Christmas.

e) Emergency Planning

Mr Staniland had met with Wyre Forest DC representatives earlier in the day. Officers would be looking further at the arrangements and at the present contract with Worcestershire County Council, in order to rationalise the levels of support provided by the County. It was noted that the County offered a critical link in circumstances where vulnerable people were involved.

f) Environmental Services

Members noted one unresolved matter in this area – a gap in transport business expertise within the Redditch Transport Section. Given that this was an area of huge spend, Officers would be looking further into what was required here.

g) WETT Regulatory Services

Amongst other matters, current levels of staff turnover were leading to some short-term capacity issues. However, plans were in place to manage this.

h) WETT Phase II

Members noted that a number of areas were presently under consideration, although no Business Cases had as yet been worked up. These areas included, Waste and Street Scene, Planning, Housing Strategy & Policy, and Youth & Community Services.

i) Waste & Street Scene

Members indicated that they did not wish to pursue these areas further at the present time.

ii) Youth & Community Services

Both Councils expressed a preference for taking on these services at District level, if this became possible, rather than considering a WETT solution.

iii) Potential Joint Museums Service

It was additionally noted that Worcester City and the County Council had a Joint Museums services and might be looking at an extension of shared service and trust arrangements over the whole of the County. Redditch had joined in these discussions. However, very little had taken place yet, other than initial exploratory discussions.

i) Financial Implications

The Board noted the ongoing savings delivered through the Single Management Team of £330,000 in 2010/11, rising to £450,000 in 2011/12 .

Some £964,000 was estimated to be in line to be delivered through shared services and joint working in 2010/11, of which some £450,000 accrued to Bromsgrove and £514,000 to Redditch. Officers' current estimates assumed that this would be achieved.

Members were reminded, however, that some Shared Service arrangements, such as the Electoral Shared Services had been set up with resilience, rather than savings, as the prime driver for change.

j) Performance Management

Members noted proposals which would provide the basis for a consistent reporting mechanism, which would enable them to spot exceptions and ensure projects were on track. A 'Red, Amber, Green' traffic light reporting system would be used.

Officers advised that this approach came straight from existing project management process shared by both Councils.

k) Joint Property Services WETT

A separate report on Property Services WETT is detailed below in the confidential section of the notes.

(The reports were deemed confidential in view of the fact that ongoing labour relations matters, and terms of contracts would be revealed, plus matters potentially affecting individual members of staff.)

It was AGREED that

- 1) **subject to Members' comments, the report be noted; and**

RECOMMENDED that

- 2) **the improvements to performance management and monitoring of Shared Services, outlined at Section 15 of the Progress report, be endorsed.**

5. DATE OF FUTURE MEETINGS

It was noted that the next meeting, an additional one, would be held on **Tuesday 4th January 2010 at 5.30 p.m. at Redditch Town Hall.**

It was also noted that the next scheduled meetings of the Board were those of 16th February and 29th March 2011.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE AUDIT BOARD

MONDAY, 13TH DECEMBER 2010 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Peters (Chairman), B. Lewis F.CMI (Vice-Chairman), J. T. Duddy, Ms. H. J. Jones and C. R. Scurrall (during Minute No's 32/10 to 38/10 and part of 39/10)

Also in attendance: Ms. J. Hill, Audit Commission (during Minute No's 32/10 to 36/10)

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

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. G. Tanfield, Ms. M. Wall, Mr. A. Bromage and Ms. A. Scarce

32/10 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D. Hancox.

33/10 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

No declarations of interest were received.

34/10 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 27th September 2010 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

Ms. J. Hill from the Audit Commission asked that it be noted at Minute No. 21/10 that "It was proposed that an unqualified opinion on the financial statements would be issued" as this was not issued until 30th September 2010.

35/10 **AUDIT COMMISSION ANNUAL AUDIT LETTER 2009/2010**

A copy of the Annual Audit Letter for 2009/2010 was considered. The Chairman welcomed Ms. J. Hill from the Audit Commission to the meeting. Ms. J. Hill informed Members that she would present the report in the absence of Ms. L. Cave, District Auditor, who had submitted her apologies.

Ms. J. Hill highlighted the following areas which were covered by the report and discussed these in detail with Members.

- Key messages (including the Council's release from the formal engagement process and Shared Services).
- Financial statements and annual governance statement (including the National Fraud Initiative and the estimated savings identified).
- Value for money
- Future challenges
- Action Plan

Ms. J. Hill informed Members that since the preparation of the Audit Letter a review of the Housing Benefit and Council Tax benefit had been concluded. Some errors had been highlighted from the initial sampling and additional work and amendments had been required. A qualification letter had been issued and a detailed report would be issued by February 2011.

Members were advised that the Audit Commission had made 3 recommendations in the Audit Letter. These had been considered by Officers and actions had been agreed to address the issues raised. These were:

- To implement all Annual Governance recommendations within the agreed timescale.
- To implement the Shared Service report recommendations
- To consider the liability arrangements to ensure services were delivered in a compliant way to both Councils.

Ms. J. Hill drew attention to Paragraph 63 of the Annual Audit Letter and reassured Members that following the Government's announcement of the abolition of the Audit Commission they would continue to deliver the Council's 2010/2011 and 2011/2012 audit.

After further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the recommendations included in the Annual Audit Letter 2009/2010 be noted.

36/10 **AUDIT COMMISSION - VALUE FOR MONEY CONCLUSION 2009/2010**

A copy of the Audit Commission Value for Money Conclusion for 2009/2010 was considered.

Ms. J. Hill advised Members this report formed part of the Use of Resources judgement for 2009/2010 and that the Audit Commission were still required to provide this despite the Use of Resources judgement ceasing with immediate effect.

Members were informed that the Audit Commission recognised that the Council had improved its arrangements in several areas and that the improvements would put the Council in a good position moving forward in realising efficiencies for the future funding limitations.

Members requested that the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources passed on the Board's thanks to staff for the work that had been done. The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources informed Members that, from January 2011, Mr. D. Evans would be the Audit Manager for the Council. Mr. Evans was also the Audit Manager for Redditch Borough Council.

RESOLVED that the Value for Money Conclusion Report for 2009/2010 be noted.

37/10 **PROTECTING THE PUBLIC PURSE - LOCAL GOVERNMENT**

The Chairman welcomed Ms. M. Wall, Bromsgrove District Council's Fraud Services Manager to the meeting.

The Fraud Services Manager explained the background of the report to Members and confirmed that it was an accepted fact that fraud would increase because of the current economic climate and that fraud clearly had an adverse impact on the economy and the services which the Council provided to its residents.

The Fraud Services Manager highlighted the high risk areas which had been identified and discussed these in detail with Members:

- Housing Tenancy Fraud
- Single Person Discount Fraud and other Council Tax discounts and exemptions
- Recruitment Fraud
- Procurement
- Blue Badge Fraud

The Fraud Services Manager informed Members that she would be providing Fraud Awareness training for Bromsgrove District Housing Trust Homeless Housing Team and the Council's Housing Strategy staff.

It was also acknowledged that Recruitment Fraud was an area, where without adequate vetting procedures, was easy to manipulate and was an area within the Council which needed to be addressed. The Fraud Services Manager explained that Human Resources were currently undergoing a shared service arrangement and it was difficult to put procedures and training in place. However it had been agreed that this would be a priority when the shared service was finalised. It had also been agreed that Anti Fraud training would be included within the Corporate Induction programme with effect from April 2011.

The Fraud Services Manager also drew Members' attention to the results of the Fraud Survey which had been carried out in October 2010 and highlighted areas of concern. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Audit Commission's Checklist as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be undertaken, to provide a baseline of where we are and to ensure sound governance and counter fraud arrangements are working as intended;
- (b) that the review of the outcomes of the Fraud Survey as shown at Appendix 2 to the report be noted;
- (c) that the review of outcomes of Investigations undertaken by the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team during 2009/2010 and the first 6 months of 2010/2011 be noted;
- (d) that the targeting of the risks identified in the report as raised nationally be approved.

RECOMMENDED that the Cabinet continue to undertake a commitment to fight possible fraud and corruption against the Council, by initially using the Audit Commission's self assessment Checklist at Appendix 1 of the report and to consider potential risks to the Council by utilising the Corporate Anti-Fraud Team (CAFT) to identify and prevent such risks.

38/10 **RISK MANAGEMENT TRACKER - QUARTER 2**

The Chairman welcomed Ms. G. Tanfield, Internal Audit Shared Service Manager to the meeting. Ms. G. Tanfield gave an update on progress of the development of the Internal Audit Shared Service and introduced her colleague, Mr. A. Bromage, Audit Manager, Worcestershire Internal Audit Shared Service, who would be managing the Internal Audit Team at Bromsgrove District Council. Mr. Bromage then presented the Risk Management Tracker report for the period 1st April 2010 to 30th September 2010, Quarter 2.

Members considered a report which presented an overview of the current progress in relation to Actions/Improvements (actions) as detailed in the service area risk registers for the period 1st April 2010 to 30th September 2010. Members were asked to note that Regulatory Services were currently not included within the risk management process to allow for the shared service to be fully embedded and that, with the agreement of the Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources, the Corporate Risk register would not be presented to the meeting due to it still being developed by officers.

Mr. Bromage informed Members that for those risk registers where an update had not been provided, Internal Audit had been unable to verify the progress towards the completion of actions. The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources informed Members that she would be raising this with the Corporate Management Team

Mr. Bromage informed Members there were a total of 39 actions that had been allocated a behind target position rating. Review had verified that these actions were in relation to ongoing projects to ensure improvements were being achieved rather than fundamental problems with processes. The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources informed Members that the Risk Management Steering Group met monthly to review departmental registers and to highlight any concerns with the Head of Service.

RESOLVED that the progress to date against all service area risk register actions for 1st April 2010 to 30th September 2010, Quarter 2, be noted.

39/10 **INTERNAL AUDIT PERFORMANCE AND WORKLOAD 2010/2011**

Consideration was given to a report that provided a summary of the current performance and workload of the Internal Audit Section. The Internal Audit Shared Service Manager informed Members that the 3 outstanding audits from the 2009/2010 Audit Plan had been completed since the last meeting of the Audit Board.

The Internal Audit Shared Service Manager informed Members that a further revision of the plan was required in order to reflect the changes in circumstances as detailed in paragraph 4.5 of the report.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the work completed and the progress against the 2010/2011 plan to 31st October 2010 be approved;
- (b) that the revised Internal Audit Plan for 2010/2011 be approved;
- (c) that the work regarding any investigations be noted;
- (d) that the Current Performance Indicator Statistics be noted; and
- (e) that amendments to the section's standard documentation be noted.

40/10 **LOCAL GOVERNMENT ACT 1972**

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

<u>Minute No.</u>	<u>Paragraphs</u>
41/10	3 and 7

41/10 **RECOMMENDATION TRACKER - QUARTER 2**

Members considered a report that presented a summary of progress to date against audit report 'priority one' and key 'priority two' findings and agreed actions. The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources provided Members with an update for each 'priority one' and key 'priority two' findings and agreed actions.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the "priority one" and key "priority two" findings and agreed actions as set out in Appendices 1 and 2 to the report be noted; and
- (b) that any necessary action and reporting process be agreed.

The meeting closed at 7.42 p.m.

Chairman

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Agenda Item 8

THERE ARE NO ENCLOSURES FOR THIS AGENDA ITEM

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH JANUARY 2011

UPDATE OF MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2011/12 – 2013/14

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Geoff Denaro
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1. To provide information to enable Members to review the current position on the Medium Term Financial Plan 2011/12 – 2013/14 and to make changes to the draft budget proposals.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 It is recommended that Executive Cabinet:

- 2.1.1 Consider the revenue bids 2011/12 – 2013/14 as identified in Appendix A and recommend any changes in priority categorisation.
- 2.1.2 Consider the new capital bids 2011/12 – 2013/14 at Appendix B and recommend any changes in priority categorisation.
- 2.1.3 Consider the current approved capital programme 2011/12 – 2012/13 and recommend any changes
- 2.1.4 Request Heads of Service continue to review the budget with the aim to present a balanced position to the Cabinet meeting in February 2011.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following approval of the Council priorities officers prepared Business Plans to ensure their services were aligned to these priorities and were to be delivered in an efficient and effective way to give quality provision to the customer. As a result of these plans a number of revenue and capital bids have been identified by Heads of Service to enable services to improve.
- 3.2 An officer review has been undertaken of the bids and they have been classified as “High, Medium or Low” depending on the link to the Council priorities. Within the summary statement at 4.5 only those rated as “High”

have been included for funding within the medium term financial plan. These bids are detailed at Appendix A (revenue) and B (capital).

- 3.3 In addition a full detailed review of all unavoidable pressures (costs associated with maintaining current delivery) and proposals for income generation have been identified.
- 3.4 To mitigate the impact of the assumed grant cuts an extensive line by line analysis of all expenditure and income was undertaken. This has realised a number of “quick wins” proposed by officers which will deliver savings with no impact on service delivery.
- 3.5 Any additional income currently generated that delivers more than the target revenue has been built into the projections as a revised target to achieve.
- 3.6 The summary position at 4.5 includes the financial impact of the areas reviewed above.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 On 13th December 2010 the Council received the 2 year provisional grant settlement from the Government. This reflected a significantly greater cut than was previously estimated and has resulted in the 4 year assumption of savings to be made now be realised over 2 years.
- 4.2 Officers have been working towards delivering £1.3m over a 4 year period through delivery of shared service and joint working arrangements together with realising efficiencies and transforming service provision. The increase in the reduction in grant may result in a number of the current plans to share services with Redditch Borough Council to be brought forward to ensure savings are realised earlier than previously assumed.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH JANUARY 2011

4.3 The revised provisional grant settlement is as follows :

	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000
Original Grant	5,047	5,047
Adjust concessionary Fares & Misc adj	-477	-477
Revised Grant	4,570	4,570
Provisional Settlement	3,805	3,308
Provisional Reduction	765	1,262
Provisional % Reduction	16.74%	27.61%
Assumed Reduction	424	720
Assumed % Reduction	8.40%	14.27%
Additional Reduction	341	542
Additional % Reduction	7.46%	11.86%

4.4 The current summary position includes:

- The impact of a reduction in the 2011/12 pay award to 0% - this would result in a zero pay across the Council staff. The current Government proposals are to award £250 for every employee earning under £21k. This has not been factored into the current budget position as the officer recommendation is to keep the award at zero for all staff.
- The Capital bids rated as "High" by Corporate Management Team. The impact of these proposals would ensure that the Councils services are delivered in a quality and effective way to our customers. A number of the Capital proposals are funded by Grant or reserve currently available. The remaining projects will be funded by Capital Receipts which would result in the Council entering into borrowing arrangements in 2013/14.
- All savings realised from the shared services implemented between Bromsgrove and Redditch and those resulting from the WETT arrangements.
- The anticipated savings from the sharing of HR & OD and Policy, Performance Communications and Equalities service across the Councils
- To maintain the ICT reserve of £100k for future years to ensure facilities are available to deliver improvements in technology during transformation.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH JANUARY 2011

- A reduction to the Council Tax in 2011/12 to 0%. The difference of the original assumption of 2.5% increase to be offset by Government Grant allocation over the 4 year period.
- The implementation of the incremental charges at the pay on foot car park
- A surplus of £46k from the Collection Fund for 2010/11 which can offset the revenue budgets for 2011/12.

- 4.5 The revised summary position is shown below. This includes the proposed high pressures only for both revenue and capital.

	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000
Base cost of General Fund Services	12,834	12,958	13,491
Pressures – High bids & unavoids	1,355	1,233	1,233
Borrowing to fund capital programme			26
Savings (quick wins, additional income, shared services, adjustment re concessionary fares)	-2,307	-1,997	-2,005
Investment Income	-117	-94	-66
Recharge to capital programme	-100	-100	-100
Net operating expenditure	11,665	12,000	12,579
Area Based Grant	-135	-135	-135
Surplus from Collection Fund	-46		
Government Grant	-3,805	-3,308	-3,308
Assumed Council Tax @ 0% (offset by 2.5% Gov Grant) 2011/12 & 4.45% 2012/13)	-7,225	-7,442	-7,628
Overall Shortfall	454	1,115	1,508

- 4.6 The Council is to set a balanced budget for 2011/12 – 2013/14 and therefore will have to approve further savings, increase income or reduce high pressures for the 3 year period. Any additional spending, over and above the pressures identified above, would also need to be funded by additional savings.
- 4.7 In January 2010 a number of schemes were proposed and approved for the period 2011/12 – 2012/13. These are included in the projections at 4.5. The details of these proposed schemes are included in Appendix C for members consideration.

4.8 Balances

- 4.8.1 The current projected level of balances at 31.03.11 is £1.174m assuming all costs approved are spent. The current prudent level of balances for the Council is £850k. .

4.9 Fees and charges

- 4.9.1 Fees and charges are currently under review with the aim to maximise the revenue generated whilst ensuring the charges are sustainable in the community. A report will be presented to the February Cabinet meeting to propose the fees and charges to be levied as part of the formal approval of the medium term financial plan..

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 None other than those identified in this report.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 None as a direct result of this budget update.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None as a direct result of this budget update. Should a number of the bids be approved in February there are potentially policy changes to ensure their implementation. These will be advised to members if required.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The delivery of a balanced budget demonstrates the Councils ability to fund objectives and priorities within a reasonable level of increase to residents.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:
- 9.2 Non compliance with the statutory deadlines to set a balanced budget.
- 9.3 No formal consultation undertaken with the public
- 9.4 These risks are being managed as follows:

9.5 Non compliance with statutory deadlines

Risk Register: Financial Services
Key Objective Ref.: 6
Key Objective: Effective and Efficient Accountancy Service

9.6 No formal consultation undertaken with the public

Risk Register: Financial Services
Key Objective Ref.: 6
Key Objective: Effective and Efficient Accountancy Service

9.7 Key actions and controls to manage these risks include:

- Detailed timetable in place to manage the budget process with departments and accountancy support
- Allocation of qualified and professional staff to focus on budget setting accounts
- Regular updates at Corporate Management Team in relation to budget processes
- Formal consultation on the budget with the Budget Jury
- Formal consultation in place with unions and individual employees

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

10.1 The setting of the budget against the Corporate Priorities will ensure that the Council demonstrates to the customer that we have aligned our resources to the key services required.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 The Equality and Diversity bids have been recommended for members consideration by the Forum. In addition all new bids / services will have an impact assessment prepared to ensure they meet the needs of all the community.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

12.1 All funding received and expended by the Council is subject to a robust framework of procurement and value for money to ensure the Council is maximising its resources.

CABINET

5TH JANUARY 2011

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

13.1 None as a direct result of this report

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 The proposals contained within the report are subject to formal member decision in relation to the sharing of services and any potential employee implications. Staff are being kept fully informed of member and officer considerations together with the union representatives.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 None as a direct result of the budget update.

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

16.1 None as a direct result of the budget update

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

17.1 None as a direct result of the budget update

18. LESSONS LEARNT

18.1 The budget report is reviewed to ensure the information enables members to make informed and considered decisions on the future budget and financial arrangements of the Council.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

19.1 The Budget Jury has been involved fully in the budget review and rating of proposed bids and savings. The formal feedback from the Jury will be presented as part of the meeting.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5TH JANUARY 2011

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	Yes
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	N/A

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

22. APPENDICES

Appendix A – Revenue Bids

Appendix B – Capital Bids

Appendix C – Currently Approved Capital Programme

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Detailed Budget working papers

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Jayne Pickering

E Mail: j.pickering@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Tel: 01527-881400

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5th January 2011

CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE STRATEGY – EVERY CUSTOMER, EVERY TIME

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Geoff Denaro
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda de Warr
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To agree the Every Customer, Every Time, Customer Experience Strategy.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That the Cabinet approve the adoption of the Every Customer, Every time Customer Experience Strategy, attached in Appendix 1.

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 This is the first joint customer experience strategy and aims to build on the achievements of the Customer First Strategy previously in place in Bromsgrove.
- 3.2 Ongoing actions from the previous strategy as well as customer service actions identified in individual service business plans have been pulled into this strategy, along with new initiatives aimed at improving the overall customer service we provide as an organisation.
- 3.3 The strategy does not intend to be exhaustive, because in reality almost everything the council does contributes to the overall customer experience.
- 3.4 It focuses on the key principle that ‘everybody matters’ and pulls together our transformation aspirations and our commitment to developing staff - because great customer service starts with our people. It also covers the basics of excellent customer experience, and understanding our customers.
- 3.5 Whilst customer ‘access’ is important, this forms only part of the overall customer experience, therefore this strategy looks at the wider picture.
- 3.6 The strategy aims to be a living document and one which anyone can easily understand. This document will be supported with a staff handbook as well detailed guidance on specific areas of customer interactions.

4. KEY ISSUES

The four key themes in the strategy are already well established within our organisations. The Every Customer, Every Time strategy establishes the link between the themes in respect of our customers but also recognises that great customer service starts with our staff and ends with 'right first time, every time' service delivery.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

The only specific financial implications are in respect of the cost of Customer Service Excellence accreditation, and gathering customer feedback. However, the lack of budget would not entirely prohibit activity in these areas and we can find ways of managing within the resources available.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

There are no specific legal implications

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

As set out in the Strategy at Appendix 1

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

The recommended strategy is in line with the Council's vision in respect of in respect of providing high quality access to services.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

9.1 Failure to adopt a clear strategy aimed at improving the customer experience would indicate a failure to understand customers needs, and an unwillingness to drive customer service improvement. This could have a negative impact on the Council's reputation.

9.2 Identified risks have been included in the Customer Services Risk Register.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

This strategy puts the customer at the heart of everything we are doing, and aims to ensure we become a truly customer 'obsessed' organisation evidenced through our actions, our staff, the way we behave, and the decisions we make in respect of service delivery.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

The strategy apply to all customers and recognises that some customers have individual needs. An impact assessment based on the proposed strategy has been completed and there are no specific actions arising.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

Improvements in customer service generally results in a reduction of preventable contact which increases value for money, by increasing capacity to deal with other issues. The transformation work in particular will not only improve customer service but also identify savings,

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

Development of improved online service will enable more customers to do their business on the internet thus potentially reducing travel to the Customer Service Centre.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

This strategy impacts on every member of staff and also future members of staff as we set out clear expectations of the team in respect of their behaviour.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

Improving the customer experience improves general satisfaction with the Council.

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

None

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

None

18. LESSONS LEARNT

N/A

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

The strategy has been presented to the Equalities and Diversity Forum and some staff consultation has taken place via a newly formed staff customer focus group. Senior Managers and Heads of Services have been consulted. Wider consultation was not considered necessary at this time as customers are unlikely to disagree with the aims or actions which will provide for a better customer experience for all. We will use customer feedback to help establish future actions.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes
Executive Director – Leisure, Cultural, Environmental and Community Services	Through CMT
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Through CMT
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	Through CMT
Head of Service	Author
Head of Resources	Through CMT
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Through CMT
Corporate Procurement Team	N/A

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All Wards

22. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Draft Customer Experience Strategy

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

N/A

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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EVERY CUSTOMER EVERY TIME

“Everybody matters”

**A Customer Experience Strategy for Bromsgrove District and
Redditch Borough Councils**

2011 - 2014



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



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1. Foreword

Welcome to the customer experience strategy for Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils.

This is the first joint customer strategy and marks an important step in our aim to share services whilst maintaining local identity and political control.

We recognise that the needs of individuals vary but customers; wherever they live or do their business, have the same expectations in respect of customer services and access to services. As Councils have no tangible 'product' and customers have no choice about which council they can go to, our reputation rests on the quality of our service provision which is why the provision of excellent customer service is so important to us. By working together we can also ensure value for money.

This strategy builds on the good work already done in both Councils to improve customer service and access to services in recent years. It sets out our vision for customer service delivery and how we will make a real difference to the customer service provision.

Councillor Geoff Denaro
Portfolio holder, Bromsgrove District
Council



Councillor Michael Braley
Portfolio holder, Redditch Borough
Council



2. Introduction

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough councils began sharing the services they provide to residents, and the management team that operates both authorities, during 2008/09. We have now started a radical 3 year transformation programme to review all our services and look to share provision when opportunities arise.

Our vision for high quality customer services is driven by the need to improve the experience customers have when contacting us, or doing business with us. We want to give our customers confidence that we can be relied upon to provide the best quality service within available resources. We want to ensure value for money, whilst also aiming to get more right first time. We want to ensure that customers do not have to contact us several times to get the service they have requested which will also save taxpayers money.

Considerable work had already been done in both Councils. In Bromsgrove through the Customer First Programme, and in Redditch, the Customer Access Strategy, and we have seen many achievements in the development of customer service provision. This strategy will build on these achievements. The work that has been done in Bromsgrove to map customer journeys and identify improvements to service delivery through the service action plans will continue and will, by joined up business planning, spread across both authorities. In Redditch work such as in respect of Customer Service Excellence in Housing and the improvement plans in Benefits support the actions in this strategy.

In developing a joint strategy it is necessary to accept the differences within the two Councils, in respect of customer base and culture, and work with them for the benefit of the customer, taking both organisations forward on a journey to excellence.

Whilst many of the national drivers for such a strategy have been removed by the coalition Government this does not remove our desire to ensure we have a strong commitment to driving customer service provision locally.

The shift of power from Westminster to local people will give communities and individuals a bigger voice. The Structural Reform Plan also includes proposals for giving residents the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and veto excessive council tax increases. 'New Localism' – the name the Government has given this new way of thinking and working - also suggests an increased focus on community engagement, through techniques like participatory budgeting and neighbourhood budgets. We recognise that services built around customer needs are a priority in the current political and economic climate and, more importantly, an expectation of customers and tax payers. Transformation of service delivery using the 'systems thinking approach' will help to ensure that we achieve this priority.

This strategy sits alongside our other local strategies, such as the Council Plan, Equality and Diversity Strategy, Workforce Development, and our Climate Change Strategy and the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement, which makes the link between national, regional and local policy. It also fits with the Total Place agenda, which looks at how we can work with other partners to drive through efficiencies and take a holistic approach to public service provision.

At both Bromsgrove at Redditch we have strong local priorities.

Bromsgrove District Council Priorities	Redditch Borough Council Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic Development.• Town Centre.• Value for Money• One Community.• Housing.• Climate Change.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• An enterprising community.• Safe.• Clean and green.• A well managed organisation

This Strategy and all related objectives have synergy with the priorities of both authorities and specifically help to ensure we provide **Value for Money** and have a **Well Managed Organisation**

A robust service business planning framework exists and customer service delivery forms an integral part of the development plans of each service.

Finally, we work closely with Worcestershire County Council, though the Worcestershire Hub Partnership to deliver joined up customer access. This partnership, made up of all the districts and the county council has successfully developed face to face, telephone and online access points for customers to gain easy, one stop access to services. This strategy sits alongside the Worcestershire Hub 'Our Customers' Strategy and the countywide Self Service Strategy.

This document not only sets out our vision but also how we aim to make this happen. This will only be a part of the journey and as customer needs change, and service delivery develops to meet those changing needs, this strategy will also change. Therefore it will be reviewed annually in line with our timetable for business planning and budget setting.

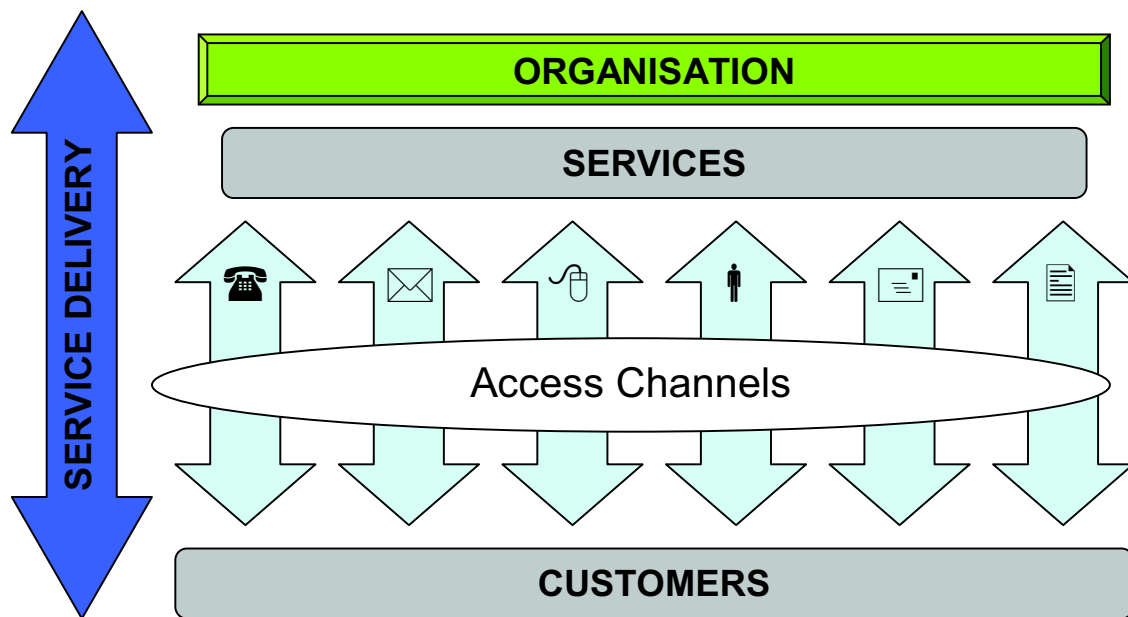
Consultation with staff has taken place via our staff Customer Focus Group, as well as with senior managers and members. The strategy takes into account the results of the Hub customer survey, conducted in Dec 2009 and the View Point survey conducted early in 2010. Feedback has been received from the Ethnic and Diversity Forum (Bromsgrove) and the Community Forum in Redditch.

3. Current Position

Both authorities had Customer Access Strategies in place which have steered the work to improve customer service over recent years. These have resulted in many improvements such as:-

- ✓ More services are now available through the Hub Customer Service Centres in both Bromsgrove and Redditch.
- ✓ Clear standards of service are in place for all services.
- ✓ Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council's are now signed up to the county wide interpreting and translation service which enables customers for whom English is not a first language to receive translation and interpretation support. It is hoped that providing the same service across the County, which manages requests on a case by case basis rather than just translating leaflets on mass, that people who live and work in different parts of the County will receive the same service Countywide.
- ✓ The Housing Service in Redditch was awarded the Charter Mark, which recognises excellent customer service, for the 5th year running.
- ✓ The benefits team in Redditch has recently introduced visiting officers who go to people's homes to assist with benefits applications.
- ✓ Redditch Borough Council introduced the Community Forum and this is now a thriving group of partners, stakeholders, and residents, who meet regularly to discuss the equality and diversity issues that relate to our services and the way they are delivered to minority groups.
- ✓ Customer First training was delivered to all staff in Bromsgrove and backed up with useful guidance in respect of handling customer feedback.
- ✓ The websites for both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils were re-launched, using a countywide template to make navigation consistent and information easier to find. We worked with the RNIB and a local visually impaired support group to ensure the site meets the specific needs of people with sight problems. We have also reduced the number of contact addresses and 'phone numbers published on the website to make it easier for customers to contact us. We also increased the number of online services available, for example online benefits applications in Redditch.
- ✓ Customer Feedback is being used to inform changes to service delivery and reported regularly to members and customers, and we invested in a system to ensure we can properly track and report on this feedback.
- ✓ Customer service based improvements are a key part in every service's business planning.
- ✓ Redditch Matters magazine has been launched to ensure residents are kept informed of council and community developments.
- ✓ Customers now have a say in the way that the Council spends their money with a budget jury made up of people from across the Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
- ✓ Customer service behaviour and objectives now form part of the annual personal development review for each member of staff.

4. What do we mean by 'access to services?'



However customers make contact with us, whether it is by telephone, email, the internet, in person, or via other means, we want them to find that access is quick and easy. However, the geographical nature of the district of Bromsgrove and Redditch Borough means that access may be limited to a smaller number of channels and customers will, by necessity, be forced to use particular means of contacting us.

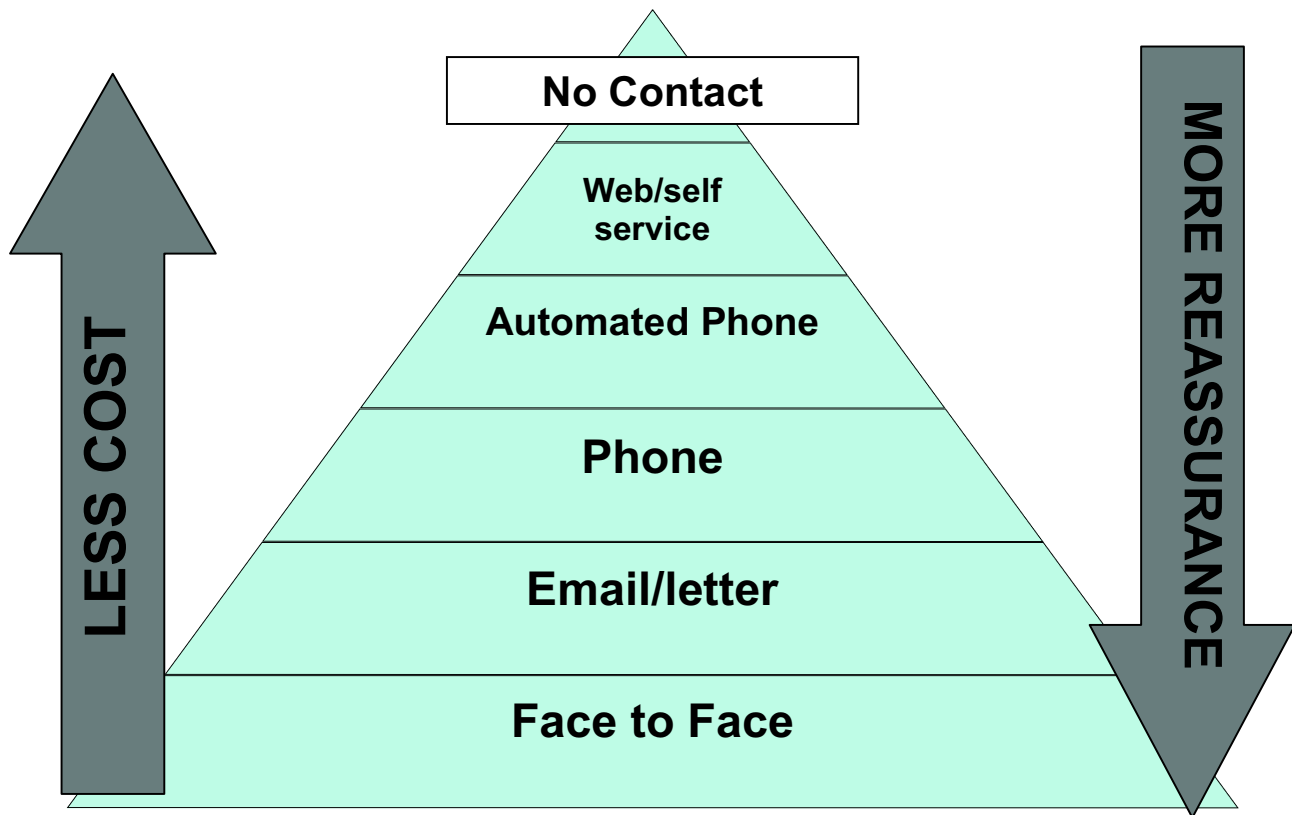
A recent survey of 1,185 residents of Worcestershire, carried out in December 2009 indicated that nearly 40% of residents contact us by telephone and 30% through face to face contact at one of the Customer Service Centres or One Stop Shops. 24% of people who completed the survey said they made contact online, via the internet or email.

83% of people said they used the internet at home and over half of all the people asked said they would consider using the internet to access council services. The survey also told us that people who tried to do their business online were also more likely to have to contact us more than once to resolve their enquiry. 43% of all responders who had to get in touch with us more than once did so because their enquiry was not resolved, and a further 38% were trying to find out what progress had been made in respect of their issue.

This suggests that we have some work to do to improve the online contact channels as this could provide better access for those people who cannot use some of the other methods of contacting us. We also need to get more right first time and get better at telling customers what is happening, or when they can expect action, in respect of matters they raise with us.

We also have contacts with many people who are instigated by us, or through everyday activities, for example at the Leisure or Community Centres, or contact with Shopmobility, or Dial a Ride amongst many others, and it is equally important to us that these contacts are positive for our customers.

There is a generally accepted model for the effectiveness of the major channels of contact available which is shown below.



What this model shows is that as we move up the triangle the costs gets lower for the organisation. However, for some types of contact a greater level of human contact is necessary, particularly where greater reassurance is needed. It is therefore vital to understand the types of contacts and the level of reassurance that a customer is likely to require when designing services for customers.

5. Our Vision

This strategy applies to **all** our customers, whether they live, work or visit Bromsgrove or Redditch. It applies to businesses, partners, other agencies and our internal customers (employees). The strategy is driven by a clear vision which links directly with our corporate priorities.

Our vision is to:-

- **make it easy to access services, joining up with other organisations where possible;**
- **provide a high quality customer experience for all customers who make contact with us, regardless of when or how they make contact;**
- **ensure customers get the information and advice they need in a way that suits their needs and is easy to understand.**

In practical terms this means that for all services and activities we will:

- Always put the customer first by:
 - Treating them as individuals.
 - Listening to them.
 - Taking ownership of problems.
 - Doing the little things – ensuring attention to detail, and going the extra mile, because we know it makes a difference.
- Work with other organisations to provide joined up services.
- Listen to and act on feedback and tell customers what we've done.
- Ensure customers get a quick response, and action or information on progress, so that they don't have to keep chasing us.
- Keep everyone informed.
- Communicate in plain language, which is easy to understand and removes the need for customers to contact us for explanations.
- Get the basics right.
- Develop our online services to provide easier access for those who can do their business with us online, and ensure it meets customer's needs.
- Use our service reviews to tailor services to our customers needs.
- Look for more efficient ways of doing things to make savings wherever possible to deliver value for money services.
- Get more right first time.

The ultimate aim of this strategy is to have people, systems, and processes in place which make it easy for customers to contact the Council by using a variety of access points. To ensure everyone gets the same excellent level of service and to have questions and issues dealt with at the first point of contact as often as possible.

We aim to exceed expectations and delight our customers.

6. Understanding our customers

Both Councils undertake a great deal of work to consult with our customers. We also gather a lot of data about customers which is held on various systems.

We use customer feedback, such as complaints and compliments to tell us how well we are doing and where we could do better and customer satisfaction surveys are used by many departments to gain direct feedback from service users.

We need to further develop our knowledge of customers and their needs, so that we can tailor our services appropriately. There is a growing need to use 'customer insight' to enable us to target services, communications and inform service developments. Whilst customer insight data can be bought in, it is how we use it that will affect the success of its use.

We will further exploit the potential of customer insight tools, to inform on lifestyle profiling which if used in conjunction with other information we already hold about customers, will help to provide a coherent view of our customers.

We will also continue to actively engage customers in decision making through dialogue where major changes in service provision are likely.

7. How will we know we are getting it right?

The judges of the success of this strategy will be the users of the services, - people who contact us for whatever reason.

Greater satisfaction with the Council and the individual services will be a key indicator of success.

Other measureable outcomes will be:

- More things done right first time.
- Increased take up of the cheaper access channels, such as online or automatic payment methods.
- Excellence in customer service provision recognised by achieving the Customer Services Excellence accreditation.
- Resolution of enquiries at the first point of contact.
- The removal of avoidable contact.
- Joined up services or co-location of public services, so that customers can access a wider range of services in one place.
- Removal of unnecessary red tape.
- Customer focused staff.
- Confident, decisive and supportive managers.
- Greater customer and staff involvement in the design of service delivery.
- Reduced costs and better value for money.

Satisfaction surveys, Worcestershire Viewpoint (residents' panel) results, Customer feedback through complaints and compliments, and reduced avoidable contact will be used to measure success. We will also use the Customer Service Excellence Accreditation to assess our progress.

8. Delivering value for money and making savings

This is obviously a major priority.

Technology needs to be exploited to provide greater ability to self serve and allow customers to do their business with us at a time that suits them, from the comfort of their own home or workplace. For the 17% of residents who do not have access to the internet at home we need to ensure that other mechanisms exist and this may mean extending public internet in Council offices, or finding other alternatives such as mobile phone technology, kiosks, or digital TV.

We will actively encourage the use of contact-less and self service channels for payments, which are expensive to handle face to face.

We will work with our partners across Worcestershire to ensure we provide joined up services. We will also develop other partnerships, where it is appropriate to do so, to bring services together and reduce costs.

Our approach to reviewing how we deliver services will enable us to assess what customers really need and remove unnecessary and costly steps in the process. This will also reduce 'avoidable' contact – contact that could have been prevented if we had done things differently. This not only reduces costs but also significantly improves the service to customers.

9. Responding to the challenge

This strategy is built around 4 key themes which enable us to focus on how we meet the challenge of delivering the best quality services that meet the needs of individuals for the lowest possible costs.

Customer experience - going back to basics to ensure that the customer's experience of contacting us is always positive – even when we can't give the answer the customer wants.

Transform – reviewing, and changing, service delivery based on what customers actually want and need and building the processes around the customer rather than to meet organisational needs.

Understanding the customer (including internal customers or partners) – through feedback, complaints, compliments, surveys, forums, and using customer insight tools such as Mosaic and the information held on our own systems.

Our Staff – ensuring all our staff are truly customer focused, and share the values and behaviours necessary to ensure we exceed our standards and our customer's expectations.

By implementing this Strategy we will make a significant contribution to the delivery of both Council's priorities specifically ensuring we provide **Value for Money** (Bromsgrove District Council) and have a **Well Managed Organisation** (Redditch Borough Council). We will also ensure that the needs of all our customers are met and that we meet our pledges in respect of **equality and diversity**.

EVERY CUSTOMER – EVERY TIME
"Everybody matters"

THEME 1 – CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Good customer service is an entitlement, not a privilege. By going back to basics to ensure that the customer's experience of contacting us is always positive, even when we can't give the answer the customer wants, we will ensure that we exceed our standards and delight our customers. We know that customers expect a high level of customer service and we must never lose sight of the fact that we are here for the customers benefit.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ That every customer should receive a high quality service every time. ✓ That every customer should be treated with respect. ✓ That customers should know we are genuine. ✓ That customers should understand the information we provide them with. ✓ That customers should know who is dealing with their issues and have confidence that something will be done. ✓ That customers have the right to feedback to us their 	<p>Aim high – OK is not good enough and excellence will be our standard.</p> <p>We will go the extra mile and take pride in our work, setting goals to strive to achieve excellent results.</p> <p>Treat everyone as we would like to be treated whether customers, colleagues, staff or Members.</p> <p>Treat people as individuals.</p> <p>Be consistent and fair.</p> <p>Mean what we say and do what we say we will.</p> <p>Let customers know if we cannot meet the timescales originally agreed, or set out in our Customer Service Pledges</p> <p>If we cannot meet a customers needs we will be up front about this because even though we can't give the answer a customer wants we do care about their issue.</p> <p>Use Plain English, and present information in a way that is easy for all to understand</p> <p>Ensure staff use the website in their every day</p>	<p>1.1 Revise and relaunch our customer service standards (Customer Experience Pledges)</p> <p>1.2 Review our Customer journey mapping and ensure all actions are completed.</p> <p>1.3 Review recruitment procedures to ensure customer focus is at the heart of successful candidates.</p> <p>1.4 Develop staff 'protocols' to ensure all staff are clear of the behaviour expected of everyone when dealing with customers.</p> <p>1.5 Develop and implement a customer focused training plan</p> <p>1.6 Develop and launch a staff customer service guide.</p> <p>1.7 Implement Plain English Training</p> <p>1.8 Review all information/letters/web pages to ensure they are easy to understand, are empathetic, and remove the need for clarification.</p> <p>1.9 Develop and conduct a customer satisfaction survey</p> <p>1.10 Develop peer review and mystery shopping mechanisms.</p>

<p>experiences and that we should use this information to shape future improvements.</p> <p>✓ That we should evaluate our customer service performance</p>	<p>work to ensure that it is fit for purpose</p> <p>Give our names when we have contact with customers</p> <p>Take ownership, not pass the buck and never blame others when things don't go to plan.</p> <p>If we have made a mistake we will be open and honest and work with the customer to establish a satisfactory outcome</p> <p>Improve our customer feedback process to ensure that customers who find it necessary to complain can do so easily and receive a quality response – even if we can't change the outcome.</p> <p>Work towards Customer Service Excellence Accreditation.</p>	<p>1.11 Achieve Customer Service Excellence accreditation.</p> <p>1.12 Reduce avoidable contact</p> <p>1.13 Get more 'Right First Time'</p> <p>1.14 Tailor our marketing, promotional and communication materials to suit the needs of all our customers.</p> <p>1.15 Work with minority groups where appropriate to improve access to services.</p> <p>1.16 Use customer complaints as a force for good, identifying service improvement opportunities.</p>
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THEME 2 – TRANSFORMATION

By reviewing, and changing, service delivery based on what customers actually want and need and building the processes we use around the customer rather than to meet organisational needs, we will drive out waste, reduce preventable contact and make savings. Customers will see changes to the way we do things as we roll out our three year programme of transformation. This is coupled with a move to sharing services wherever possible to maximise resilience within the teams, provide a more cost effective service and ensure a consistently high standard of service for customers of both authorities.

Wherever possible we need to work with other organisations to develop joint service provision and make it easier for our customers to do business with all public services. We know that customers see local government as a single organisation so we already provide joint access to County Council and District council services. We also need to explore how we could extend this to include other public services through co-location or joint service delivery.

Many services already have good working relationships with other organisations in the course of delivering services and these will continue to be developed and maximized for the benefit of customers.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<p>✓ Services should be customer focused and easy to access across a range of access channels.</p> <p>✓ In getting the best possible value out of our resources.</p> <p>✓ In eliminating wasteful duplications or inefficient process.</p> <p>✓ In reducing preventable contact, where customers have to contact us a number of times to get something done, or to chase progress.</p> <p>✓ That technology should support and enhance customer access and service delivery.</p> <p>✓ That by working with others we can make better use of resources and expertise.</p> <p>✓ That partnerships are fundamental to delivering excellent joined-up services.</p>	<p>Review our service delivery and processes to shape them around the customers needs, using systems thinking methodology, which assesses customer demand and plans for 'perfect' service delivery.</p> <p>Ensure that when planning new processes we cut out non value work.</p> <p>Work with other organisations to develop joined up service delivery and make it easier for customers to access public services</p> <p>Ensure that wherever possible customers can access services online, over the phone and face to face.</p> <p>Provide a one stop service and reduce the number of times customers have to make contact with us to get something done.</p> <p>Develop a way of enabling customers to tell us about change of personal details once rather than numerous times.</p> <p>Develop our web service to enable more to be done through self service.</p> <p>Encourage customers to use self service where it is possible to do so.</p>	<p>2.1 Review key frontline services using the systems thinking methodology and put the customer at the heart of changes to the end to end process.</p> <p>2.2 Increase resolution at first point of contact, where ever and with whomever that contact might be.</p> <p>2.3 Develop a 'Tell us once' mechanism for customer changes of address and other details.</p> <p>2.4 Implement Shared Services where it is appropriate, cost effective and beneficial to service delivery.</p> <p>2.5 Work with partners to join up service provision and provide more cost effective services.</p> <p>2.6 Work with our local government partners across Worcestershire to develop self service.</p> <p>2.7 Review and revise web content to ensure it is relevant and fit for purpose.</p> <p>2.8 Continue to develop our online service to ensure that those who want to, can access information and services via the web.</p> <p>2.8 Maintain public internet access at our Customer Service Centres.</p> <p>2.9 Provide mediated web access and customer awareness training to encourage take up of self service.</p> <p>2.10 Maintain one phone number for council services (with limited number of 'specialist' phone numbers to allow 'menu-less' access to telephone services).</p>

		<p>2.11 Ensure customer service features in action plans in all services, as part of our business planning process.</p> <p>2.12 Review face to face service to ensure resources are most effectively used.</p> <p>2.13 Use previously developed customer service initiatives where appropriate across any new shared services.</p>
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THEME 3 – UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER

In order that we communicate properly with customers, fully understand customer needs and shape our services in a way that best suits the majority we need to use all of the feedback we gather. We currently receive feedback via Members, complaints, compliments, surveys and forums and we need to use this ‘intelligence’ to help shape service improvements. By actively engaging with customers, staff, Members and partners and joining up all the information we hold we will be able to develop a wider view with which to inform the service transformations and service improvement plans. This will enable us to build service delivery around the needs of customers rather than around the organisational structure.

Customer insight information is valuable to help us to target communications appropriately and cost effectively. We need to use the information we receive through customer insight tools to inform the redesign of services and mainstream its use within the decision making process for all policy and procedural changes.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<p>✓ That customers have the right to tell us if they are unhappy with the service we have provided.</p> <p>✓ That our customers concerns are our concerns – we should know what they are and act on them if it is possible to do so.</p>	<p>Ensure our customer feedback process is easy to understand and that complaints are dealt with at the highest possible level</p> <p>Publicise the ways in which residents and business can engage with us.</p> <p>Consult with customers</p> <p>Conduct customer satisfaction surveys</p>	<p>3.1 Relaunch our Customer Feedback policy.</p> <p>3.2 Implement computer software to ensure all complaints are captured and followed up.</p> <p>3.3 Develop a method of monitoring web content to ensure it meets customers needs</p> <p>3.4 Provided guidance on how to get involved at the Council.</p>

<p>✓ That customers should know how to get involved with the Council.</p> <p>✓ Customers should have a say in how/where savings are made.</p> <p>✓ That we should ask you what you thought of the service we provided.</p> <p>✓ That our own staff are also a valuable source of information</p>	<p>and follow up calls to make sure customers received the information or service they needed.</p> <p>Consult with staff about internal service provision.</p> <p>Look at best practice in other organisations and identify projects where better customer knowledge would help us to engage and consult better.</p> <p>Use customer insight data to inform and target publicity campaigns.</p> <p>Implement automated feedback technology.</p>	<p>3.5 Provide the public with the opportunity to get involved in our budget setting via the annual Budget Jury and on-line budget consultation</p> <p>3.6 Continue to consult with customers through public forums and customer satisfaction surveys</p> <p>3.7 Conduct Staff/internal customer surveys</p> <p>3.8 Implement a joint staff customer focus forum, to act as champions of customer service throughout the organisations.</p> <p>3.9 Maintain and develop individual service satisfaction surveys</p> <p>3.10 Implement a ‘follow up calls’ regime where by staff contact a sample of customers to ensure that a recent request for service has been properly dealt with.</p> <p>3.11 Implement GovMetric to capture real time customer feedback on their experience.</p> <p>3.12 Develop a joint Consultation Strategy? Is this planned?</p> <p>3.13 Use customer insight to inform decision making and communications</p> <p>3.14 Include Customer Impact assessment in decision making process.</p> <p>3.15 Improve the quality of data held about customers on our customer relationship management system.</p> <p>3.16 Carry out service consultation with users (and non users where appropriate) and use the results to inform service improvement.</p>
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THEME 4 - OUR STAFF

Great customer service starts with our staff and they are key to ensuring we are a truly customer focused organisation. It is vital that all staff understand the value of great service and share the values and behaviours necessary to ensure we exceed our standards and our customer's expectations. Excellent examples should be celebrated and shared for others to learn from. Poor performance will be addressed and opportunities to develop will be provided. Many of our staff have little contact with external customers but this does not mean they don't have customers. The role of these staff is to support the front line services, who are therefore their customers and this strategy applies equally to all.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ That all staff should be 'customer obsessed'. ✓ Staff should be praised for good service and helped to improve if they sometimes fall short of our expectations. ✓ That all staff should be sensitive to individual customer needs. ✓ That only people who are committed to providing excellent customer service should join the team. 	<p>Make sure that all staff understand their role within the organisation and that the role of the Council is to provide customer service.</p> <p>Use customer feedback and our own observations of staff behaviour to evaluate performance and address issues through our performance development framework</p> <p>Make sure that every member of staff sees others points of view, is sensitive to people's feelings and acknowledge the customers concerns.</p> <p>Ensure our recruitment policies are clear about expected behaviours.</p> <p>Ensure that sufficient and appropriate training is in place</p>	<p>4.1 Performance development will include customer service development for all staff.</p> <p>4.2 Our Corporate Training Plans will include customer service training, to help staff deal with specific areas and general customer awareness.</p> <p>4.3 Core skills will be developed for all staff which will include customer service skills.</p> <p>4.4 Core Skills for managers will be developed which will include skills for managing a customer focused service and staff performance issues</p> <p>4.5 Maintain the Corporate Management Team (CMT) Back to the Floor initiative and develop this to encourage all managers to spend at least one half day per year working with a different team.</p>

<p>✓ That managers should ensure that their team provides the expected level of service.</p> <p>✓ Staff should understand who their customer is.</p>	<p>Ensure excellent service is recognised and poor performance addressed.</p> <p>Ensure that all teams, regardless of their function consider how they serve their customers whoever they may be.</p> <p>Remove blockages and challenge issues which create barriers to providing excellent service.</p> <p>Lead change positively throughout the organisations</p> <p>Create pride in the organisations and our achievements</p>	<p>4.6 Develop our Induction Packs and training to ensure customer focus is a key part of our instruction to new starters</p> <p>4.7 Maintain CMT Walk the Wards initiative</p> <p>4.8 Staff Awards (BAFTAs / Redditch Staff Awards scheme)</p> <p>4.9 Utilise Staff Ideas Schemes to capture staff ideas and suggestions</p> <p>4.10 Develop home working where appropriate to support staff in undertaking their duties.</p> <p>4.11 Develop the staff intranet to ensure that all staff have access to appropriate information.</p>
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Our Customer Service Pledge

Our customers are important to us and we aim to provide high quality services, exceed customer expectations and delight our customers. We will treat you as individuals, listen carefully to you, be sensitive to your needs, and take ownership of problems so that you can be confident that someone is dealing with your issue.

What customers can expect from us...

We will:-

- be friendly, polite, helpful, attentive and considerate at all times;
- provide accurate and clear information;
- use plain English and avoid jargon or technical terms;
- be open and honest about what we can and cannot deliver;
- get back to you when we say we will, and advise you of our progress when we are taking longer than anticipated to address an issue.

We always aim to get it right first time, every time so that you don't have to keep contacting us about the same issue.

If the first person you have contact with cannot help you and they have to pass on your enquiry to someone else they will tell you who will be dealing with it.

If your enquiry cannot be dealt with at the time you contact us we will make sure you know what is happening and when you can expect to receive further contact from us.

Some services have to work to different standards because of laws that set out how they must operate and details these are available online or from the relevant service. Otherwise the following timescales will apply when you contact us.

We will always make our services, offices and information as accessible as possible to all our customers.

Whilst our focus is on quality, we also aim to provide a quality response within an acceptable period. As a guide these are the timeframes we aim to work within:-

Emails

When you **email** us we aim to respond to all customer enquiries requiring a response within **2 days** of the day it was received by us. In most cases this will be a full response but if the issue will take longer to investigate or resolve we will tell you when you can expect a full response.

If the officer you have emailed is out of the office you will be advised when that officer will be available and who to contact in the meantime if your enquiry is urgent.

Letters

We aim respond to all customer enquiries made by **letter** within **7 working days** of the date it is received by us. In most cases this will be a full response but if the issue will take longer to investigate or resolve before we can get back to you we will tell you when we intend to get a full response out to you.

In person

If you visit one of our customer service centres in **person**, we aim to see you within **5 minutes of your arrival to find out the nature of your enquiry**. If you need to see a customer service advisor we will then see you as soon possible and wherever possible within 15 minutes. We will advise you of

approximate waiting times if it will be longer than 15 minutes and advise you of alternative options if appropriate.

If the person you see cannot help you they will tell you who can and provide you with facilities to speak to them if they are within our organisation or pass on contact details if this is more suitable. If you need assistance with English a telephone interpreter can be provided at this time.

If it is appropriate for you to have an appointment with a specialist officer we will make the necessary arrangements for you to see them at the time that is most convenient to you (within normal office hours). If you need assistance with English an interpreter, or a British Sign Language interpreter (subject to availability) will be arranged for the appointment.

If you have an appointment with a member of staff they will see you on time.

Telephone

If you call the customer services centre one of our customer service advisors aims to answer telephone calls within **20 seconds (6 rings)** during opening times (link to opening times).

At times of peak demand we will advise you if you are in queue and will keep waiting times as short as possible.

Staff in all other offices aim to answer 100% of their 'phone calls within **20 seconds (6 rings)** between 9am and 5pm.

If you need assistance with English a telephone interpreter can be provided at this time.

If voicemail is activated you will be told when the member of staff is going to be available and given an alternative number to call in the event the enquiry is urgent. Staff will respond to voicemail messages within 1 working day of the date of the call, or within 1 working day of the date the message tells you they will return to the office.

Online

We will ensure all the information on our website is accurate, up to date and makes sense to customers.

Complaints

We will acknowledge all complaints made through our complaints procedure within 2 working days and carry out investigations to enable us to respond to you within 15 working days of receipt of your complaint. If this is not possible we will tell you exactly when you can expect a response from us.

Home visits

If we have an appointment to visit you at home we will:

- ensure you understand the reason for the visit;
- let you know if we cannot keep the appointment, or if we are going to be delayed;
- ensure you and your home is treated with respect; and
- let you know what we will do next if follow up action is necessary.

We value the diversity of our communities and want to ensure that everyone has fair access to our services. We are therefore committed to equality and diversity in the way we respond to your needs and in the way we provide our services. We will not discriminate unfairly or unlawfully on any grounds and in particular the grounds of race, gender (including gender identity), disability, age, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. Different services may be offered, or services may be provided in a different way where it would be appropriate to do so (e.g. different services may be offered based on age or a service may be provided differently to include reasonable adjustments for disability).

Appendix 2

Customer access points

Bromsgrove



Go online

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



Telephone enquiries

01527 881288

Monday to Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed



Telephone Payments

01527 881474



In Person

Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre
School Drive
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 1AY

Monday to Wednesday	09:00 - 17:00
Thursday	10:00 - 17:00
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed

Redditch



Go online

www.redditchbc.gov.uk



Telephone enquiries

01527 534123

Monday and Tuesday and Thursday	09:00 - 17:30
Wednesday	10:00 - 17:30
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed



Telephone Payments

01527 534021.



In Person

Redditch Customer Service Centre
Town Hall
Walter Stranz Square
Redditch
B98 8AH

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday	09:00 - 17:30
Wednesday	10:00 - 17:30
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed

Batchley One Stop Shop
Batchley Shopping Centre,
183 Batchley Rd
Batchley
Redditch
B97 6JB

Monday, Tuesday and Friday	09:00 - 12:30
Wednesday and Thursday	13:30 - 17:30

Winyates One Stop Shop
Unit 3 Winyates Centre,
Redditch
B98 0NR

Monday and Tuesday	13:30 - 17:00
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday	09:00 - 12:30

Woodrow One Stop Shop
Woodrow Shopping Centre
Studley Road
Redditch
B98 7RY

Monday and Tuesday	09:00 - 12:30
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday	13:30 – 17:00

Amanda de Warr
Head of Customer Services

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council's

December 2010

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5th January 2011

BROMSGROVE PARTNERSHIP'S ANNUAL REPORT 2009/10

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor R. Hollingworth, Leader of the Council
Relevant Head of Service	Hugh Bennett, Director of Policy, Performance & Partnerships
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

1.1 To present to the Cabinet the Annual Report 2009/10 and request ratification of the document, which sets out the Partnership's performance against the priorities contained within the existing Sustainable Community Strategy (SCS) for that period, namely:

- Changing the Perception of Crime and ASB
- Intergenerational and Diversionary Activities
- Reducing CO2 Emissions
- Adaptation
- Town Centre
- Economic Development
- Staying Healthy
- Mental Health and Wellbeing
- Being Healthy
- Positive Activities
- Stronger Communities
- Balanced Communities
- Older People

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 **The Cabinet is requested to recommend that Full Council approve the LSP Annual Report (attached as Appendix 1).**

3. BACKGROUND

3.1 Local Strategic Partnerships (LSPs) act as a mechanism for working better together to deliver joined up outcomes. Active support towards the Bromsgrove Partnership and its role supports the Government's explicit aims to enable more people to become involved in the development of priorities for local services.

The report details performance for the year 2009/10 against the priorities listed in paragraph 1.1 of this report. The LSP has a formal performance management reporting structure to monitor progress and discuss the future direction and activity of the Bromsgrove Partnership.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 The key issue is the value of partnership working. Examples are Town Centre, Development at Perryfields Road, The TRUNK and the U Decide event. The Bromsgrove Partnership will continue to move forward and will be looking again at their priorities, and will focus on incorporating New Localism and Big Society

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The Council's priorities cascade from the Sustainable Community Strategy. Capital and revenue budget provision in future years reflect these priorities.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 Although the LSP is a non-statutory partnership, under the Local Government Act 2000, the Council is obliged to convene one and develop a Sustainable Community Strategy. The Sustainable Community Strategy for Bromsgrove is the delivery mechanism for the Bromsgrove LSP. The Council remains the accountable body for the Strategy.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 and the Local Government Work Programme "Making it happen: The Implementation Plan" illustrate that partnerships are central to building on achievements to embed them into lasting reform. Government policy has moved from encouraging partnerships towards mandating them, even though voluntarism is the key to effective joint working.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 The Sustainable Community Strategy links to all Council objectives

CABINET

5th January 2011

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 Working in partnership is a key risk which is identified in the Corporate Risk Register as CCPP04: Effective LSP. The Council will not be able to deliver its priorities without working in partnership with the LSP.
- 9.2 Key partner organisations were involved with and kept informed of progress throughout the development of the existing and the revised SCS, thus gaining buy in. Partners committed to the Strategy and its key deliverable outcomes.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 Working in partnership delivers joined up outcomes, which is what our customers want. The current strategy is available on the website

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 An equalities impact assessment of the existing strategy was completed.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

- 12.1 By formally endorsing the Bromsgrove Partnership's Annual Report of the SCS, it demonstrates that Bromsgrove District Council is addressing the needs of residents of the district and ensuring that future plans and resources are included in the relevant strategic plans.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

- 13.1 Reducing emissions is one of the priorities of the LSP.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 None

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 The LSP Terms of Reference and Governance is due to be reviewed and revised as appropriate. The SCS has a performance management framework which has recently been streamlined.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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5th January 2011

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

16.1 None

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

17.1 Health & Well being are priorities for the LSP.

18. LESSONS LEARNT

18.1 Partnership working is complex but the report clearly demonstrates a commitment to partnership working helps deliver community aspirations.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

19.1 The report will be published on the internet and this enables the public to view it; however the majority will not. The report will be used more for press releases and promoting partnership projects

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes
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	Yes
Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5th January 2011

21. WARDS AFFECTED

All wards

22. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Bromsgrove Partnership's Annual Report 2009/10

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Helen Mole
E Mail: h.mole@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881618

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5th January 2011

REVIEW OF LICKEY END PARISH COUNCIL

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor G N Denaro
Relevant Head of Service	Mrs C L Felton
Non-Key Decision	

1 SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 A Community Governance Review of Lickey End Parish Council has been undertaken during April to November 2010. Members are advised that the outcome of this revealed the following:
- (i) that the parish of Lickey End be abolished: and
 - (ii) that Lickey End should not continue to have a Parish Council.
- 1.2 Accordingly a Community Governance Order is required under Section 86 of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007 to abolish the parish of Lickey End and dissolve the Parish Council with effect from 1 January 2011.
- 1.3 The Local Government (Parish and Parish Council) (England) Regulations 2008 provides for the transfer of any assets or liabilities of the parish Council to the principal Council.
- 1.4. Accordingly Lickey End Parish Council has closed its accounts and forwarded £5545.09 to Bromsgrove District Council where the same is being held in a suspense account pending a Cabinet decision in respect of how the same should be disposed of.
- 1.5 For members information officers have researched the general uses to which other abolished Council funds have been put and it would appear that the most usual procedure is for funds to be utilised for the benefit of residents within the abolished area.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is asked to note the receipt of £5545.09 being the balance in the account transferred from Lickey End Parish Council and **to decide how the monies are to be spent.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 Following the introduction of the Local Government and Public Involvement in Health Act 2007, at the Electoral Matters Committee on 20th January 2010 it was agreed that the scope of the Community Governance Review of Lickey End would be a consultation with local government electors of the parish and elected Councillors and Local Authorities for the parish of Lickey End to be unparished and for the Lickey End Parish Council to be abolished.
- 3.2 This Review commenced on 12 April 2010, when the Electoral Matters Committee of the Council published a Terms of Reference document and invited initial submissions from individuals or organisations who had an interest in the Review. In the Terms of Reference, the Council published a timetable for the Review and it published a consultation strategy. The Terms of Reference was published and distributed to individuals and organisations identified in the strategy, copies were made available at the council offices, and a press release was issued. The Terms of Reference and consultation survey of the local electors of Lickey End Parish was intended to be a prompt to local consideration, which in turn would help Bromsgrove Council to prepare Draft Proposals.
- 3.3 The period for initial submissions closed on 31st June 2010. The consultation survey of the 2,178 local electors resulted in 758 replies (34.8%) with 82.4% in favour of the Lickey End Parish being dissolved and 15.8% against. A written submission was received from a County Councillor for Lickey End expressing support of the abolition of the Parish Council¹.
- 3.4 Bromsgrove District Council published the Draft Proposals in this Review in July and there was a two month period for submission of any comments – no submissions were received during this period.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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5th January 2011

- 3.5 The Final Proposals published in October were a summary of those included in the Draft Proposals. No further submissions were received and the Final Recommendations were:

- 1. that the Parish of Lickey End be abolished; and**
- 2. that Lickey End should not continue to have a Parish Council.**

- 3.6 An Abolition Order is to be made and available for public inspection. Additionally, the following organisations will be informed that the order has been made.

- The Secretary of State for Communities and Local Government
- The Electoral Commission
- The Office of National Statistics
- The Director General of Ordnance Survey
- Surrey County Council
- The Audit Commission.

- 3.7 The Local Government (Parish and Parish Council) (England) Regulations 2008 provide for the transfer of any property, assets rights or liabilities of a parish council to the new successor parish council, or where none is proposed to the principal council itself. In this case, any assets of Lickey End Parish Council would be transferred to Bromsgrove District Council. Although, how any monies are spent would a decision for the Council.

- 3.8 The decision taken by the Council could be challenged by way of judicial review. Any application for a judicial review must be submitted promptly and in any event within three months.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 The cost of the consultation exercise has been £1,019.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 A Community Governance Review has to be conducted in accordance with the requirements of the Local Government and Public Involvement in

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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5th January 2011

Health Act 2007 (Part 4) and the associated Department of Communities and Local Government Guidance on Community, the Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 and the Local Government Act 1972 (as amended). In making its decision, the Council has to take account of the views of local people. The Council must, by section 100(4) of the 2007 Act, have regard to the guidance issued by the Secretary of State.

- 6.2 The 2007 Act devolves the power to take decisions about community governance reviews and their electoral arrangements to local government and local communities. The Secretary of State therefore has no involvement in the taking of decisions about recommendations made in the community governance review and the Electoral Commission's involvement is limited to giving effect to consequential recommendations for related alterations to the electoral areas of the District Council. This Council has responsibility for undertaking this community governance review and decide whether to give effect to recommendations made in this review. Governance Reviews, the Local Government (Parishes and Parish Councils) (England) Regulations 2008 and the Local Government Act 1972 (amended)

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 None identified

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 CO2 - Improvements, Priority Value for Money; and CO3 - One Community and Well Being, Priority One Community, by helping to meet the needs of local communities taking into account the views of local people and their electoral arrangements.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 None identified.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 In conducting the review the Council has ensured that the affected communities have been properly consulted.

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

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5th January 2011

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

11.1 None identified

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

12.1 None identified

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

13.1 None identified

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

14.1 None identified

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

15.1 None identified

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

16.1 None identified

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

17.1 None identified

18. LESSONS LEARNT

18.1 None identified

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

19.1 Consultation with all registered local government electors, local Parish Councillors, District Councillors and County Councillors of the parish of Lickey End.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5th January 2011

Portfolio Holder Cllr G N Denaro	Yes
Chief Executive as Returning Officer	Yes
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	No
Head of Service – Claire Felton	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	Yes
Corporate Procurement Team	No

21. WARDS AFFECTED

Marlbrook Ward and Norton Ward

22. APPENDICES

None identified

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Department of Communities and Local Government – Guidance on Community Governance review

24. KEY

AUTHOR OF REPORT

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

CABINET

5th January 2011

Name: Susan Mould, Electoral Services Manager
E Mail: s.mould@bromsgrove.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881 462

S:parishreview/lickeyend/cabinetreport05.01.2011

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet

5th January 2011

Longbridge Memorandum of Understanding

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

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The purpose of this report is to seek Cabinet endorsement for the Longbridge Memorandum of Understanding (MoU). It is a multilateral agreement that sets out the standards of co-operation between Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) Birmingham City Council (BCC), and Worcestershire County Council (WCC) in respect to the management and delivery of the Longbridge Area Action Plan (AAP). It includes the City Council's role as banker for 'pooled' Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff (LIT) funds.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the non legally binding Longbridge Memorandum of Understanding is endorsed including the provision for Birmingham City Council to act as banker for 'pooled' Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff (LIT) developer contributions as detailed in Appendix 5 of the MoU
- 2.2 That Delegated authority is given to the Executive Director of Planning and Regeneration, Regulatory, Housing Services to make minor amendments to the MoU and Appendices in consultation with Birmingham City Council (BCC) and Worcestershire County Council (WCC).

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 BDC in association with BCC and WCC prepared the Longbridge Area Action Plan, to secure the comprehensive regeneration of the Longbridge area, following the closure of the MG Rover plant in 2005. The AAP was adopted in April 2009 and is both a policy and implementation tool that sets out the aims and objectives for the Longbridge redevelopment; its proposals will guide the development and delivery of a sustainable and accessible new community.
- 3.2 In May 2009 the councils put in place a governance structure supported by specific working groups and delivery mechanisms to progress the AAP aims and objectives. A Longbridge Project Board, chaired by the BCC Director of Regeneration and comprising of senior officers from BDC WCC and the St

Modwen, has been appointed to provide strategic guidance and delivery of the AAP. Other delivery groups are also part of this governance structure as outlined in the MoU

- 3.3 The MoU will ensure consistent and joined up partnership working between the Councils. It outlines the cross-bounding arrangements and working structure between the three Councils, inclusive of the financial management of the LIT funds.

4. KEY ISSUES

- 4.1 Although the councils will implement their own Section 106 agreement with the developer, which will include a provision for LIT contributions, the MoU outlines a structure for the Councils to 'pool' LIT developer payments in order to deliver the community infrastructure identified in the AAP. These banking arrangements for the LIT funds are fundamental to the MoU agreement.

5. FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS

- 5.1 Appendix 4 – Section 1 of the MOU details the financial arrangements proposed for the Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff.
- 5.2 It is proposed that BCC will receive all Tariff monies on behalf of the authorities and will act as 'banker' for receipts into and payments out of the 'LIT Fund' on the following basis. This is the most effective system to ensure that the funds are invested in a high value portfolio and therefore attract maximum return.
- 5.3 BCC will account for LIT Income and Expenditure for revenue and capital separately in accordance with local authority accounting standards, and for BCC officers to calculate the LIT Fund balance for revenue and capital separately. The Board will be responsible for confirming the budgetary allocations in line with the Community Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the approval of BCC, BDC and WCC LIT funded projects. BCC will be responsible for providing an outturn turn statement, including a subjective analysis of expenditure, of expenditures and income for each authority for each financial year ended 31st March.
- 5.4 Each authority incurring LIT related expenditure endorsed by the Longbridge Delivery Board will account on an 'open book' basis to BCC as 'banker' (in accordance with any procedures the authorities agree for the

LIT Fund). BCC as 'banker' will quarterly reimburse all such expenditure which is to be met from the LIT Fund. This will be on the basis of cash payments defrayed and not on an accounting accruals basis. Each authority to make its own accruals as appropriate.

- 5.5 BCC will account for the payment of LIT monies to WCC and BDC as grants, as approved under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding. Each authority will be required to enter into conditions of grant aid for each project with BCC and must seek internal approval for any projects they are delivering and submit these to BCC in advance of any claims for reimbursement.
- 5.6 If the LIT is 'wound up', any closing LIT Fund surplus, including interest to date, will be paid to the authorities in equal proportions of one third.
- 5.7 The proposed arrangement will ensure that there is a transparent and robust financial management framework in place for allocation of funds.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The MoU is not a legally binding document, but it is well suited to the proposed arrangement between the three Councils. The MoU is prepared pursuant to Section 2 of the Local Government Act 2000, which enables the Council to enter into arrangements which will promote the economic, social and environmental well being of the area. In exercising these powers the Council is obliged to have regard to the Secretary of State Guidance as to the application of the Council's Community Strategy. The MoU will formalise the current working partnership arrangements between the three Councils. It will provide a framework for collectively delivering the aims and objectives of the AAP.
- 6.2 From April 2014 the CIL regulations will restrict the use of pooled contributions to fund community infrastructure and limit the ability of planning officers to take such contributions into consideration when granting planning permission. The regulations aim to bring all such arrangements under the CIL system. Although introduced by the previous government, the current government has indicated their intention to retain the CIL system with changes to be set out in future legislation. Officers will consider the implications of the Community Infrastructure Regulations regarding the MoU as and when necessary.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

Cabinet

5th January 2011

- 7.1 The MoU supports the Councils adopted planning policy for the Longbridge Site.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 Regeneration - the MoU helps facilitate the successful regeneration of Longbridge and with it its associated economic and community benefits for Bromsgrove and South Birmingham, including supporting the cases for electrification of the line and a new rail station at Bromsgrove.

One community - the AAP provides for around 1400 houses across the site with around 700 on the east works in Bromsgrove, of which around 35% will be affordable with a provision of retirement living complex still possible subject to economic circumstances.

Climate Change - the policies within the AAP require development to include high sustainability standards subject to viability of the overall scheme.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 The main risks associated with the details included in this report are:
Without the MoU the Council and wider community may not benefit fully from development and developer contributions which take place or are collected in Birmingham at but which will affect communities and services in Bromsgrove.

- 9.2 These risks are being managed as follows:

Risk Register: Planning and Environment
Key Objective Ref No: 6
Key Objective: Effective, efficient, and legally compliant Strategic planning Service

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 None

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 An Equalities impact assessment was carried out on the Longbridge AAP for the examination in December 2008.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

12.1 None

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

13.1 None from endorsing of the MoU although one of the major objectives on the AAP is to ensure the development is as sustainable as possible.

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 None

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

19.1 The MoU has been prepared over a considerable period of time with input from BDC's, BCC's and WCC's, Planning Legal and Financial services.

20. OTHERS CONSULTED ON THE REPORT

Portfolio Holder	Yes
Chief Executive	Yes (at CMT)
Executive Director (S151 Officer)	Yes (at CMT)

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Cabinet

5th January 2011

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

21. WARDS AFFECTED

Hillside, Beacon, and Waseley are the most likely to be effected although the full effects of Longbridge regeneration could be more widespread.

22. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - Longbridge Memorandum of Understanding

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

24. KEY

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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CABINET

5th January 2011

THE MARKETING OF BROMSGROVE

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr R Hollingworth
Relevant Head of Service	John Staniland
Non Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 The creation of a Bromsgrove 'identity' and 'product' in relation to the Economic Development of the District of Bromsgrove and the Regeneration of Bromsgrove Town Centre.
- 1.2 The implementation of a Marketing Campaign to promote Bromsgrove to Investors, Developers, Retailers, Businesses, Shoppers, Visitors and Residents.
- 1.3 The creation of a Bromsgrove 'shop window' web-site and investment prospectus'.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Cabinet are asked to recommend to Full Council the approval of:**
- 2.2 **A commitment to invest £20,000 to fund the marketing of Bromsgrove Town Centre and the wider District.**

3. BACKGROUND

- 3.1 The Economic Development Theme Group of the Local Strategic Partnership has identified the need for a Marketing Campaign for Bromsgrove as a strategic priority for the economic development of the District. This is because:
 - Increasing Inward Investment has been identified as a primary goal of the economic development strategy.
 - The Bromsgrove 'product' needs to be defined and firmly established within the changing economic development landscape of Local Enterprise Partnerships (LEP) and the new North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration structure.
 - The Town Centre Regeneration Programme is preparing to go public on its Area Action Plan and starting the process of finding Development Partner(s).

4.0 **KEY ISSUES**

4.1 'The Campaign' would take the form of:

- Creation of a Bromsgrove 'identity' or 'product'
- Production of Marketing Literature including Investment Prospectus'.
- Production of a Bromsgrove Website
- Advertising of Bromsgrove in local, regional and national publications and trade press

4.2 The purpose of 'The Campaign' would be in support of the Regeneration of the Town Centre and achieving wider Economic Prosperity for the District. It would aim to:

- Attract Private Developers into the Town Centre by promoting the Area Action Plan and the advertising of the development opportunities in the Town Centre as part of the procurement process of partner developer(s)
- Attract new Retailers to the Town Centre to suit both the new Retail Units being created as part of the Regeneration Programme and niche retailers for historic shop premises
- Attract general Inward Investment into the Town and District in the form of new employers, concentrating on the benefits of location; transport links; low cost semi-skilled and skilled engineering based workforce; lower premises costs; quality of life etc.
- Promote Bromsgrove as the proven location for successful business start-ups - specifically targeting nascent technology companies as part of promoting Bromsgrove's position on the A38 Technology Corridor and the need to catalyse phase 2 of the Bromsgrove Technology Park
- Attract more shoppers into the Town Centre
- Stimulate the evening economy in the Town Centre and attract more visitors into Town and the wider District through the creation of a central and common events and activities programme
- Raise awareness among residents of the attractions and benefits of Bromsgrove as a Town and District

5. **FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS**

5.1 The cost of this campaign has been mitigated in a number of ways:

5.2 'Soft market testing' undertaken as part of the Regeneration Programme has identified the key selling points that Bromsgrove offers to Developers, reducing the need for separate market research.

CABINET

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- 5.3 The production of the Area Action Plan and other Planning and Regeneration Documents will help provide copy and images for the new Investment Prospectus' and Marketing Brochures
- 5.4 Initial population of a Town Centre Regeneration Website will limit the Website work to a 'shop window' site that will sit in front of the current pre-populated site. Furthermore in principle agreements with Bromsgrove Arts Network and The Artrix to work together on a common events programme with the potential for a central on-line booking facility powered by The Artrix' web-site will reduce the need for expensive software functionality and potentially make maintenance of the site self funding.
- 5.5 The retention of an independent graduate marketer to assist with 'in-house' web design and community engagement has greatly reduced both the potential day rate needed to be funded and remaining scope of work to achieve the aims of The Campaign.
- 5.6 The precise expenditure plan for the £20,000 will be approved by the Economic Development Theme Group, but managed by the Director for Planning and Regeneration and his team. In-house resources will be utilised where possible and any out-sourcing will be managed within Bromsgrove District Council procurement rules.

6. LEGAL IMPLICATIONS

- 6.1 The Council has powers to pursue initiatives for the well-being of the District and this proposal falls within this remit.

7. POLICY IMPLICATIONS

- 7.1 The proposal meets the Council priority of improving the Town Centre viability and vitality and would support the aims of the emerging Core Strategy and Area Action Plan.

8. COUNCIL OBJECTIVES

- 8.1 As set out in 7 above.

9. RISK MANAGEMENT INCLUDING HEALTH & SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

- 9.1 If this work is not commenced now, we will not be ready to market the development opportunity presented by the Area Action Plan and the regeneration of the Town will be adversely affected by a potential failure to attract suitable investment.

10. CUSTOMER IMPLICATIONS

- 10.1 External Customers will benefit from knowing what Bromsgrove has to offer in terms of shopping and investment opportunities. A link to the Customer Service Centre (Worcestershire Hub Bromsgrove) will be included within the website.

11. EQUALITIES AND DIVERSITY IMPLICATIONS

- 11.1 The Town Centre website will highlight the various projects within the Regeneration Programme; any equalities and diversity implications will be highlighted. For example, the renovated High Street will be designed with improved access for all.

12. VALUE FOR MONEY IMPLICATIONS, PROCUREMENT AND ASSET MANAGEMENT

- 12.1 Any external input will be obtained following Bromsgrove District Council procurement guidelines. This will be led by the Regeneration team, but the Director of Planning and Regeneration will have overall responsibility and decision-making.

13. CLIMATE CHANGE, CARBON IMPLICATIONS AND BIODIVERSITY

- 13.1 The Town Centre website will highlight the various projects within the Regeneration Programme; any climate change considerations, carbon implications and biodiversity enhancements will be highlighted.

14. HUMAN RESOURCES IMPLICATIONS

- 14.1 Some of the funding may be used to extend the retention of the independent graduate marketer to assist with 'in-house' web and prospectus design and production. This may avoid the need to appoint more expensive outside agencies.
- 14.2 A limited amount of impact on the internal IT team may result from the proposal in terms of a number of additional web pages to maintain, although it is anticipated that these will be self funding.

15. GOVERNANCE/PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT IMPLICATIONS

- 15.1 The Governance and Performance Management of the Campaign will be overseen by the Economic Development Theme Group. Governance aspects relating to the Regeneration Programme will be managed by the Regeneration Programme Manager and overseen by The Town Centre Steering Group, the Portfolio Holder and the Head of Service.

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

- 16.1 None identified as a result of this report but community safety implications would be taken into account in any proposals for specific sites.

17. HEALTH INEQUALITIES IMPLICATIONS

- 17.1 The successful regeneration of the town should benefit the deprived wards of Charford, Sidemoor, Slideshow and Whitford that the Town Centre supports. The creation of more jobs will hopefully help to improve average household incomes in these wards and this in turn will help with reducing inequalities in health between these wards and the rest of the District.

18. LESSONS LEARNT

- 18.1 Investment Prospectus and Promotional Websites and campaigns used in other towns such as Biddulph, Corby, Kidderminster and Stockport will be used to ensure the Lessons Learnt in similar projects are incorporated into the Bromsgrove Approach.

19. COMMUNITY AND STAKEHOLDER ENGAGEMENT

- 19.1 Stakeholder meetings have been held in connection with town centre proposals and their views will be taken into account in any marketing proposals. The Economic Theme Group will also engage with local businesses regarding the marketing of the town.

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	Yes
Executive Director – Planning & Regeneration, Regulatory and Housing Services	Yes
Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships	No

CABINET

5th January 2011

Head of Service	Yes
Head of Resources	No
Head of Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	No
Corporate Procurement Team	No

21. WARDS AFFECTED

The benefit of the Marketing Campaign will be felt across the whole District.

22. APPENDICES

Not applicable

23. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Not applicable

24. KEY

Not applicable

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Tel: (01527) 881730

NEW REVENUE BIDS - 2011/12-
2013/14

Appendix A

Department	Description	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	H/M/L	Commentary (link to priorities etc)
LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	Impact of Terms and Conditions Review	3	0	0	H	Potential costs associated with proposed changes to terms and conditions.
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	Cemetery Tree Works	4	4	4	H	To undertake urgent remedial works on the cemetery trees to mitigate the impact of safety issues to the public
PLANNING & REGENERATION	Core Strategy review	50	0	0	H	To formally review the core strategy for the Council.
LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	Equality & Diversity - new bids	5	5	5	H	New Equality and Diversity Bids
LEGAL AND DEMOCRATIC SERVICES	Freedom of the District - Mercian	5	0	0	H	This cost relates to the granting of the freedom of the District to the Mercian Regiment in 2010/11
TRANSFORMATION	GCSX (Gov connect) connection charges	18	18	18	H	Gov Connect connection charges to connect to Government secure services, these charges are now to be met by each authority due to Gov Connect no longer providing funding. BDC use this service for the Revenue & Benefit information exchange with DWP
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	Green Waste R&R - bins	12	12	12	H	To provide for replacement bins for the green waste / brown bins
ENVIRONMENTAL SERVICES	Green Waste R&R - fleet	80	80	80	H	To provide for reserve for future replacement vehicles for the garden waste vehicles
TRANSFORMATION	Member ICT facilities	8	8	8	H	Linked to capital bid. The project will deliver standard ICT equipment for all Members . It was agreed by the Member Development Steering Group that this is required and will enable the correct use of ICT facilities. It will also enable members to make use of the Broadband at home and Blackberry Devices where required.
TRANSFORMATION	MS Office & PC suite	46	46	46	H	This will enable a standard method of working across the councils (sharing calendars etc). This will also include upgrading both sites to the latest supported versions of Microsoft Office and PC operating system. The cost includes online training and the ability for people to purchase the software at home at a discounted rate.
COMMUNITY SERVICES	Strategic Housing- Contribution towards Sub Regional Housing Market Assessment	10	0	0	H	CO1 Housing - The HMA is a key piece of research that forms the basis data for the Countywide Housing Strategy, local strategic housing action plans, and evidence to support the Council's Core Strategy and negotiations with developers on Sect 106 affordable housing and HCA for development funding.
TRANSFORMATION	Voice over IP	18	18	18	H	Linked to capital bid - Cost savings of £10k for BDC phone system. It will also prevent the need to spend an additional £90k on making the BDC system supportable after 2011. This will also deliver cost savings by not having to pay for each call made between BDC & RBC
COMMUNITY SERVICES	Homelessness Support Post	15	15	15	H	To fund a part time post (£10k) within strategic housing to enable pro-active support to vulnerable members of the community who may be at risk of becoming homeless following the changes to Housing Benefits. The funding would be provided via the grant allocation from Government. In addition it is proposed there is a £5k increase to the Discretionary Housing Payment allocation to meet customers financial constraints as a further result of the impending changes
PLANNING & REGENERATION	Business Start up Grant	5	5	5	H	The project would provide a £500 grant to people who start a new business and undertake a free business start up course provided by NEW College.
COUNCIL WIDE	Impact of Terms and Conditions Review	13	13	13	H	To provide insurance to all employees for death in service over the allocation provided as part of the Pension Scheme.
LEISURE AND CULTURE	Options appraisal for new leisure facility	50	0	0	H	To fund an options appraisal to assess the costs and specification of a new leisure facility in the District

FINANCE AND RESOURCES	Develop and introduce Health & Well Being Programme	6	0	0	M	To improve the support given to staff in their health and well being. This should reduce the sickness and support the absence management across the Council.
PLANNING & REGENERATION	Aftercare Service	15	15	15	M	Establish high level relationships with key strategic businesses through a programme of company visits and ensure that the companies are receiving maximum support. The purpose of the service is to embed businesses in the District and to minimise the risk of relocation
CUSTOMER SERVICES	Automated customer feedback	6	6	6	M	Linked to capital bid - Implementation of an automated customer feedback mechanism enables customer to provide real time feedback on their experience of contact at the time of the contact. This helps inform service delivery improvements and provides us with real time information on customer demand.
PLANNING & REGENERATION	Careers Fair for yr 8 students	1	1	1	M	Due to the tertiary system of education in Bromsgrove, students do not receive careers advice until year 9 (first year of high school). The Careers Fair aims to foster economic ambition in young people and encourage them to think about their future opportunities
CUSTOMER SERVICES	Customer Service excellence	4	0	0	M	This represents the cost of Customer Service Excellence assessment for both authorities. Customer Service Excellence provides public services with a practical tool for driving customer-focused change within their organisation.
PLANNING & REGENERATION	Graduate Programme	1	1	1	M	The Social Science Workplace Experience Programme (SSWEP) is funded by the Economic and Social Research Council. The programme is used to access the skills and knowledge of undergraduate social science students and the programme is subject to application
FINANCE AND RESOURCES	Implement bureau service for payroll and improvements to BACS process	6	0	0	M	To provide an automated system for the update and consolidation of monthly information from staff to enable payment of car mileage and overtime etc. This system is currently resource intensive and it is anticipated that there will be a saving in staff time
PLANNING & REGENERATION	Market Cover	1	1	1	M	To provide resources to cover the operational hours of the market
FINANCE AND RESOURCES	Review recruitment procedures and roll out Recruitment Portal	6	0	0	M	To provide an automated system for the update and consolidation of monthly information from staff to enable payment of car mileage and overtime etc. This system is currently resource intensive and it is anticipated that there will be a saving in staff time
FINANCE AND RESOURCES	Risk Management Review	3	0	0	M	To improve the risk management processes within the Council
FINANCE AND RESOURCES	Stress Audit	2	0	0	M	To enable pro-active support to staff who may suffer from stress and to provide advice and support of health matters to reduce the impact of stress related sickness
POLICY AND COMMS	Podcasts	1	1	1	L	By purchasing the equipment this will enable both Councils to look at extending their range of communications internally and eventually externally.
POLICY AND COMMS	Mosaic	8	8	8	M	To keep Mosaic to enable the Council to identify customers and to target services to these customers
TOTAL NEW BIDS - REVENUE		401	257	257		

TOTAL HIGH BIDS FUNDED	342	224	224
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**NEW CAPITAL BIDS -
2011/12- 2013/14**

Appendix B

Department	Description	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	2013/14 £'000	H/M/L	Commentary (link to priorities etc)
COMMUNITY SERVICES	Funding for DFGs	100	100	190	H	The Council has a statutory duty under The Housing Grants, Construction and Regeneration Act 1996) to provide mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFGs) for the adaptation of homes of disabled persons. This will increase the funding available through the grant of £310k from the Government and £90k already approved to a revised allocation of £500k.
COMMUNITY SERVICES	Local Authority Grant to Principal Preferred Partners (BDHT / W Mercia) for the development of affordable housing in the District.	200	0	0	H	Local authority grant budget for allocation to the Council's Principal Preferred RSL Partners to assist in the development of affordable housing in the District
COMMUNITY SERVICES	Home Repair Assistance Grants	0	0	25	H	Provision of Discretionary Home Repair Assistance Grants of up to £5,000 repayable upon sale of property or death of recipient. Provided to applicants where the owner occupiers property in need of essential repairs as determined by the Housing Act 2004 as a 'Category 1 Hazard' in order to make the property healthy, safe, wind and weatherproof.
COMMUNITY SERVICES	BURT Bus	32	0	0	M	Capital bid to replace the Bromsgrove Urban Rural Transport (BURT) bus. The current bus has had major mechanical and bodywork issues, resulting in an overspend on the repairs and maintenance budget. In addition the bus is now 7 years old. This service has been running for just over 12 months and is currently being evaluated as to the services impact and longer term sustainability'.
TRANSFORMATION	Member ICT facilities at RBC & BDC	10	0	0	H	The project will deliver standard ICT equipment for all Members at BDC. It was agreed by the Member Development Steering Group that this is required and will enable the correct use of ICT facilities. It will also enable members to make use of the wireless infrastructure at the Council House

TRANSFORMATION	Voice over IP for BDC & RBC	90	0	0	H	This is to maintain the current service provision and is to be funded by the reserve that has been allocated to ICT development.
FINANCE AND RESOURCES	Electronic claim form BDC	20	0	0	M	To enable customers to claim for benefits via the Internet to enable a more speedy response on-line benefit applications
CUSTOMER SERVICES	Automated customer feedback	10	0	0	M	Implementation of an automated customer feedback mechanism enables customer to provide real time feedback on their experience of contact at the time of the contact. This helps inform service delivery improvements.
POLICY AND COMMS	Solar Panels	16	0	0	M	To install solar panels on assets belonging to the Council with the aim to reduce future energy bills.
POLICY AND COMMS	Podcasts	0	0	0	M	By purchasing the equipment this will enable both Councils to look at extending their range of communications internally and eventually externally.
ENVIRONMENT SERVICES	Depot Drive Replacement	80	0	0	H	Existing block pavours are breaking up and therefore causing a health and safety risk to all staff
ENVIRONMENT SERVICES	Fleet Replacement	225	641	916	H	Street Scene vehicle replacement programme originally agreed at £1,001k following an analysis of vehicle requirements and service changes, now 5 Refuse collection vehicles (£700k - agreed previously), 2 Mini Sweepers (£134k - new bid), 4 mowers (£32k (£17k agreed previously)), 1 Forklift Truck (£25k - new bid), various items of small plant (£51k - new bid). £284k of original agreed budget released back to capital receipts.
LEISURE & CULTURAL	Harvest Close (Heath Close) - Enhance Play Areas	52	0	0	H	S106 Funded
LEISURE & CULTURAL	Holycross Lodge - Youth Provision in Bromsgrove West	0	32	0	H	S106 Funded
LEISURE & CULTURAL	Sanders Park - Enhancement of Existing Play Areas	60	0	0	H	S106 Funded
	TOTAL BIDS - CAPITAL	895	773	1,131		

**CURRENTLY APPROVED
CAPITAL PROGRAMME
2011/12 - 2012/13**

Appendix C

Department	Description	2011/12 £'000	2012/13 £'000	Commentary (link to priorities etc)
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT	Discretionary Home Repair Assistance & Housing Renewal Grants (Private Sector Only)	63	63	Home Repair & Maintenance Assistance grants.
PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT	Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants (DFG's) - Private & BDHT Grants	400	400	Mandatory Disabled Facilities Grants. Partially funded from Government Grant (£310k).
STREET SCENE & COMMUNITY	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Grounds)	17	0	Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for grounds maintenance fleet
STREET SCENE & COMMUNITY	Street Scene Depot Vehicle Replacement Programme (Refuse Collection)	700	0	Maintain the planned programme of replacement vehicles for refuse collection service
CORPORATE	SUPPORT SERVICES RECHARGES TO CAPITAL	136	136	Recharge from Revenue in relation to staff spending time on capital projects
	TOTAL BIDS - CAPITAL	1,316	599	

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EVERY CUSTOMER EVERY TIME

“Everybody matters”

**A Customer Experience Strategy for Bromsgrove District and
Redditch Borough Councils**

2011 - 2014



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk



Contents

1. Foreword
2. Introduction
3. Current position
4. What do we mean by 'access to services'
5. Our vision
6. Understanding our customers
7. How will we know when we are getting it right?
8. Delivering value for money and making savings
9. Responding to the challenge

1. Foreword

Welcome to the customer experience strategy for Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils.

This is the first joint customer strategy and marks an important step in our aim to share services whilst maintaining local identity and political control.

We recognise that the needs of individuals vary but customers, wherever they live or do their business, have the same expectations in respect of customer services and access to services. As Councils have no tangible 'product' and customers have no choice about which council they can go to, our reputation rests on the quality of our service provision which is why the provision of excellent customer service is so important to us. By working together we can also ensure value for money.

This strategy builds on the good work already done in both Councils to improve customer service and access to services in recent years. It sets out our vision for customer service delivery and how we will make a real difference to the customer service provision.

Councillor Geoff Denaro
Portfolio holder, Bromsgrove District
Council

Councillor Michael Braley
Portfolio holder, Redditch Borough
Council

Insert pictures of portfolio holders

2. Introduction

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough councils began sharing the services they provide to residents, and the management team that operates both authorities, during 2008/09. We have now started a radical 3 year transformation programme to review all our services and look to share provision when opportunities arise.

Our vision for high quality customer services is driven by the need to improve the experience customers have when contacting us, or doing business with us. We want to give our customers confidence that we can be relied upon to provide the best quality service within available resources. We want to ensure value for money, whilst also aiming to get more right first time. We want to ensure that customers do not have to contact us several times to get the service they have requested which will also save taxpayers money.

Considerable work had already been done in both Councils. In Bromsgrove through the Customer First Programme, and in Redditch, the Customer Access Strategy, and we have seen many achievements in the development of customer service provision. This strategy will build on these achievements. The work that has been done in Bromsgrove to map customer journeys and identify improvements to service delivery through the service action plans will continue and will, by joined up business planning, spread across both authorities. In Redditch work such as in respect of Customer Service Excellence in Housing and the improvement plans in Benefits support the actions in this strategy.

In developing a joint strategy it is necessary to accept the differences within the two Councils, in respect of customer base and culture, and work with them for the benefit of the customer, taking both organisations forward on a journey to excellence.

Whilst many of the national drivers for such a strategy have been removed by the coalition Government this does not remove our desire to ensure we have a strong commitment to driving customer service provision locally.

The shift of power from Westminster to local people will give communities and individuals a bigger voice. The Structural Reform Plan also includes proposals for giving residents the power to instigate local referendums on any local issue and veto excessive council tax increases. 'New Localism' – the name the Government has given this new way of thinking and working - also suggests an increased focus on community engagement, through techniques like participatory budgeting and neighbourhood budgets. We recognise that services built around customer needs are a priority in the current political and economic climate and, more importantly, an expectation of customers and tax payers. Transformation of service delivery using the 'systems thinking approach' will help to ensure that we achieve this priority.

This strategy sits alongside our other local strategies, such as the Council Plan, Equality and Diversity Strategy, Workforce Development, and our Climate Change Strategy and the Worcestershire Local Area Agreement, which makes the link between national, regional and local policy. It also fits with the Total Place agenda, which looks at how we can work with other partners to drive through efficiencies and take a holistic approach to public service provision.

At both Bromsgrove at Redditch we have strong local priorities.

Bromsgrove District Council Priorities	Redditch Borough Council Priorities
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Economic Development. • Town Centre. • Value for Money • One Community. • Housing. • Climate Change. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An enterprising community. • Safe. • Clean and green. • A well managed organisation

This Strategy and all related objectives have synergy with the priorities of both authorities and specifically help to ensure we provide **Value for Money** and have a **Well Managed Organisation**

A robust service business planning framework exists and customer service delivery forms an integral part of the development plans of each service.

Finally, we work closely with Worcestershire County Council, though the Worcestershire Hub Partnership to deliver joined up customer access. This partnership, made up of all the districts and the county council has successfully developed face to face, telephone and online access points for customers to gain easy, one stop access to services. This strategy sits alongside the Worcestershire Hub 'Our Customers' Strategy and the countywide Self Service Strategy.

This document not only sets out our vision but also how we aim to make this happen. This will only be a part of the journey and as customer needs change, and service delivery develops to meet those changing needs, this strategy will also change. Therefore it will be reviewed annually in line with our timetable for business planning and budget setting.

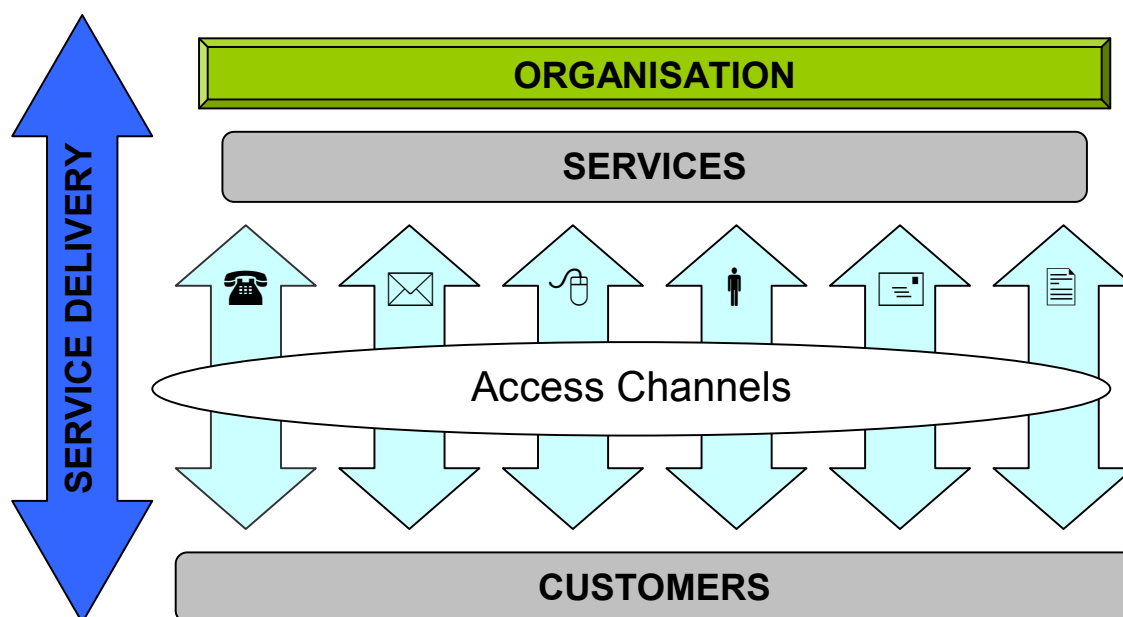
Consultation with staff has taken place via our staff Customer Focus Group, as well as with senior managers and members. The strategy takes into account the results of the Hub customer survey, conducted in Dec 2009 and the View Point survey conducted early in 2010. Feedback has been received from the Ethnic and Diversity Forum (Bromsgrove) and the Community Forum in Redditch.

3. Current Position

Both authorities had Customer Access Strategies in place which have steered the work to improve customer service over recent years. These have resulted in many improvements such as:-

- ✓ More services are now available through the Hub Customer Service Centres in both Bromsgrove and Redditch.
- ✓ Clear standards of service are in place for all services.
- ✓ Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council's are now signed up to the county wide interpreting and translation service which enables customers for whom English is not a first language to receive translation and interpretation support. It is hoped that providing the same service across the County, which manages requests on a case by case basis rather than just translating leaflets on mass, that people who live and work in different parts of the County will receive the same service Countywide.
- ✓ The Housing Service in Redditch was awarded the Charter Mark, which recognises excellent customer service, for the 5th year running.
- ✓ The benefits team in Redditch has recently introduced visiting officers who go to people's homes to assist with benefits applications.
- ✓ Redditch Borough Council introduced the Community Forum and this is now a thriving group of partners, stakeholders, and residents, who meet regularly to discuss the equality and diversity issues that relate to our services and the way they are delivered to minority groups.
- ✓ Customer First training was delivered to all staff in Bromsgrove and backed up with useful guidance in respect of handling customer feedback.
- ✓ The websites for both Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils were re-launched, using a countywide template to make navigation consistent and information easier to find. We worked with the RNIB and a local visually impaired support group to ensure the site meets the specific needs of people with sight problems. We have also reduced the number of contact addresses and 'phone numbers published on the website to make it easier for customers to contact us. We also increased the number of online services available, for example online benefits applications in Redditch.
- ✓ Customer Feedback is being used to inform changes to service delivery and reported regularly to members and customers, and we invested in a system to ensure we can properly track and report on this feedback.
- ✓ Customer service based improvements are a key part in every service's business planning.
- ✓ Redditch Matters magazine has been launched to ensure residents are kept informed of council and community developments.
- ✓ Customers now have a say in the way that the Council spends their money with a budget jury made up of people from across the Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough.
- ✓ Customer service behaviour and objectives now form part of the annual personal development review for each member of staff.

4. What do we mean by 'access to services?'



However customers make contact with us, whether it is by telephone, email, the internet, in person, or via other means, we want them to find that access is quick and easy. However, the geographical nature of the district of Bromsgrove and Redditch Borough means that access may be limited to a smaller number of channels and customers will, by necessity, be forced to use particular means of contacting us.

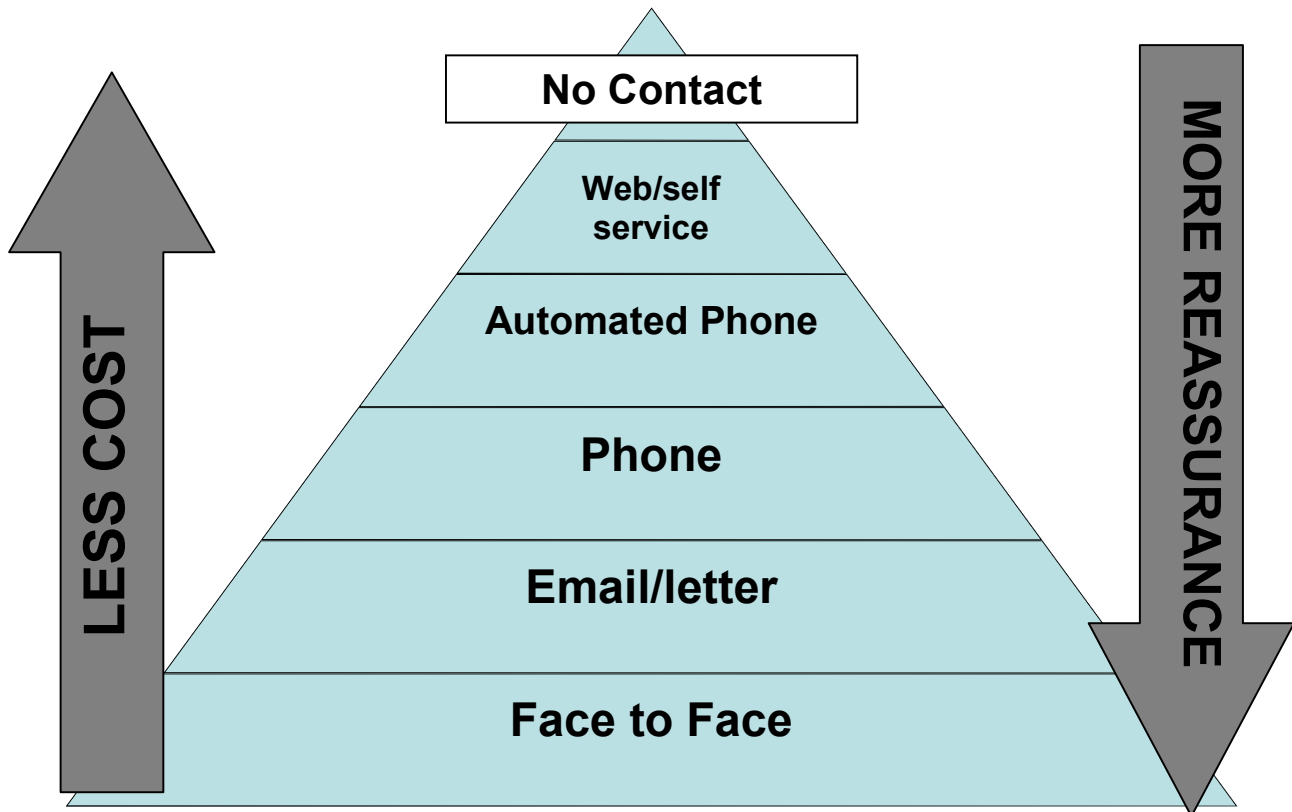
A recent survey of 1,185 residents of Worcestershire, carried out in December 2009 indicated that nearly 40% of residents contact us by telephone and 30% through face to face contact at one of the Customer Service Centres or One Stop Shops. 24% of people who completed the survey said they made contact online, via the internet or email.

83% of people said they used the internet at home and over half of all the people asked said they would consider using the internet to access council services. The survey also told us that people who tried to do their business online were also more likely to have to contact us more than once to resolve their enquiry. 43% of all responders who had to get in touch with us more than once did so because their enquiry was not resolved, and a further 38% were trying to find out what progress had been made in respect of their issue.

This suggests that we have some work to do to improve the online contact channels as this could provide better access for those people who cannot use some of the other methods of contacting us. We also need to get more right first time and get better at telling customers what is happening, or when they can expect action, in respect of matters they raise with us.

We also have contacts with many people which are instigated by us, or through everyday activities, for example at the Leisure or Community Centres, or contact with Shopmobility, or Dial a Ride amongst many others, and it is equally important to us that these contacts are positive for our customers.

There is a generally accepted model for the effectiveness of the major channels of contact available which is shown below.



What this model shows is that as we move up the triangle the costs gets lower for the organisation. However, for some types of contact a greater level of human contact is necessary, particularly where greater reassurance is needed. It is therefore vital to understand the types of contacts and the level of reassurance that a customer is likely to require when designing services for customers.

5. Our Vision

This strategy applies to **all** our customers, whether they live, work or visit Bromsgrove or Redditch. It applies to businesses, partners, other agencies and our internal customers (employees). The strategy is driven by a clear vision which links directly with our corporate priorities.

Our vision is to:-

- **make it easy to access services, joining up with other organisations where possible;**
- **provide a high quality customer experience for all customers who make contact with us, regardless of when or how they make contact;**
- **ensure customers get the information and advice they need in a way that suits their needs and is easy to understand.**

In practical terms this means that for all services and activities we will:

- Always put the customer first by:
 - Treating them as individuals.
 - Listening to them.
 - Taking ownership of problems.
 - Doing the little things – ensuring attention to detail, and going the extra mile, because we know it makes a difference.
- Work with other organisations to provide joined up services.
- Listen to and act on feedback and tell customers what we've done.
- Ensure customers get a quick response, and action or information on progress, so that they don't have to keep chasing us.
- Keep everyone informed.
- Communicate in plain language, which is easy to understand and removes the need for customers to contact us for explanations.
- Get the basics right.
- Develop our online services to provide easier access for those who can do their business with us online, and ensure it meets customer's needs.
- Use our service reviews to tailor services to our customers needs.
- Look for more efficient ways of doing things to make savings wherever possible to deliver value for money services.
- Get more right first time.

The ultimate aim of this strategy is to have people, systems, and processes in place which make it easy for customers to contact the Council by using a variety of access points. To ensure everyone gets the same excellent level of service and to have questions and issues dealt with at the first point of contact as often as possible.

We aim to exceed expectations and delight our customers.

6. Understanding our customers

Both Councils undertake a great deal of work to consult with our customers. We also gather a lot of data about customers which is held on various systems.

We use customer feedback, such as complaints and compliments to tell us how well we are doing and where we could do better and customer satisfaction surveys are used by many departments to gain direct feedback from service users.

We need to further develop our knowledge of customers and their needs, so that we can tailor our services appropriately. There is a growing need to use 'customer insight' to enable us to target services, communications and inform service developments. Whilst customer insight data can be bought in, it is how we use it that will affect the success of its use.

We will further exploit the potential of customer insight tools, to inform on lifestyle profiling which if used in conjunction with other information we already hold about customers, will help to provide a coherent view of our customers.

We will also continue to actively engage customers in decision making through dialogue where major changes in service provision are likely.

7. How will we know we are getting it right?

The judges of the success of this strategy will be the users of the services, - people who contact us for whatever reason.

Greater satisfaction with the Council and the individual services will be a key indicator of success.

Other measureable outcomes will be:

- More things done right first time.
- Increased take up of the cheaper access channels, such as online or automatic payment methods.
- Excellence in customer service provision recognised by achieving the Customer Services Excellence accreditation.
- Resolution of enquiries at the first point of contact.
- The removal of avoidable contact.
- Joined up services or co-location of public services, so that customers can access a wider range of services in one place.
- Removal of unnecessary red tape.
- Customer focused staff.
- Confident, decisive and supportive managers.
- Greater customer and staff involvement in the design of service delivery.
- Reduced costs and better value for money.

Satisfaction surveys, Worcestershire Viewpoint (resident's panel) results, Customer feedback through complaints and compliments, and reduced avoidable contact will be used to measure success. We will also use the Customer Service Excellence Accreditation to assess our progress.

8. Delivering value for money and making savings

This is obviously a major priority.

Technology needs to be exploited to provide greater ability to self serve and allow customers to do their business with us at a time that suits them, from the comfort of their own home or workplace. For the 17% of residents who do not have access to the internet at home we need to ensure that other mechanisms exist and this may mean extending public internet in Council offices, or finding other alternatives such as mobile phone technology, kiosks, or digital TV.

We will actively encourage the use of contact-less and self service channels for payments, which are expensive to handle face to face.

We will work with our partners across Worcestershire to ensure we provide joined up services. We will also develop other partnerships, where it is appropriate to do so, to bring services together and reduce costs.

Our approach to reviewing how we deliver services will enable us to assess what customers really need and remove unnecessary and costly steps in the process. This will also reduce 'avoidable' contact – contact that could have been prevented if we had done things differently. This not only reduces costs but also significantly improves the service to customers.

9. Responding to the challenge

This strategy is built around 4 key themes which enable us to focus on how we meet the challenge of delivering the best quality services that meet the needs of individuals for the lowest possible costs.

Customer experience - going back to basics to ensure that the customer's experience of contacting us is always positive – even when we can't give the answer the customer wants.

Transform – reviewing, and changing, service delivery based on what customers actually want and need and building the processes around the customer rather than to meet organisational needs.

Understanding the customer (including internal customers or partners) – through feedback, complaints, compliments, surveys, forums, and using customer insight tools such as Mosaic and the information held on our own systems.

Our Staff – ensuring all our staff are truly customer focused, and share the values and behaviours necessary to ensure we exceed our standards and our customer's expectations.

By implementing this Strategy we will make a significant contribution to the delivery of both Council's priorities specifically ensuring we provide **Value for Money** (Bromsgrove District Council) and have a **Well Managed Organisation** (Redditch Borough Council). We will also ensure that the needs of all our customers are met and that we meet our pledges in respect of **equality and diversity**.

EVERY CUSTOMER – EVERY TIME
"Everybody matters"

THEME 1 – CUSTOMER EXPERIENCE

Good customer service is an entitlement, not a privilege. By going back to basics to ensure that the customer's experience of contacting us is always positive, even when we can't give the answer the customer wants, we will ensure that we exceed our standards and delight our customers. We know that customers expect a high level of customer service and we must never lose sight of the fact that we are here for the customers benefit.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<p>✓ That every customer should receive a high quality service every time.</p> <p>✓ That every customer should be treated with respect.</p> <p>✓ That customers should know we are genuine.</p> <p>✓ That customers should understand the information we provide them with.</p> <p>✓ That customers should know who is dealing with their issues and have confidence that something will be done.</p> <p>✓ That customers have the right to feedback to us their</p>	<p>Aim high – OK is not good enough and excellence will be our standard.</p> <p>We will go the extra mile and take pride in our work, setting goals to strive to achieve excellent results.</p> <p>Treat everyone as we would like to be treated whether customers, colleagues, staff or Members.</p> <p>Treat people as individuals.</p> <p>Be consistent and fair.</p> <p>Mean what we say and do what we say we will.</p> <p>Let customers know if we cannot meet the timescales originally agreed, or set out in our Customer Service Pledges</p> <p>If we cannot meet a customers needs we will be up front about this because even though we can't give the answer a customer wants we do care about their issue.</p> <p>Use Plain English, and present information in a way that is easy for all to understand</p> <p>Ensure staff use the website in their every day</p>	<p>1.1 Revise and relaunch our customer service standards (Customer Experience Pledges)</p> <p>1.2 Review our Customer journey mapping and ensure all actions are completed.</p> <p>1.3 Review recruitment procedures to ensure customer focus is at the heart of successful candidates.</p> <p>1.4 Develop staff 'protocols' to ensure all staff are clear of the behaviour expected of everyone when dealing with customers.</p> <p>1.5 Develop and implement a customer focused training plan</p> <p>1.6 Develop and launch a staff customer service guide.</p> <p>1.7 Implement Plain English Training</p> <p>1.8 Review all information/letters/web pages to ensure they are easy to understand, are empathetic, and remove the need for clarification.</p> <p>1.9 Develop and conduct a customer satisfaction survey</p> <p>1.10 Develop peer review and mystery shopping mechanisms.</p>

<p>experiences and that we should use this information to shape future improvements.</p> <p>✓ That we should evaluate our customer service performance</p>	<p>work to ensure that it is fit for purpose</p> <p>Give our names when we have contact with customers</p> <p>Take ownership, not pass the buck and never blame others when things don't go to plan.</p> <p>If we have made a mistake we will be open and honest and work with the customer to establish a satisfactory outcome</p> <p>Improve our customer feedback process to ensure that customers who find it necessary to complain can do so easily and receive a quality response – even if we can't change the outcome.</p> <p>Work towards Customer Service Excellence Accreditation.</p>	<p>1.11 Achieve Customer Service Excellence accreditation.</p> <p>1.12 Reduce avoidable contact</p> <p>1.13 Get more 'Right First Time'</p> <p>1.14 Tailor our marketing, promotional and communication materials to suit the needs of all our customers.</p> <p>1.15 Work with minority groups where appropriate to improve access to services.</p> <p>1.16 Use customer complaints as a force for good, identifying service improvement opportunities.</p>
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THEME 2 – TRANSFORMATION

By reviewing, and changing, service delivery based on what customers actually want and need and building the processes we use around the customer rather than to meet organisational needs, we will drive out waste, reduce preventable contact and make savings. Customers will see changes to the way we do things as we roll out our three year programme of transformation. This is coupled with a move to sharing services wherever possible to maximise resilience within the teams, provide a more cost effective service and ensure a consistently high standard of service for customers of both authorities.

Wherever possible we need to work with other organisations to develop joint service provision and make it easier for our customers to do business with all public services. We know that customers see local government as a single organisation so we already provide joint access to County Council and District council services. We also need to explore how we could extend this to include other public services through co-location or joint service delivery.

Many services already have good working relationships with other organisations in the course of delivering services and these will continue to be developed and maximized for the benefit of customers.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<p>✓ Services should be customer focused and easy to access across a range of access channels.</p> <p>✓ In getting the best possible value out of our resources.</p> <p>✓ In eliminating wasteful duplications or inefficient process.</p> <p>✓ In reducing preventable contact, where customers have to contact us a number of times to get something done, or to chase progress.</p> <p>✓ That technology should support and enhance customer access and service delivery.</p> <p>✓ That by working with others we can make better use of resources and expertise.</p> <p>✓ That partnerships are fundamental to delivering excellent joined-up services.</p>	<p>Review our service delivery and processes to shape them around the customers needs, using systems thinking methodology, which assesses customer demand and plans for 'perfect' service delivery.</p> <p>Ensure that when planning new processes we cut out non value work.</p> <p>Work with other organisations to develop joined up service delivery and make it easier for customers to access public services</p> <p>Ensure that wherever possible customers can access services online, over the phone and face to face.</p> <p>Provide a one stop service and reduce the number of times customers have to make contact with us to get something done.</p> <p>Develop a way of enabling customers to tell us about change of personal details once rather than numerous times.</p> <p>Develop our web service to enable more to be done through self service.</p> <p>Encourage customers to use self service where it is possible to do so.</p>	<p>2.1 Review key frontline services using the systems thinking methodology and put the customer at the heart of changes to the end to end process.</p> <p>2.2 Increase resolution at first point of contact, where ever and with whomever that contact might be.</p> <p>2.3 Develop a 'Tell us once' mechanism for customer changes of address and other details.</p> <p>2.4 Implement Shared Services where it is appropriate, cost effective and beneficial to service delivery.</p> <p>2.5 Work with partners to join up service provision and provide more cost effective services.</p> <p>2.6 Work with our local government partners across Worcestershire to develop self service.</p> <p>2.7 Review and revise web content to ensure it is relevant and fit for purpose.</p> <p>2.8 Continue to develop our online service to ensure that those who want to, can access information and services via the web.</p> <p>2.8 Maintain public internet access at our Customer Service Centres.</p> <p>2.9 Provide mediated web access and customer awareness training to encourage take up of self service.</p> <p>2.10 Maintain one phone number for council services (with limited number of 'specialist' phone numbers to allow 'menu-less' access to telephone services).</p>

		<p>2.11 Ensure customer service features in action plans in all services, as part of our business planning process.</p> <p>2.12 Review face to face service to ensure resources are most effectively used.</p> <p>2.13 Use previously developed customer service initiatives where appropriate across any new shared services.</p>
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THEME 3 – UNDERSTANDING THE CUSTOMER

In order that we communicate properly with customers, fully understand customer needs and shape our services in a way that best suits the majority we need to use all of the feedback we gather. We currently receive feedback via Members, complaints, compliments, surveys and forums and we need to use this 'intelligence' to help shape service improvements. By actively engaging with customers, staff, Members and partners and joining up all the information we hold we will be able to develop a wider view with which to inform the service transformations and service improvement plans. This will enable us to build service delivery around the needs of customers rather than around the organisational structure.

Customer insight information is valuable to help us to target communications appropriately and cost effectively. We need to use the information we receive through customer insight tools to inform the redesign of services and mainstream it's use within the decision making process for all policy and procedural changes.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<p>✓ That customers have the right to tell us if they are unhappy with the service we have provided.</p> <p>✓ That our customers concerns are our concerns – we should know what they are and act on them if it is possible to do so.</p>	<p>Ensure our customer feedback process is easy to understand and that complaints are dealt with at the highest possible level</p> <p>Publicise the ways in which residents and business can engage with us.</p> <p>Consult with customers</p> <p>Conduct customer satisfaction surveys</p>	<p>3.1 Relaunch our Customer Feedback policy.</p> <p>3.2 Implement computer software to ensure all complaints are captured and followed up.</p> <p>3.3 Develop a method of monitoring web content to ensure it meets customers needs</p> <p>3.4 Provided guidance on how to get involved at the Council.</p>

<p>✓ That customers should know how to get involved with the Council.</p> <p>✓ Customers should have a say in how/where savings are made.</p> <p>✓ That we should ask you what you thought of the service we provided.</p> <p>✓ That our own staff are also a valuable source of information</p>	<p>and follow up calls to make sure customers received the information or service they needed.</p> <p>Consult with staff about internal service provision.</p> <p>Look at best practice in other organisations and identify projects where better customer knowledge would help us to engage and consult better.</p> <p>Use customer insight data to inform and target publicity campaigns.</p> <p>Implement automated feedback technology.</p>	<p>3.5 Provide the public with the opportunity to get involved in our budget setting via the annual Budget Jury and on-line budget consultation</p> <p>3.6 Continue to consult with customers through public forums and customer satisfaction surveys</p> <p>3.7 Conduct Staff/internal customer surveys</p> <p>3.8 Implement a joint staff customer focus forum, to act as champions of customer service throughout the organisations.</p> <p>3.9 Maintain and develop individual service satisfaction surveys</p> <p>3.10 Implement a ‘follow up calls’ regime where by staff contact a sample of customers to ensure that a recent request for service has been properly dealt with.</p> <p>3.11 Implement GovMetric to capture real time customer feedback on their experience.</p> <p>3.12 Develop a joint Consultation Strategy? Is this planned?</p> <p>3.13 Use customer insight to inform decision making and communications</p> <p>3.14 Include Customer Impact assessment in decision making process .</p> <p>3.15 Improve the quality of data held about customers on our customer relationship management system.</p> <p>3.16 Carry out service consultation with users (and non users where appropriate) and use the results to inform service improvement.</p>
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THEME 4 - OUR STAFF

Great customer service starts with our staff and they are key to ensuring we are a truly customer focused organisation. It is vital that all staff understand the value of great service and share the values and behaviours necessary to ensure we exceed our standards and our customer's expectations. Excellent examples should be celebrated and shared for others to learn from. Poor performance will be addressed and opportunities to develop will be provided. Many of our staff have little contact with external customers but this does not mean they don't have customers. The role of these staff is to support the front line services, who are therefore their customers and this strategy applies equally to all.

We believe:	We will:	Key actions needed to deliver the objective
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ✓ That all staff should be 'customer obsessed'. ✓ Staff should be praised for good service and helped to improve if they sometimes fall short of our expectations. ✓ That all staff should be sensitive to individual customer needs. ✓ That only people who are committed to providing excellent customer service should join the team. 	<p>Make sure that all staff understand their role within the organisation and that the role of the Council is to provide customer service.</p> <p>Use customer feedback and our own observations of staff behaviour to evaluate performance and address issues through our performance development framework</p> <p>Make sure that every member of staff sees others points of view, is sensitive to people's feelings and acknowledge the customers concerns.</p> <p>Ensure our recruitment policies are clear about expected behaviours.</p> <p>Ensure that sufficient and appropriate training is in place</p>	<p>4.1 Performance development will include customer service development for all staff.</p> <p>4.2 Our Corporate Training Plans will include customer service training, to help staff deal with specific areas and general customer awareness.</p> <p>4.3 Core skills will be developed for all staff which will include customer service skills.</p> <p>4.4 Core Skills for managers will be developed which will include skills for managing a customer focused service and staff performance issues</p> <p>4.5 Maintain the Corporate Management Team (CMT) Back to the Floor initiative and develop this to encourage all managers to spend at least one half day per year working with a different team.</p>

<p>✓ That managers should ensure that their team provides the expected level of service.</p> <p>✓ Staff should understand who their customer is.</p>	<p>Ensure excellent service is recognised and poor performance addressed.</p> <p>Ensure that all teams, regardless of their function consider how they serve their customers whoever they may be.</p> <p>Remove blockages and challenge issues which create barriers to providing excellent service.</p> <p>Lead change positively throughout the organisations</p> <p>Create pride in the organisations and our achievements</p>	<p>4.6 Develop our Induction Packs and training to ensure customer focus is a key part of our instruction to new starters</p> <p>4.7 Maintain CMT Walk the Wards initiative</p> <p>4.8 Staff Awards (BAFTAs / Redditch Staff Awards scheme)</p> <p>4.9 Utilise Staff Ideas Schemes to capture staff ideas and suggestions</p> <p>4.10 Develop home working where appropriate to support staff in undertaking their duties.</p> <p>4.11 Develop the staff intranet to ensure that all staff have access to appropriate information.</p>
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Appendix 1

Our Customer Service Pledge

Our customers are important to us and we aim to provide high quality services, exceed customer expectations and delight our customers. We will treat you as individuals, listen carefully to you, be sensitive to your needs, and take ownership of problems so that you can be confident that someone is dealing with your issue.

What customers can expect from us...

We will:-

- be friendly, polite, helpful, attentive and considerate at all times;
- provide accurate and clear information;
- use plain English and avoid jargon or technical terms;
- be open and honest about what we can and cannot deliver;
- get back to you when we say we will, and advise you of our progress when we are taking longer than anticipated to address an issue.

We always aim to get it right first time, every time so that you don't have to keep contacting us about the same issue.

If the first person you have contact with cannot help you and they have to pass on your enquiry to someone else they will tell you who will be dealing with it.

If your enquiry cannot be dealt with at the time you contact us we will make sure you know what is happening and when you can expect to receive further contact from us.

Some services have to work to different standards because of laws that set out how they must operate and details these are available online or from the relevant service. Otherwise the following timescales will apply when you contact us.

We will always make our services, offices and information as accessible as possible to all our customers.

Whilst our focus is on quality, we also aim to provide a quality response within an acceptable period. As a guide these are the timeframes we aim to work within:-

Emails

When you **email** us we aim to respond to all customer enquiries requiring a response within **48 hours** of the time it was received by us. In most cases this will be a full response but if the issue will take longer to investigate or resolve we will tell you when you can expect a full response.

If the officer you have emailed is out of the office you will be advised when that officer will be available and who to contact in the meantime if your enquiry is urgent.

Letters

We aim respond to all customer enquiries made by **letter** within **7 working days** of the date it is received by us. In most cases this will be a full response but if the issue will take longer to investigate or resolve before we can get back to you we will tell you when we intend to get a full response out to you.

In person

If you visit one of our customer service centres in **person**, we aim to see you within 5 minutes of your arrival to find out the nature of your enquiry. If you need to see a customer service advisor we will then

see you as soon possible and wherever possible within 15 minutes. We will advise you of approximate waiting times if it will be longer than 15 minutes and advise you of alternative options if appropriate.

If the person you see cannot help you they will tell you who can and provide you with facilities to speak to them if they are within our organisation or pass on contact details if this is more suitable. If you need assistance with English a telephone interpreter can be provided at this time.

If it is appropriate for you to have an appointment with a specialist officer we will make the necessary arrangements for you to see them at the time that is most convenient to you (within normal office hours). If you need assistance with English an interpreter, or a British Sign Language interpreter (subject to availability) will be arranged for the appointment.

If you have an appointment with a member of staff they will see you on time.

Telephone

If you call the customer services centre one of our customer service advisors aims to answer telephone calls within 20 seconds (6 rings) during opening times ([link to opening times](#)).

At times of peak demand we will advise you if you are in queue and will keep waiting times as short as possible.

Staff in all other offices aim to answer 100% of their 'phone calls within 20 seconds (6 rings) between 9am and 5pm.

If you need assistance with English a telephone interpreter can be provided at this time.

If voicemail is activated you will be told when the member of staff is going to be available and given an alternative number to call in the event the enquiry is urgent. Staff will respond to voicemail messages within 1 working day of the date of the call, or within 1 working day of the date the message tells you they will return to the office.

Online

We will ensure all the information on our website is accurate, up to date and makes sense to customers.

Complaints

We will acknowledge all complaints made through our complaints procedure within 2 working days and carry out investigations to enable us to respond to you within 15 working days of receipt of your complaint. If this is not possible we will tell you exactly when you can expect a response from us.

Home visits

If we have an appointment to visit you at home we will:

- ensure you understand the reason for the visit;
- let you know if we cannot keep the appointment, or if we are going to be delayed;
- ensure you and your home is treated with respect; and
- let you know what we will do next if follow up action is necessary.

We value the diversity of our communities and want to ensure that everyone has fair access to our services. We are therefore committed to equality and diversity in the way we respond to your needs and in the way we provide our services. We will not discriminate unfairly or unlawfully on any grounds and in particular the grounds of race, gender (including gender identity), disability, age, religion or belief, or sexual orientation. Different services may be offered, or services may be provided in a different way where it would be appropriate to do so (e.g. different services may be offered based on age or a service may be provided differently to include reasonable adjustments for disability).

Appendix 2**Customer access points****Bromsgrove****Go online**www.bromsgrove.gov.uk**Telephone enquiries**

01527 881288

Monday to Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed

**Telephone Payments**

01527 881474

**In Person**

Bromsgrove District Customer Service Centre
 School Drive
 Bromsgrove
 Worcestershire
 B60 1AY

Monday to Wednesday	09:00 - 17:00
Thursday	10:00 - 17:00
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed

Redditch**Go online**www.redditchbc.gov.uk**Telephone enquiries**

01527 534123

Monday and Tuesday and Thursday	09:00 - 17:30
Wednesday	10:00 - 17:30
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed

**Telephone Payments**

01527 534021.

**In Person**

Redditch Customer Service Centre
 Town Hall
 Walter Stranz Square
 Redditch
 B98 8AH

Monday, Tuesday and Thursday	09:00 - 17:30
Wednesday	10:00 - 17:30
Friday	09:00 - 17:00
Saturday	09:00 - 12:00 (Noon)
Sunday	Closed

Batchley One Stop Shop
 Batchley Shopping Centre,
 183 Batchley Rd
 Batchley
 Redditch
 B97 6JB

Monday, Tuesday and Friday	09:00 - 12:30
Wednesday and Thursday	13:30 - 17:30

Winyates One Stop Shop
Unit 3 Winyates Centre,
Redditch
B98 0NR

Monday and Tuesday	13:30 - 17:00
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday	09:00 - 12:30

Woodrow One Stop Shop
Woodrow Shopping Centre
Studley Road
Redditch
B98 7RY

Monday and Tuesday	09:00 - 12:30
Wednesday, Thursday and Friday	13:30 – 17:00

Amanda de Warr
Head of Customer Services

Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Council's

October 2010



Bromsgrove Partnership
Your District Your Future

Bromsgrove
Partnership
**Draft Annual
Report**

2009/2010

Bromsgrove
Your District Your Future Partnership

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Welcome to the fourth annual report of the Bromsgrove Partnership. 2009/10 was a really busy year for the Partnership. We have worked hard on our governance to make sure the Partnership adds value and working together is really beginning to bear fruit. As Chairman of the Partnership, I knew who to call when the Multi Agency Resource Centre in Charford was about to collapse and working with our partners we were able to launch an improved service to our residents through The Trunk. It is difficult to measure things like that, but I believe it is a really good example of New Localism in action. We know at a local level what our residents want, after all, they turned up and demonstrated outside the Council House ! And we delivered a local solution.

I am also delighted to be able to report real progress on the town centre. It has taken a long time, but the town centre regeneration project is complex and multi-agency; we simply could not deliver our resident's aspirations for the town without working in partnership. Similarly, affordable housing and the right mix of housing so that we can sustain our communities is a subject close to my heart. Working with our preferred registered social landlord BDHT, the Perryfields housing scheme, the biggest affordable housing scheme in the District for many a year, is now under construction. For our older residents, Gilbert Court extra care housing scheme has re-opened.

Finally, partnership working is not meant to be cosy, in fact, I would argue that if the atmosphere around the table is too cosy, the partnership probably isn't working. We do argue and we do have our moments, but I am convinced that everyone round the table has a shared ambition to deliver a District that is Safe and Feels Safe, has Economic Success, Stronger Communities, a Better Environment, where residents are Healthy and one where our Children and Young People are designed in, not out of our communities.

I look forward to reporting more progress on these next year.

Roger Hollingworth,
Chairman of the Bromsgrove Partnership and Leader of the Council



Safe and Feel Safe

2



Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership (BCSP) is responsible for ensuring the community is safe and feels safe. Our priorities are: changing the perception of crime, disorder, and anti-social behaviour, intergenerational and diversionary activities.

The Theme Group has created key actions with an aim to reduce the perception amongst residents that anti-social behaviour is a problem within their local area.

An intergenerational activity strategy is yet to be developed; however partners have been delivering a programme of diversionary activities – these include free multi-sports activities at multi-use games areas around the District, free football coaching in Sidemoor and DJ and MC workshops in Sidemoor and Charford. The Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership has also worked with partners to ensure diversionary activities are delivered at times and locations that regularly experience youth related anti-social behaviour.

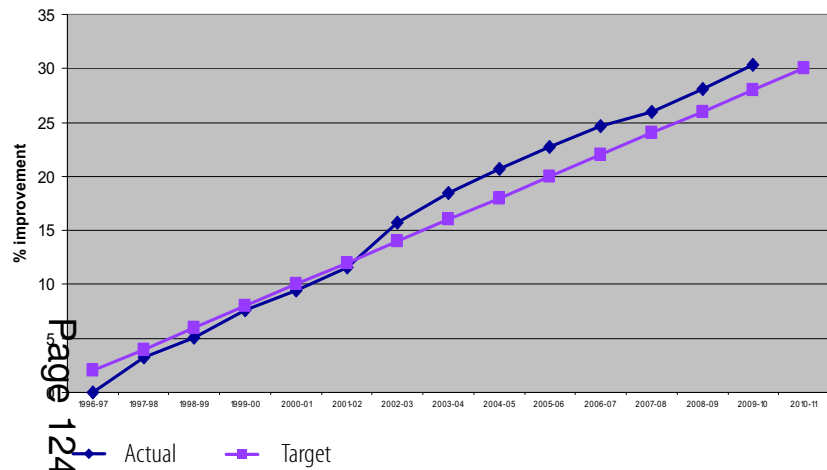
The most recent Place Survey and previous Crime Surveys indicated that Bromsgrove residents were most concerned about young people 'hanging around on the streets'. West Mercia Police and Bromsgrove District Council have teamed up to take a zero tolerance approach to underage alcohol consumption in parks and open spaces. Through high visibility presence, local policing teams and Neighbourhood Wardens, over 300 young people were encountered during the 'Operation Harness' leading to mass confiscations of alcohol. Young people were advised about the risks of alcohol misuse and the legal consequences of their activities; letters were also sent home to parents.

Bromsgrove Community Safety Partnership has secured one page of press space in the Bromsgrove Standard which is published on the third Friday of every month. These articles focus on a different service agency within the Community Safety Partnership each month; showcasing the services they provide and explores how their work makes Bromsgrove a 'Safer Bromsgrove'.

Better Environment

3

Bromsgrove BC HECA Progress



The Better Environment Theme Group is challenged with the objective ***"A better environment for today and tomorrow"***. The Group's priorities are reducing CO2 emissions to improve energy efficiency and adapting to the impacts of climate change.

The Theme Group is a combination of partners from across the District and County whose aim, through working together, is to improve and enhance the environment for those who live, work and visit Bromsgrove District. The Theme Group's key areas of focus are to address the issues, including the challenges and opportunities of climate change through mitigation and adaptation.

Since the 2005 baseline Bromsgrove District has shown a reduction in CO2 emissions. The recent data suggests a 3.2% per capita reduction to 6.1 tonnes per head of population, which is lower than the overall county figure of 6.9 tonnes per capita. In conjunction with this the Council has achieved its Home Energy Conservation target a year ahead of schedule. The Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) monitors the improvement in energy efficiency of the housing stock. The target was to achieve a 30% improvement. The graph opposite illustrates Bromsgrove's improvement.

The largest proportion of CO2 in the District comes from housing. To help tackle this the following partner activities have taken place:

- The Council in conjunction with partners, and utilising the countywide Warmer Worcestershire thermal imaging, has promoted the free and subsidised insulation schemes offered through the fuel utilities.
- Over 300 households received energy advice and 537 referrals were made for insulation and to Warm Front.
- The social housing stock in Bromsgrove is owned by Bromsgrove District Housing Trust. During 2009 they undertook a programme to thermal insulate a number of their hard to treat properties in Charford (Austin Road).



Economic Success

4



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‘Economic Success that is shared by all’ is the objective for the Economic Development Theme Group. The priorities are Town Centre Redevelopment, Economic Development and Employment, Training and Volunteering.

Despite the on-going recession, there are signs that the vitality of the Town Centre is improving. A recent Town Centre Health check shows a reduction in the number of vacant shop units and an increase of some 7.4% in footfall compared with 2009.

Significant progress has been made on a number of strategically important sites within the town centre.



Economic Success

5



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The development of the new Health Centre is well underway and the Council has agreed to grant planning permission for a new Sainsbury's store off the Birmingham Road. Financial contributions from this development will be used to upgrade the High Street, improve pedestrian access between the new store and the High Street and contribute towards sustainable transport measures.

First phase plans for the future of the town are close to completion including a public realm strategy featuring design principles for a refurbished High Street and detailed information on all identified regeneration sites with ideas about what each sites should be used for.

To be included is the very important George House and Market Hall site, which sits at the end of the High Street and at the gateway into town of key routes from Worcester and Kidderminster. Plans for the Transport Network and Environment and Open Spaces will also be included.

Views on the key issues relating to the Town Centre were provided when over a thousand local residents took part in the Area Action Plan Issues and Options Consultation in 2008. The findings of the consultation have been combined with views of strategic planners, architects and developers to produce a new town plan.

This first phase of the Area Action Plan is called the 'Preferred Option' and will be presented to the public for consultation before Christmas 2010. At the end of a 3 month public consultation the plan is to be reviewed for a last time, before issuing the final Area Action Plan for Bromsgrove Town Centre.

Health and Wellbeing

6



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The Health and Wellbeing Theme Group has been working on the following key public health priorities: healthy weights, positive mental health, reducing harm from alcohol misuse and smoking prevention and reduction. Multi-agency sub groups have been established to tackle the issues of alcohol misuse, healthy weight and promoting positive mental health.

The Healthy Weight group aims to promote physical activity and healthy eating for children, young people and adults. **The Alcohol sub group** has developed a local action plan based on the countywide alcohol strategy. The plan is divided into 3 sections; reducing crime and disorder associated with alcohol misuse; reducing alcohol related hospital admissions and children and young people. The Positive Mental Health Group aims to promote positive mental health and reduce stigma for those who suffer with mental health issues. The group has based its work on the recommendations of New Horizons, which outlines a model for public mental health.

The Health and Wellbeing Theme Group have been successful in obtaining funding to run a pilot project - **Age Well Scheme**, aimed at improving the health and well being of older people aged between 55-65 yrs. The project has gained funding for a local co-ordinator for one year. The co-ordinator, Ian Anderson, took up post at the beginning of September this year. He is based at Bromsgrove District Council offices and is managed by Bromsgrove and Redditch Network (BARN). In addition BDC have pledged fifty thousand pounds funding to develop physical activity services for older people within the Bromsgrove District over the next 3 years.



The project is aimed at pre retirement aged people to promote behaviour changes for healthier lifestyles. The project will recruit from the partnership and local employers in the District. It will be delivered by a series of workshops that explore and encourage healthy lifestyles e.g. smoking cessation, reducing alcohol misuse, healthy eating and promoting regular physical activity. In addition there will be workshops that deal with issues surrounding emotional health in older age, bereavement, financial wellbeing and housing.

The Theme Group has been successful, together with Councillors Emma Moffet and Maddy Bunker, in obtaining funding for the falls prevention course - **Postural Stability Instruction** for those who are at risk of or who have suffered a fall. In addition to this funding, ten thousand pounds has been awarded to the District through Joint Commissioning to roll out further Postural Stability Instruction classes across the district. To date sufficient referrals have been made to introduce classes in Charford and Finstall.

Children and Young People

7



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The Children and Young Peoples Theme Group has been established to *“meet the needs of children & young people”* within the District.

The Priorities for the Theme Group are to develop activities, schemes and interventions to promote healthy lifestyle, physical and positive activities. Also to ensure that services work closely together in a co-ordinated and planned manner for the benefit of all.

The Children and Young Peoples Theme Group is also committed to promoting consultation and engagement opportunities across the District to ensure services are designed with local children and young people and to promote the principles safe guarding in all that we do.

In July of this year the Sports Development Team co-ordinated the successful delivery of our third **High 5 Event** at Sanders Park. The event was delivered in line with BECANs (Bromsgrove Extended Community Activity Network) objectives and funded by the Extended Services proportion of Sport Unlimited. Twenty five clubs, agencies and organisations were represented at the event and in addition to this there was a full day's programme of demonstrations, displays, workshops and taster sessions. Children and young people had the opportunity to experience a range of sports and activities, pick up freebies and access information on all the organisations present.

In excess of 3500 members of the community attended throughout the five hour event. Funding was utilised to allow children to experience their first club training session free of charge and act as an incentive to encourage children into club settings.

Young people from across Bromsgrove District decided how to spend £35,000 on projects that affect them during a **“U Decide”** event on 25 March 2010.

Children and Young People

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At the event, held at the Dolphin Centre in Bromsgrove, Eleven groups of young people made bids for amounts ranging from £1,360 to £5,000. Around fifty young people then voted for the bids they thought were the best.

U Decide is designed to enable young people to be involved directly in how money is spent, getting first hand experience of voting and decision making. The project developed from a pilot event which ran last year. Ensuring that the process was as accessible as possible for young people was crucial, so extra support to enable this was funded by Government Office West Midlands. Partners from Worcestershire County Council and the voluntary sector were involved in the development of U Decide and it is hoped that the partnership will develop in future years, enabling even more young people to become involved in decision making.



Stronger Communities

9

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The Stronger Communities Theme Group recognises the critical need to ensure the widest possible understanding of community within the diverse areas that make up the District of Bromsgrove. The priorities for this group are stronger communities, balanced communities and addressing the needs of older people.

The Theme Group oversees the work of the Trunk on the Charford Estate and has recently helped launch Together Bromsgrove Plus – a special Together Bromsgrove aimed at our older residents.

The Theme group has seized the initiative of the Coalition Government 'Big Society' and given it a Bromsgrove slant to give life to Connecting Communities; a system of pledges where residents of the District agree in 2011 to give 4 hours of their time to a worthwhile community based activity.

The community activities will be facilitated by community groups who will call in the pledges to deliver their objectives. The Theme group has already recruited a local sponsor. It looks like we are in for a Big Bromsgrove in 2011 !



A major step forward in the delivery of housing with support and care for older people was achieved during the year with the completion of **Gilbert Court Extra Care Scheme** in Charford. Twenty seven newly built units of affordable accommodation offering both rent, shared ownership and intermediate care options became available for new residents together with the completion of a scheme of major refurbishment to 65 existing homes and provision of extensive new communal facilities on the scheme. The scheme that was led and delivered by Bromsgrove District Housing Trust was supported by capital funding provided by the Housing Corporation and Bromsgrove District Council and revenue funding from Worcestershire County Council to provide the care and support services available.

Stronger Communities

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The largest affordable housing scheme in the District for many years gained both planning and financial approval during the year. The Perryfields Housing scheme will provide the phased delivery of 158 new houses to meet the needs of a broad range of occupants including newly formed households, families and accommodation for older people wishing to downsize. The scheme which is being delivered through a partnership formed between Bromsgrove District Housing Trust and West Mercia Housing Group will offer various affordable tenure options such as housing for rent, shared ownership and intermediate rent, supported by capital grant provided by the Homes and Communities Agency and Bromsgrove District Council.

The Trunk

A multi-partnership project scooped a place in a prestigious regional award.

Bromsgrove's Trunk came runner up in the National Housing Federation's West Midlands What We Are Proud of Awards.

The Trunk is a multi-agency partnership, which began in 2009 and is now delivering tangible and meaningful outcomes for the residents of Charford and Sidemoor.

The Trunk project is based around the use of five vacant shop units belonging to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust (BDHT) being opened as a community centre. This was done through the partnership working of a priority LSP Group 'Successful Neighbourhoods through Involvement and Learning'.

The centre, run by EPIC, a community interest company, BDHT and Bromsgrove District Council, is split into Club Youth, offering youth services on Charford, and the Trunk, a community resource offering learning, training and support activities to adults.



Governance

11

Over the last year, we have also been working behind the scenes to keep the Bromsgrove Partnership fit for purpose. For a local strategic partnership to be effective it needs clear leadership, a strong shared ambition, a shared set of priorities - ultimately good governance. During 2009/10 the Leader of the Council became Chairman of the Board, with the vice-chairman John Morgan representing the private sector. This change strengthens the political accountability of the partnership and provides a more commercial focus. We have checked our priorities against the statistics and community engagement feedback we have, to ensure the Partnership is focusing on the right things. We have published a new Sustainable Community Strategy, moved to bi-monthly performance reporting, but kept this simple, thereby keeping a focus, but reducing burdens on officers to enable them to focus on delivery.

Hugh Bennett

Secretary to the Partnership and Director of Policy, Performance and Partnerships

Objectives

Communities that are safe and feel safe

A better environment for today and tomorrow

Economic Success that is shared by all

Improving health and wellbeing

Meeting the needs of children and young people

Stronger communities

Priorities

1. Changing the perception of crime and ASB
2. Intergenerational and Diversionary Activities

1. Reducing CO2 emissions
2. Adaptation

1. Town Centre
2. Economic Development

1. Staying Healthy
2. Mental Health and Wellbeing

1. Being Healthy
2. Positive Activities

1. Stronger Communities
2. Balanced Communities
3. Older People

Our Vision

We will make Bromsgrove District a better place to work, live and visit by driving forward change

Bromsgrove
Your District Your Future
Partnership

Version 10.1 as of 18/10/10

**THE LONGBRIDGE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
Birmingham City Council
and
Bromsgrove District Council
and
Worcestershire County Council**

**Relating to land within the
Longbridge Area Action Plan Area**

**THE LONGBRIDGE
MEMORANDUM OF UNDERSTANDING
(THE MEMORANDUM)**

IS MADE DAY OF 2010

Is made between:

- | | |
|---|---|
| (1) Birmingham City Council (BCC) | King Edward House
135 New Street
Birmingham
B2 4QJ |
| (2) Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) | Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 1AA |
| (3) Worcestershire County Council (WCC) | County Hall
Spetchley Road
Worcester
WR5 2NP |

Hereinafter called the Councils and reference to the Councils shall be construed accordingly.

Definitions

Project Working Groups	The purpose of the working groups is to provide advice, act as consultee/to put forward proposals to the Project Delivery Group relating to planning applications, projects and S106 issues, in particular, tariff (LIT) funded schemes and will be made up of officers from each Council where appropriate. The terms of which are set out at Appendix 3.
Decision Functions	BDC Committee, Cabinet Member Decision and Cabinet; WCC Cabinet Member and Cabinet; BCC Planning Committee, Cabinet Member Decision, Cabinet Decision, Joint Committee, Cabinet Member with joint responsibility.
Project Delivery Board	A board established jointly by the Councils and AWM to provide Project Managerial Support to assist in the delivery of the projects set out within the AAP, the terms of reference of which are set out at Appendix 5.
Project Delivery Group	A group established jointly by the Councils to provide support and to put forward recommendations from the Working Groups to the Project Delivery Board, and to monitor, evaluate and review the delivery of the AAP, the terms of reference of which are set out at Appendix 3.
Longbridge Area Action Plan	(hereinafter called the AAP) available in hard copy from BCC upon request or at http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap
Planning Applications	Means any planning applications in respect of the AAP Area.

Memorandum	Means this document setting out the joint understanding and spirit of co-operation between the Councils in the application and delivery of the AAP.
Longbridge Area Action Plan development site	A copy of which is annexed hereto at Appendix 2. Plan 1
Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff (LIT)	Means the sum to be collected and applied in accordance with Appendix 4 of this Memorandum and Part D of the AAP.
List of Agreed Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff Priorities (LIT)	Means a current list jointly prepared and agreed by the Councils and identified in Part D of the AAP and subsequently prioritised against which the tariff is to be applied and for the avoidance of doubt may be jointly subject to re-prioritisation from time to time of which are set out at Appendix 7.
Project Manager	Appointed by BCC with support of AWM and the Longbridge Delivery Board and the role and remit of this position is set out in part at Appendix 6.
Banker	BCC is to act on behalf of the three authorities as administrator for the receipt and payment of LIT money. The details of which are set out at Appendix 4.

1. This Memorandum of Understanding sets out the agreed understanding between the Councils as to the application of the AAP and specifically in respect of:
 - 1.1. The Councils' main contacts in relation to project areas, services and statutory functions;
 - 1.2. The advisory role in relation to planning applications and the monitoring of the application of the AAP to the Action Plan Area and to act as consultee and to put forward proposals relating to the Action Plan Area.
 - 1.3. Requirements regarding formal and informal project management, reporting, communication and review;
 - 1.4. Requirements for development and implementation of a Delivery Plan, to support the AAP with particular reference to:
 - 1.4.1. Project delivery structure; the governance and implementation of project management measures.
 - 1.4.2. Community Infrastructure planning mechanisms and methods of agreeing phasing and priorities for the implementation of the requirements set out in Part D of the AAP;
 - 1.4.3. Financial arrangements, including banking, tariff income and expenditure.
 - 1.5. The Councils' agreed system of governance in dealing with the tariff payment application to the Action Plan Area as set out in Part D table 2 of the AAP.
 - 1.6. Appendix 4, section 2 sets out an understanding of the Delivery Group decision-making process with regards to LIT funding. (see also Project Governance structure chart Appendix 3)

2. WORKING GROUPS

2.1. Four Working Groups will be established to deal with;

- advice in relation to planning applications, and
- project management, and
- application of the tariff and table 2 of the AAP

The four Working Groups will address the following specialist areas:

- i) Planning and Urban Design
- ii) Transportation and Highways Infrastructure
- iii) Housing, Communities, Parks and Education
- iv) Employment, skills and business Development

2.2. The Working Groups may also consist of a number of sub groups that may need to be set up depending upon the nature and content of the planning application/project.

2.3. Annexed hereto at Appendix 3 is a schedule that sets out the agreed function, management, and working structure for the Working Groups.

2.4. Annexed hereto at Appendix 4 are guidelines for the administration of the banking function.

2.5. The Working Groups will be responsible for developing proposals and work programmes and putting such proposals and a List of Agreed Priorities forward to the Project Delivery Board.

2.6. Each Working Group will appoint a representative to attend Project Delivery Group meetings.

3. LONGBRIDGE DELIVERY GROUP (LDG)

- 3.1. The Longbridge Delivery Group is to be made up of representatives from the Working Groups officers from the Councils and the Project Manager - The LDG will co-ordinate and be responsible for the development and delivery of the Delivery Plan linked to the requirements of the AAP.
- 3.2. The LDG shall put forward proposals relating to the AAP to the Longbridge Delivery Board for ratification and subsequent authorisation by the decision function.
- 3.3. The LDG will monitor the implementation of all planning permissions in the AAP area against the AAP aims and objectives and in particular to monitor the delivery of the schemes being funded by the Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff.
- 3.4. Annexed hereto at Appendix 3, Section 2 is a schedule that sets out the agreed function, management, and working structure for the LDG.

4. LONGBRIDGE DELIVERY BOARD (LDB)

4.1. The Longbridge Delivery Board will be established to:

- (i) Be responsible for endorsing major elements of work, including the Delivery Plan, any business plan/resource planning and then to make recommendations to the decision function.
- (ii) Oversee the management of all projects and the delivery of such in accordance with the AAP consideration of planning applications and the Delivery Plan;
- (iii) Agree on the application of the Tariff sum to projects outlined in Part D table 2 of the AAP;
- (iv) Put forward recommendations from the LDG to the decision function
- (v) All decisions in relation to the Action Plan Area are to be made in accordance with the provisions of the AAP

- (vi) Annexed hereto at Appendix 5 is a schedule that sets out the agreed function management and working structure for the Longbridge Delivery Board
- (vii) The terms of reference for the Longbridge Delivery Board to be agreed by the Board itself, but also shall include the requirements of this Memorandum.

5. ARBITRATION CLAUSE

In the event of any dispute or difference arising out of the meaning or application of this Memorandum between the parties (other than a dispute or difference relating to a matter of law or concerning the meaning or construction of this Memorandum) such dispute or difference shall be referred to a sole arbitrator to be agreed between the parties, or failing agreement within 14 days, after either party has given the other a written request to concur in the appointment of an arbitrator, by an arbitrator to be appointed by the President or a Vice President of the Charter Institute of Arbitrators.

6. CONTACT DETAILS

This document also sets out the main contact details from three Authorities;

BCC contact details – Peter Wright

Area Manager
South Birmingham Development Planning and Regeneration
PO Box 4470
Birmingham
B1 1TR
Tel: 0121 303 3170
Peter.wright@birmingham.gov.uk

BDC contact details – Mike Dunphy

Strategic Planning Manager
Planning and Environment Services
Bromsgrove District Council
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove
Worcestershire
B60 1AA
Tel: 01527 881325
m.dunphy@bromsgrove.gov.uk

Worcestershire County Council contact details – Mark Middleton

Head of Strategy and Environmental Planning
Worcestershire County Council
Spetchley Road
Worcester
WR5 2NP
Tel: 01905 766717
mmiddleton@worcestershire.gov.uk

THIS MEMORANDUM IS SIGNED BY AUTHORISED
SIGNATORIES ON BEHALF OF THE RESPECTIVE COUNCILS IN
THE SPIRIT OF COOPERATION

Signed by _on
on behalf of Birmingham City Council.

.....

Signed by _on
on behalf of Bromsgrove District Council.

.....

Signed by _on
on behalf of Worcestershire County Council.

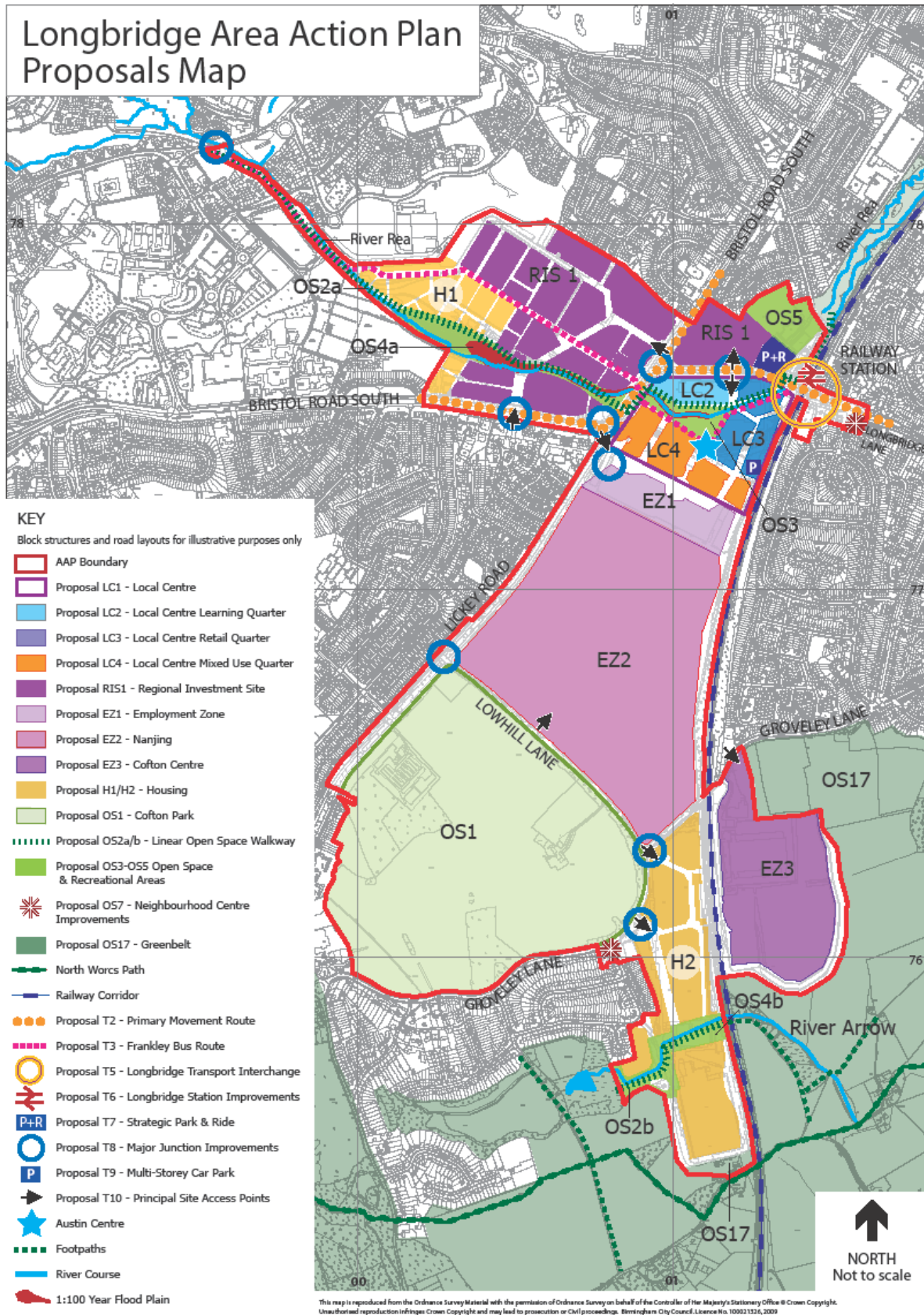
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APPENDIX 1

Longbridge Area Action Plan

Note: The AAP is available upon request in hard copy only from
BCC Development Planning & Regeneration or at
<http://www.birmingham.gov.uk/longbridgeaap>.

APPENDIX 2 The Action Plan Area



APPENDIX 3

SECTION 1 - The Longbridge Area Action Plan Working Groups

1. Purpose

The purpose of the Working Groups (WGS) is to advise on the delivery of the AAP and infrastructure development relating to it and to consider specific planning applications and put forward proposals relating to the AAP to the Project Delivery Group

The Councils joint aim is to provide, through the WGS, an appropriate level of partnership, support and advice to enable the purpose of the AAP to be achieved.

2. Scope of this Appendix

This appendix relates to the arrangements for the achievement by the WGS of its purposes as set out in 1 above.

3. Composition of the WGS

The WGS will comprise senior officer representatives and other officers providing expert advice in relation to specific planning applications as appropriate and will meet on a monthly basis or as and when required. It is expected that each of the Councils will nominate officers. Representatives of outside organisations and agencies can be co-opted onto a group where this is considered by the group to be beneficial in aiding discussions and delivery.

4. Substitute

Each Council will be entitled to nominate a substitute to attend any or all meetings of the WGS in place of its nominated representatives and such substitute shall be entitled to act in all respects as if he/she were the Council's nominated representative.

5. Appointment of Chairperson

The members of the WGS shall at its first meeting and annually thereafter elect a chairperson of the WGS from among their number.

6. Roles and Responsibilities of the WGS

- a. To act as consultees and advisors in respect of Planning Applications referred to it by the appropriate case officer.
- b. To make such recommendations as they consider appropriate in respect of the applications to it.
- c. To discuss any other issues relevant to paragraphs (a) and (b)

7. The financial programming (Banker) and Tariff Management

To act in accordance with the guidelines set out at Appendix 4

8. Duty of Good Faith and Confidentiality

The WGS shall at all times and in a spirit of co-operation act with the utmost good faith and shall ensure that any confidential information disclosed to it by any Council is kept confidential unless and until the Council concerned gives its written consent to disclosure of such information.

APPENDIX 3

SECTION 2 - Longbridge Delivery Group (LDG)

1. **Purpose:**

The purpose of the LDG is to co-ordinate and to be responsible for the development, implementation and monitoring of the Delivery Plan linked to the requirements of the AAP and to put forward proposals to the Project Delivery Board.

2. **Scope:**

This appendix relates to the arrangements for the achievement by the LDG of its purposes as set out in the above

3. **Composition of the LDG:**

The LDG will comprise a representative from each of the WGS and will be chaired by the Area Manager, South Birmingham, Development Planning & Regeneration.

4. **Roles and Responsibilities of the LDG:**

- a. To co-ordinate and to be responsible for the development of the Delivery plan linked to the requirements of the AAP.
- b. To put forward proposals relating to the AAP to the Longbridge Delivery Board.
- c. To monitor the delivery of the Community infrastructure development (LIT).
- d. Consider the need for re-prioritisation of the objectives of the AAP and community infrastructure development and make such recommendations as appropriate in respect to such re-prioritisation.

- e. To monitor the role of the Bank/Accountable Body in the application of the tariff in accordance with the provisions of the AAP and to consider as necessary the need to re-prioritise the List of Agreed Priorities or make other arrangements to ensure a continued level of delivery on a twelve monthly basis
- f. To monitor the application of the tariff in delivering of the AAP's objectives and to make any changes that may be necessary to ensure continued delivery of Part D of the AAP.

5. Duty of Good Faith and Confidentiality:

The LDG shall at all times and in a spirit of co-operation act with the utmost good faith and shall ensure that any confidential information disclosed to it by any Council is kept confidential unless and until the Council concerned gives it written consent to disclosure of such information

APPENDIX 4

Guidelines on the Section 106 / LIT Banking Function

SECTION 1 - Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff Financial Arrangements

The following assumes that:

- Birmingham City Council (BCC), Worcestershire County Council (WCC), and Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) ('the authorities') are each legally and financially responsible for implementing their own planning agreements in their area.
 - The authorities will set up a binding governance structure determining how the LIT Fund will operate. The Longbridge Delivery Group (endorsed by Longbridge Delivery Board) will prioritise and decide how and when to spend any Tariff monies received in accordance with the Longbridge Area Plan and associated planning agreements.
 - The cost risk of an authority's individual infrastructure project(s) in excess of the amounts approved by the Longbridge Delivery Board or Tariff monies received will be entirely at the authority's own risk.
 - The financial arrangements set out below apply to the Tariff income and its use, while other Section 106 arrangements will follow procedures as per local authority's existing policies.
-
1. BCC will receive all Tariff monies on behalf of the authorities and will act as 'banker' for receipts into and payments out of the 'LIT Fund' on the following basis.
 2. It will be necessary to plan, budget, and account for LIT Income and Expenditure for revenue and capital separately in accordance with local authority accounting standards, and for BCC officers to calculate the LIT Fund balance for revenue and capital separately. The Board will be responsible for confirming the budgetary allocations in line with the Community Infrastructure Delivery Plan for the approval of BCC, BDC and WCC LIT funded projects. BCC will be responsible for providing an outturn statement, including a subjective analysis of expenditure, of

expenditures and income for each authority for each financial year ended 31st March.

3. Each authority incurring LIT related expenditure endorsed by the Longbridge Delivery Board will account on an 'open book' basis to BCC as 'banker' (in accordance with any procedures the authorities agree for the LIT Fund). BCC as 'banker' will quarterly reimburse all such expenditure which is to be met from the LIT Fund. This will be on the basis of cash payments defrayed and not on an accounting accruals basis. Each authority to make its own accruals as appropriate.
4. BCC will account for the payment of LIT monies to WCC and BDC as grants, as approved under the terms of the Memorandum of Understanding. Each authority will be required to enter into conditions of grant aid for each project with BCC and must seek internal approval for any projects they are delivering and submit these to BCC in advance of any claims for reimbursement. BCC will also be fully compliant with the requirements of this clause.
5. WCC, BDC and BCC will need to provide evidence of project spend on a payments basis and project progress statements to corroborate a request for reimbursement from the LIT Fund. All quarterly requests for reimbursement must be supported by a Demand Notice confirming the sum requested for each project. BCC as 'banker' will have the right to make on site inspections as necessary.
6. A Community Infrastructure Delivery Plan, setting out LIT funding requirements will be agreed and revised at least annually by the authorities. This will be endorsed by the Longbridge Delivery Board and BCC finance officers in accordance with its banking role, for LIT expenditure and planning purposes.
7. ALL LIT Income (including interest earned) must be spent on approved projects in accordance with the project approval letter,
8. Subject to the following paragraphs, the LIT Fund will not support contractual commitments for expenditure unless sufficient funding is available in the Fund. BCC will not cash flow, or fund any project costs for any authority in lieu of future LIT income streams. This will be subject to other financial payment arrangements, if agreed by the Board and the three authorities.
9. Any project expenditure which exceeds the approved project sum has to be funded by the individual authority which entered into the expenditure

commitment, unless approved by the Board and the other authorities subject to uncommitted LIT funding being available.

10. Any expenditure which has been funded through the LIT Fund and which subsequently is found to be ineligible (as determined by the Longbridge Delivery Group) must be repaid in FULL to the LIT Fund, upon demand.
11. BCC, as Banker, will credit interest to the LIT Fund based on the net balance in hand at the end of each quarter at the 3 month rate offered by the Government Debt Management Office to local authorities, or if not available, the 3 month LIBOR rate less 10BP.
12. BCC, as Banker, will not be required to establish a separate bank account for LIT transactions or to invest LIT surpluses in separate investments. BCC's transactions and accounts as Banker for the LIT Fund will be subject to its normal statutory and financial management processes including payment processes, ledger entries and controls, internal and external audit.
13. In line with the adopted AAP, the Councils will charge a fee to cover the administrative costs associated with managing and monitoring Section106 and LIT agreements. The fee will be charged per planning application at a maximum of 2.5% from the total S106/LIT contribution sum, and will be subject to a minimum payment of £1000. On schemes generating S106/LIT payments over £1million, the total fee will be reviewed by the Councils and may be subject to negotiation.
14. On 'winding up' of the LIT, any closing LIT Fund surplus, including interest to date, will be paid to the authorities in equal proportions of one third.
15. BCC, as Banker, will make its accounts available on an 'open book' basis and provide regular financial and monitoring information (quarterly) to the Longbridge Delivery Board and have the LIT fund audited as part of its annual statutory accounts.

APPENDIX 4

SECTION 2 - Decision making process for LIT funding and Governance Structure Chart

A request by service providers for LIT funds follows a two stage application process. This is to ensure that BCC's finance procedures are followed and to ensure the Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff is being used to deliver the community infrastructure necessary to deliver the AAP objectives.

The first stage utilises BCC's Project Inception Document (PDD). The PDD will:

- enable the Longbridge Delivery Group to make informed and transparent decisions
- provide consistent approach to decision making
- help achieve maximum effectiveness and best value of the LIT
- provide a clear basis for monitoring review
- ensure the LIT is funding projects that comply with the objectives of the Area Action Plan.

The second stage follows BCC's comprehensive Gateway and Financial Approval procedures, whether for internal BCC service delivery or for external Council or agency.

Step 1 - information gathering meeting

Prior to preparing any proposals, it is essential for the applicant to meet with the Longbridge Project Manager and/or officers from the Longbridge Delivery Group to discuss the proposal and clarify any questions concerning the LIT grants.

Step 2 – prepare a Project Definition Document

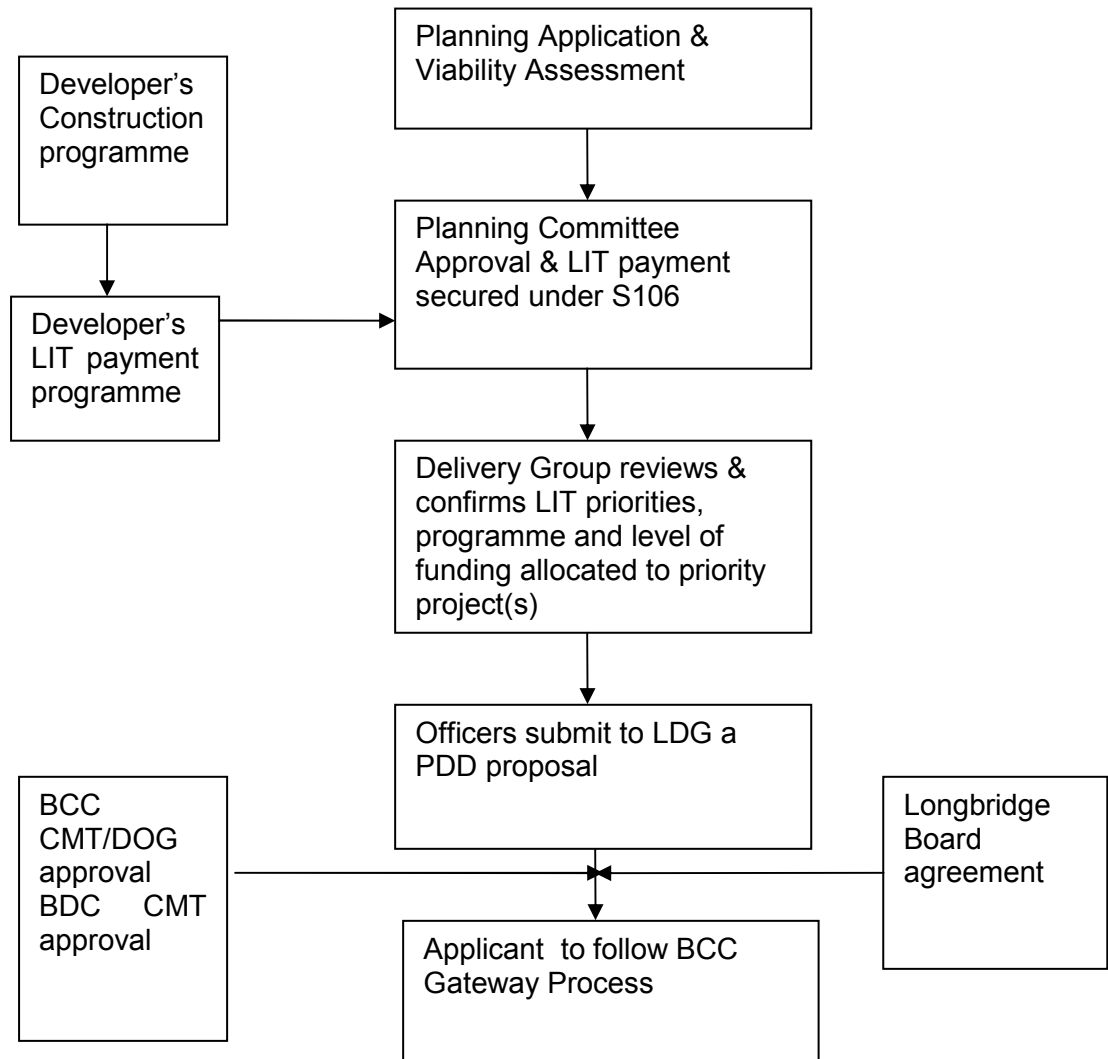
The aim of the PDD is to provide the Longbridge Delivery Group with an objective means to review and comment on the proposal prior.

Step 3 – Evaluation of Proposal

Subject to any clarifications and amendments to ensure compliance with AAP policies and LIT funding requirements, the Longbridge Delivery Group will then conditionally approve the application subject to endorsement by the Longbridge Delivery Board.

Step 4 - Complete Conditions of Grant Aid application.

The applicant must then follow BCC's Gateway procedure and assessment by the BCC's Planning and Regeneration Directorate. Successful applications will be awarded a fixed sum subject to Terms & Conditions of the funding contract.



APPENDIX 5

Longbridge Delivery Board (LDB)

Terms of Reference for Project Delivery Board

The Terms of Reference set out the context in which the LDB (the Board) will operate and their relationship to various reporting structures.

1. Aims and Objectives of the Board

- 1.1 The Group supports the delivery and implementation of AAP being led by Development Planning & Regeneration as set out in Division's annual service plan.
- 1.2 The LDB aims to provide a strategic and operational oversight of the named projects in the AAP area by providing the mechanism to co-ordinate and join up actions across partners in the interest of Project Delivery and to put forward recommendations to the Decision Function in accordance with the requirements of the AAP and the sustainable community strategies for Birmingham and Bromsgrove, and any other relevant planning policy whether statutory or non-statutory.
- 1.3 The LDB aims to provide strategic and operational oversight of the named project by providing the mechanism to co-ordinate and join up actions across partners in the interest of project delivery and to put forward recommendations to the Decision Function in accordance with the requirements of AAP the community strategies for Birmingham and Bromsgrove and any other relevant planning policy whether statutory and non-statutory.
- 1.4 The LDB will operate on the following principles
 - visible commitment by the member organisations to the identified project
 - clear purpose, clarity of expectations and agreed actions
 - openness and transparency
 - effective communication and accountability

- combined expertise
- shared mechanisms for risk management, monitoring, reviewing and reporting of performance/progress.
- commitment to seeking creative and innovative solutions to problems
- decision making that can be progressed through existing approval processes

2. Roles and Responsibilities

2.1 The LDB brings together key agencies and landholders that can bring action/influence to ensure effective project delivery and can speak with “one voice”. The role of the LDB is therefore to provide strategic direction, leadership and coordinated action for the AAP.

2.2 To be responsible for ensuring that the project contributes to the vision and aims of the Birmingham and Bromsgrove’s Sustainable Community Strategy and in doing so support the objectives of a wider range of economic and social objectives and initiatives. Specifically the LDB will:

- provide “joined up” action across agencies in support of the project;
- seek creative and innovative solutions to problems;
- advise and support the Project Manager on operational aspects;
- monitor progress against an agreed project plan;
- oversee the Risk Management Framework and Equalities Impact Needs Assessment;
- advise on securing of funds;
- support appointment and management of any external consultants.

2.3 In supporting the above, the LDB will make recommendations for members to action through the appropriate approval processes. The Group itself has no approval delegations.

- to support and consider recommendations submitted by the LDG and to put forward these recommendations to the Decision Function

- to endorse the annual Delivery Plan
- to receive progress reports in relation to the AAP
- to be responsible for negotiating major programme changes and financial issues
- to ensure that proper consultation in relation to all proposals which may affect the AAP have only been taken following proper consultation with all stakeholders, interested parties and the local community.

3. Membership

- 3.1 Individual representation on the LDB will depend on the scope and issues of the individual projects within AAP to be discussed, but will include at least one representative from each Council, AWM, St. Modwen and other key stakeholders to be identified .
- 3.2 The Members of the LDB shall at its first meeting and annually thereafter elect a Chair person and vice Chair person from amongst their number.
- 3.3 The Chair person in consultation with the LDB will keep under review the arrangements and membership of the LDB.
- 3.4 The Chair person may approve changes to the membership of the LDB.
- 3.5 The Chair person in consultation with the LDB Members may dissolve the LDB or any associated Sub-Board when its purpose is no longer required.
- 3.6 Each LDB member will be entitled to nominate a substitute to attend any or all meetings of the LDB in the place of either or both of its nominated representatives and such substitute shall be entitled to act in all respects as if he/she were the LDB nominated representative.

4. Meetings

- 4.1 The LDB will meet on a quarterly basis. The Chair may call a special meeting following consultation with LDB Members.
- 4.2 Additional representatives may be invited to meetings with the agreement of the Chair in consultation with the PDG Members.

- 4.3 The meeting will be serviced by the Project Delivery Manager, with secretariat functions provided by Development Planning & Regeneration.
- 4.4 Action points arising from meetings will be noted and followed up through an action tracker.

5. Reporting Structures

- 5.1 The Project Manager will be responsible for updating City Council departments and officers through Development Officers Group and any internal working groups.
- 5.2 Individual members will be responsible for reporting back through their own reporting and communication channels.

- 6. **Duty of Good Faith and Confidentiality:** the LDB shall at all times act with the utmost good faith and a spirit of co-operation and shall ensure that any confidential information disclosed to it by a LDB Member or any substituted LDB Member will be kept confidential.

7. General Principles

- 7.1 This LDB does not represent a legal entity and is not subject to the Partnership Act.
- 7.2 The LDB is not a decision making body. It can put forward recommendations but all decisions are subject to the constitutional arrangements of Birmingham City Council, Bromsgrove District Council and Worcestershire County Council and subject to Overview and Scrutiny arrangements and Financial Regulations. The LDB does not have the authority to take executive decisions on behalf of Birmingham City Council, Bromsgrove District Council or Worcestershire County Council."

APPENDIX 6

Longbridge Project Manager

The project manager's role is to oversee the successful planning, execution, monitoring, communication and control of the project processes that support the delivery and implementation of the AAP and that of Longbridge redevelopment. The Project Manager will report to the South Birmingham Area Manager. The Project Manager's responsibilities include, but are not limited to the following:

- Lead, direct, co-ordinate and supervise the project as required.
- Ensure that project decisions and approvals are given in a timely manner within project programme deadline
- Use project management skills to work flexibly when required across the range of projects managed within the division.
- With input from St Modwen, preparation of the Master Programme and monitoring of progress against it.
- Develop & monitoring the project's risk management process.
- Update monitoring tools, directories, mechanisms for managing the process
- Developing and maintaining a Delivery plan.
- Recording and managing project issues and escalating where necessary.
- Ensure that the required level of reporting takes place at both officer and member forums.
- Prepare reports for appropriate groups when required, including reports for Cabinet/Cabinet Members approval.
- Work with colleagues and consultants to produce documents and studies on which the Councils can base strategic development decisions.
- Identify potential problems, disputes or conflicts and resolving them, with the co-operation of all concerned in the best interest of the Councils.

- Manage the involvement of external consultants including procurement of services, performance and payment of fees.
- Work with development Partners to deliver the AAP aims and objectives.
- Attend consultation meetings with elected members and others.
- Manage the co-ordination of the Working Groups engaged in project work.
- Work alongside the Area Teams, other in-house and external consultants and agencies that contribute to the development process.

APPENDIX 7

List of Agreed Priorities

The application of the Tariff is to be applied against Community Infrastructure Improvements listed in Table 2 of the AAP and identified below. The Tariff priorities have come forward from consultation with local stakeholders and residents; they acknowledge priorities identified in the Sustainability Appraisal and Baseline evidence, and reflect the current proposed development programme. However, as part of the monitoring and management of the AAP, the current priorities may change as infrastructure is delivered and/or to reflect changes in local needs and the delivery programme. No finite costs have been assigned to projects at this stage as these will correspond to the level of developer contributions, mix of development, phasing and nature of projects funded. The following table outlines the current list of agreed priorities as of 21st July 2010.

Longbridge Infrastructure Tariff (LIT) Matrix 21/07/2010				
Ref..	LIT Expenditure Items	Estimated date for contributions	Project Outline	Current Priority (high to low)
1	Longbridge Railway Station	Associated with Transport HUB, Bournville College, and links to Bromsgrove station improvements	Improved ticketing services, improved waiting areas and generally an improved journey experience for passengers	1
2	Sustainable Transport and Co-ordination	Will be phased depending on requirements	Funding required for travel plan co- ordinator as identified in Travel Management Strategy and Movement Strategy.	2
3	Bus Service Improvements	Early funding to operate services - linked to housing approvals. Further work required on programme	Quality frequent bus connection between Frankley and Longbridge, re- directed bus routes and network of small 'buzz buses'	1
4	Railway Service and Infrastructure Improvements	2011 onwards	DfT keen on scheme and local contribution. Bromsgrove Station due to move in 2010/11.	1

5	Education and childcare, primary and secondary schools.	2012 - onwards (in conjunction with Housing development)	According to the Community Infrastructure baseline: 'Birth rates are increasing locally and there is a projected reduction in the levels of surplus primary and secondary spaces	1
6	Local employment and training agreements.	2010 onwards	Important local priority – Longbridge Employment Access Team created to drive forward	1
7	Tariff LIT Administration	2010 onwards	The administration and monitoring process associated with a tariff and a S106 is both complex and time-consuming. A % fee will be agreed by the Councils. (See MoU)	1
8	Heritage and Culture	2010 onwards in conjunction with facility built unit in town centre	In conjunction with The Austin Centre development. More research and feasibility of potential programmes and management of centre required.	1
9	Safer Communities	2011 onwards	Identified as a high priority in baselines and at EIP	2
10	Cofton Park	2010 onwards	Park investment is a strong local priority supported across the AAP.	1
11	Off-site Open Space	2012-13	Wide range of off-site open space enhancement and mitigation projects	3
12	Public Art	2013 onwards	Several successful Community engagement models exist to develop and generate community spirit and local pride and enhance the quality of public spaces through public art. Links to Austin Centre programming..	3
13	Community Capacity	2014 onwards	Focus upon building the capacity of existing community organisations which operate community centres as well as upgrading existing buildings to enable transfer into community ownership to be a viable and attractive option.	4
14	Healthy living and sports development	2014 onwards	Potential options for a diverse range of programmes to incorporate training provision for the leisure industry in line with the worklessness agenda.	4
15	Enterprise and Business Support	2014 onwards	Identified as a priority in various reports but requires greater strategic leadership and direction.	4
16	Lifelong learning	2014 onwards	Priorities include: referrals to suppliers- Informal 'first step' learning- Adult skills (literacy / numeracy)- IT skills development	5

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