



## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

**MONDAY 21ST JANUARY 2013**  
**AT 6.00 P.M.**

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

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

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Arrangements
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 17th December 2012 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. Homelessness Grants 2012-13 - Update Report (Pages 9 - 12)
5. Telephony Problems - Presentation from the Head of Customer Services
6. Quarter 2 Sickness Absence Performance and Health Report (Pages 13 - 20)
7. Overview & Scrutiny Topic Proposal Community Safety Team - Additional Information (Pages 21 - 24)
8. Budget 2013/14 - Verbal Update
9. Youth Provision Task Group - Verbal Update
10. Air Quality Task Group - Verbal Update

11. Worcestershire County Council Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Verbal Update
12. Action List (Pages 25 - 26)
13. Cabinet Work Programme 1st February to 31st May 2013 (Pages 27 - 32)
14. Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme (Pages 33 - 36)
15. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.

K. DICKS  
Chief Executive

The Council House  
Burcot Lane  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B60 1AA

10th January 2013



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# Agenda Item 3

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 17TH DECEMBER 2012 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors S. R. Colella (Chairman), P. Lammas (Vice-Chairman), C. J. Bloore, J. S. Brogan, Dr. B. T. Cooper, Mrs. R. L. Dent, Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, R. J. Laight, P. M. McDonald (Minute No. 69/01 to Minute No. 73/12), S. P. Shannon, Mrs. C. J. Spencer and L. J. Turner

Invitees: Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP

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

#### 69/12 APOLOGIES

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

#### 70/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

There were no declarations of interest or whipping arrangements.

#### 71/12 MINUTES

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**RSOLVED:**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

The Board discussed the following areas in detail:

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

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

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

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

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

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



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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

80/12 **ACTIONS LIST**

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

**RESOLVED** that the Work Programme be noted.

The meeting closed at 7.38 p.m.

Chairman

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### Overview and Scrutiny 21<sup>st</sup> January 2013

#### Update on Schemes and Initiatives Funded through Homelessness Grant for 2012/13.

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Del Booth
Relevant Head of Service	Deputy Chief Executive

#### 1.0 Background Information

- 1.1 At the Overview and Scrutiny meeting held on the 27<sup>th</sup> February 2012 the Strategic Housing Team were requested to provide an update on the Homelessness Grant funded initiatives for 2012/13 that were approved by Cabinet on the 1<sup>st</sup> February 2012.
- 1.2 The annual Homelessness grant to BDC, allocated through Communities and Local Government (DCLG) has been used each year since 2002 to fund a range of homelessness support services and schemes that focus upon the prevention of homelessness and repeat homelessness. Austerity measures introduced by the Government have put households under greater financial pressure and are leading to increases in homelessness in the District. To help support local authorities to manage the increase in demand for services DCLG increased the amount of homelessness grant it awards to local authorities. For Bromsgrove, this resulted in the Homelessness Grant allocation increasing by 40% to £113,470 for 2011/12 and 2012/13.

#### 2.0 Allocation of Homelessness Grant

- 2.1 The table below shows the allocation awarded for 2012/13 projects

<b>Allocation of CLG Homeless Grant 2012/13</b>		
Amount Carried Forward from 11/12	18,531	
Homelessness Grant for 12/13	114,000	
<b>Total</b>	<b>132,531</b>	
<b>Homelessness Grant for 2012/13</b>	<b>Bid allocation</b>	<b>Actual SPEND IN YEAR</b>
CAB Mortgage Rescue Adviser allocated 08/08	17,600	17,600
Housing Options Service	15,000	15,000
Floating Homelessness Prevention Officers	24,000	24,000
mYPlace Rent Deposit Scheme for under 25's	21,500	21,500
Newstart Furniture Project	8,500	8,500
Homelessness Coordinator	2,500	4,500
Night Assessment Centre	3,000	5,375
Step Up – salary	21,000	21,000
St Basils – exp approved in 11/12 inc in carry forward	0	15,000
<b>Total</b>	<b>113,100</b>	<b>132,475</b>

## **2.2 CAB - Owner Occupier Money Adviser**

The Owner Occupier specialist adviser at the CAB offers free, impartial advice for owner occupiers to prevent repossession and homelessness, and to assist clients at risk of getting into mortgage arrears. The hours spent working with each client varies from 9 to 24 hours with an average of 10 hours per client. In total 6 cases have been assisted by the mortgage rescue scheme. The remainder have been resolved by accessing additional benefits such as support for mortgage interest, debt prioritisation, negotiation with mortgage lenders or in a minority of cases where mortgage rescue and other options are exhausted, working with households to plan their move on into other tenures. During 2011/12 78 clients were assisted and in the first 6 months of 2012/13 31 clients were assisted.

## **2.3 Housing Options**

In 2007 the Homelessness Service was re-structured to enable a more preventative approach to those who are homeless and those who are threatened with homelessness by creating a Housing Options Service. The funding is used to enable home visits to be undertaken. The service is offered to anyone seeking advice regarding housing and is supported by the Step Up Private Tenancy Scheme, the mYPlace scheme and Home Choice Plus. The number of clients accessing the service has steadily increased from 646 in 2007/08 to 787 2011/12 and an anticipated 832 in 2012/13.

## **2.4 Homeless Prevention Floating Support Officers**

This service is jointly funded with bdht and Supporting People to provide floating non tenure specific support to 18+ year olds who are homeless or potentially homeless. Clients are supported to maintain their accommodation and prevent them from becoming homeless, or to secure accommodation and sustain it thereby avoiding repeat homelessness. The officers work closely with the Housing Options team to ensure a seamless service for clients who are homeless or at risk of homelessness and prioritise those customers in most need of support. 100% of all clients were successfully supported to live independently in 11/12. The service was awarded an A rating by SP under the QAF in July 2012. 48 households were supported in 2011/12 and 63 supported in the first 6 months of 2012/13.

## **2.5 St Basils 'mYPlace' Private Tenancy Scheme**

mYPlace sources safe, affordable accommodation for young people in the Private Rented Sector, working with local landlords. They support and prepare 18-25 year olds that are homeless or at risk of homelessness to rent privately, creating sustainable tenancies by providing financial support, ensuring affordability, support with independent living skills including setting up utilities, regular tenancy health checks, accessing furniture needed, as well as ongoing support if required. 8 placements have been achieved since April 2012. St Basils have assisted in rehousing a further 13 young people, and

continue to support 7 people on the waiting list and have enabled 3 young people to return to live with their families.

**2.6 NewStarts Furniture Project**

NewStarts furniture project has grown rapidly into the largest furniture re-use scheme in Worcestershire. It assists those who are homeless and requiring furniture to access settled accommodation earlier and helps those who are on limited incomes to access cheap furniture and avoid getting into debt. The scheme helped 341 households in 2011/12 and 198 in the first six months of 2012/13.

**2.7 County Homelessness Co-ordinator**

The County Homelessness Strategy Co-ordinator post is responsible for the co-ordination, implementation, monitoring, reviewing and updating the Worcestershire Homelessness Strategy and action plan. This is a jointly funded post between the six local authorities in Worcestershire and Supporting People.

**2.8 Night Assessment Centre**

The Night Assessment Centre creates a place of safety for people who would otherwise have to sleep rough during the coldest months of the year – November to March – to keep warm and have some food. All clients who access the service have their needs and requirements assessed and a support plan is developed. Support is given to secure temporary or permanent accommodation that is appropriate for the individual. Where clients are presenting with other needs eg: mental health, they will be offered an opportunity to be referred to the appropriate service. 9 clients were assisted in 2011/12 with a local connection to Bromsgrove. The contribution for 2011/12 was carried forward as Worcester City Council were late submitting the invoice for the 2011/12 financial year.

**2.9 Step Up Private Tenancy Scheme for over 25's**

The Step Up private tenancy scheme was established in 2007 and supports homeless households to access private rented accommodation by offering them help with paying for rent in advance and deposit, therefore, preventing their homelessness. The scheme enabled 21 placements into the PRS during 2011/12 and 17 for the first 6 months of 2012/13. In addition, the Step Up scheme has enabled 17 empty homes to be brought back into use in 2011/12 and 4 empty homes to be brought back into use in the first 6 months of 2012/13.

**2.10 St Basils – Callowbrook Lane**

During the previous financial year £15,000 was identified to support St Basils in the refurbishment and management of Callowbrook Lane which comprises 15 units of self contained accommodation, leased through a Private Sector Leasing Scheme. The funding was carried forward to 2012/13 as the refurbishment wasn't completed until Spring 2012. The accommodation is available to under 25's that are homeless

or potentially homeless and prepared to engage with training and support.

### **3.0 Homelessness Performance**

- 3.1 The number of people presenting as homeless, those accepted and the outcome of homelessness prevention services are monitored by the Strategic Housing Team on a quarterly basis. The table below forecasts an increase across all areas for 2013 and this trend is likely to continue due to a range of Welfare Reforms from April 2013.

Performance info 2009/10	Total 2008/9	Total 2009/10	Total 2010/11	Total 2011/12	Projected 2012/13
Presentations	119	123	115	127	144
Acceptances	69	63	66	67	78
No of people in temp accommodation	13 on 31/3/09	14 on 31/3/10	31 on 31/3/11	26 on 31/3/12	50 estimate for 31/3/13
Preventions	172	155	198	204	220
Housing advice (BDHT)	695	766	756	787	832

#### **AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Amanda Glennie  
E Mail: [a.glennie@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:a.glennie@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)  
Tel: 01527 881278



## Overview & Scrutiny Board

21<sup>st</sup> January 2013

### SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH FOR PERIOD ENDING 30<sup>TH</sup> SEPTEMBER 2012

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mark Bullivant – Portfolio Holder for Corporate Management
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources
Non-Key Decision	

#### 1 SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To report to the Overview & Scrutiny Board on Bromsgrove District Council's performance for the second quarter (July – September 2012) in relation to sickness absence.

#### 2 RECOMMENDATIONS

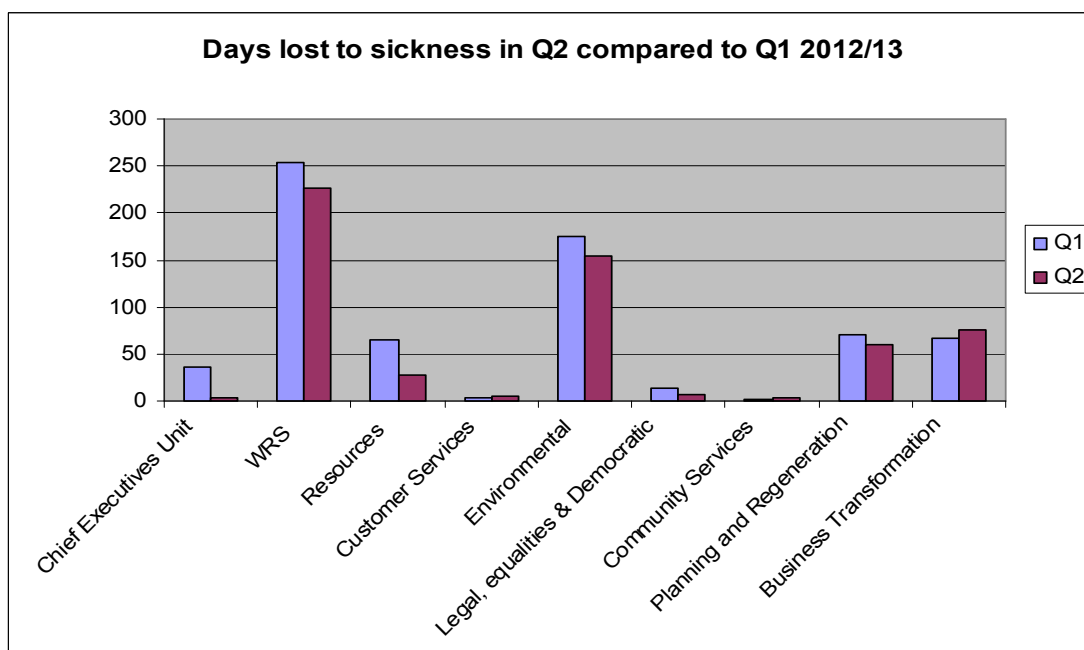
That the data relating to the quarter be noted.

#### 3 KEY ISSUES

##### Analysis of the monthly statistics for the quarter

Statistics for the quarter July – September 2012 compared to the previous quarter

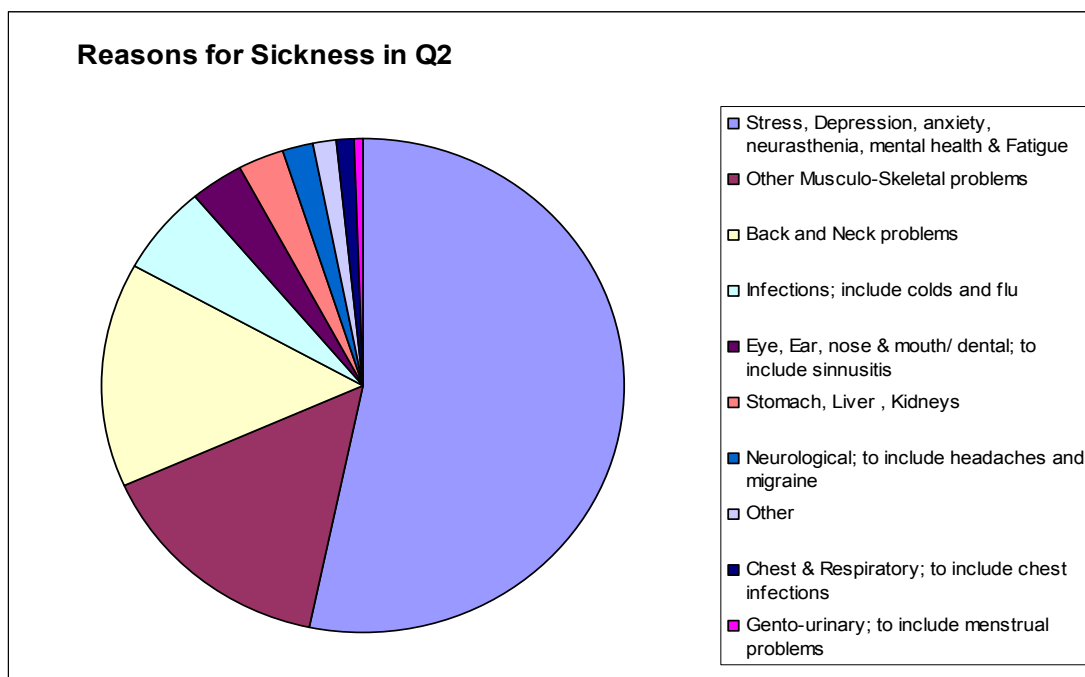
- 3.1 The graph below shows the sickness absence for Bromsgrove District Council employees in the second quarter July – September 2012, compared to the first quarter (April – June 2012).



- 3.2 The average days lost per person for this quarter is 1.5 days per person compared to 1.91 days in the previous quarter. This represents a drop in absence levels for the fourth quarter in a row. It also indicates a predicted outturn for the year of 6.21 days, compared to 7.6 for the previous quarter.
- 3.3 The main contributing factor for the overall reduction in absence is due to levels in several service areas declining, including Worcestershire Regulatory Services, Resources and Environmental services. Overall figures for both short-term and long-term absence have reduced since the last quarter. Further information in relation to long-term and short-term absence levels is detailed later in the report.

Breakdown of absence by sickness type

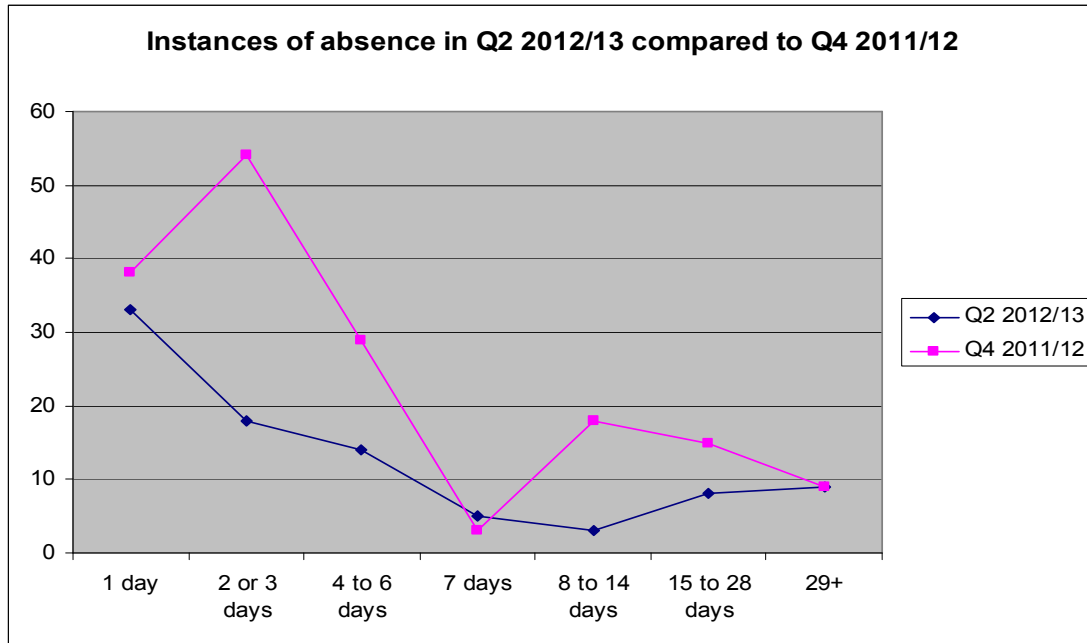
- 3.4 As agreed, the standard Local Government Sickness categories have been used from the start of the reporting year to record sickness absence.
- 3.5 Previously there were more than 30 categories of absence. These have been replaced with just 12, allowing absences to be grouped by type, providing a more useful way to analyse data and decide where resources should be focused. A copy of the absence categories can be provided to members on request.
- 3.6 The graph below shows the top ten absences broken down by sickness type for the second quarter (July to September 2012).



- 3.7 As the chart demonstrates, by grouping absence type it is possible to see that the largest proportion of absence is as a result of mental health-related illness. Whilst this quarter's absence is actually comparable to the previous quarter, the new method for categorisation provides more useful data.
- 3.8 It is important to recognise that although mental health-related absence is the largest category, and therefore it may be inferred there is an issue with work-related absence, this category incorporates several different conditions including, work and non-work related stress, depression, bereavement, fatigue and conditions such as SAD and ME.
- 3.9 When analysed further, there is one long-term absence case that is directly attributed to work-related stress with 3 non-work related stress cases and 3 related to bereavement over the quarter. There is also a case of ME recorded for the entire quarter which is incorporated into this category.
- 3.10 As a result of this data, and the ability to now focus resource more specifically, the Council has successfully introduced an Employee Assistance Programme. We have also undertaken a review of the current Occupational Health provisions and have worked closely with our local external provider to ensure the Occupational Health service meets our requirements.
- 3.11 It has also been agreed that on a trial basis we will employ a Wellbeing Officer, specifically tasked with developing and implementing initiatives tailored to address the trends identifiable through sickness data. The introduction of this position is actively supported by the Corporate Health, Safety and Wellbeing Committee.
- 3.12 The Human Resources and Organisational Development Team has also developed two workshops for managers; one on self-management, the other focussing on Wellbeing, not just their own but also the Wellbeing of their teams. These will be rolled-out in the next few months.
- 3.13 Irrespective of whether absence due to mental health-related illness is work-related or not, the impact on individuals of the national uncertainty regarding future local government funding and the subsequent change the Council is continuing to experience should not be underestimated. Wherever possible the Council should seek to support its employees in whatever way it is able to.

Incidences of absence by duration

3.14 The graph below shows the number of incidences of absence by duration for this quarter compared to quarter 4 2011/12, which was when this data was last reported.

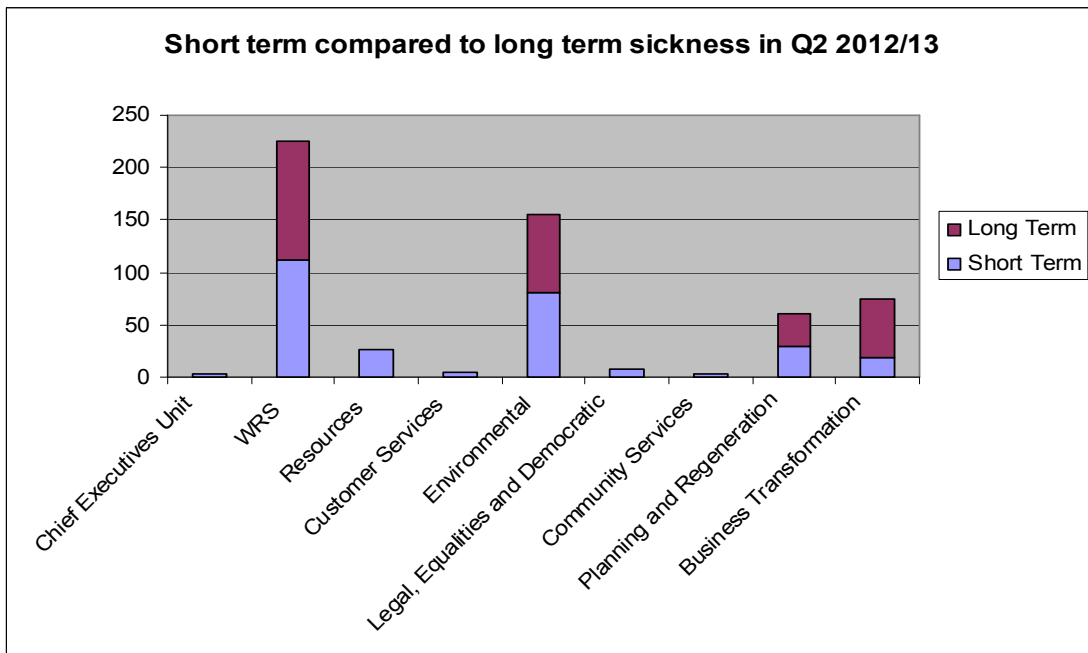


3.15 The graph shows there is still a peak in duration of absence time between 1 and 3 days, although other absences, particularly long-term absences have significantly dropped. The HR Advisors continue to work closely with line-mangers, particularly in relation to long-term absences.

3.16 Recent changes to the Council's Sickness Policy, particularly the introduction of a staged process for the management of long-term absence should assist in continuing this downward trend.

Long term and short term absence comparisons

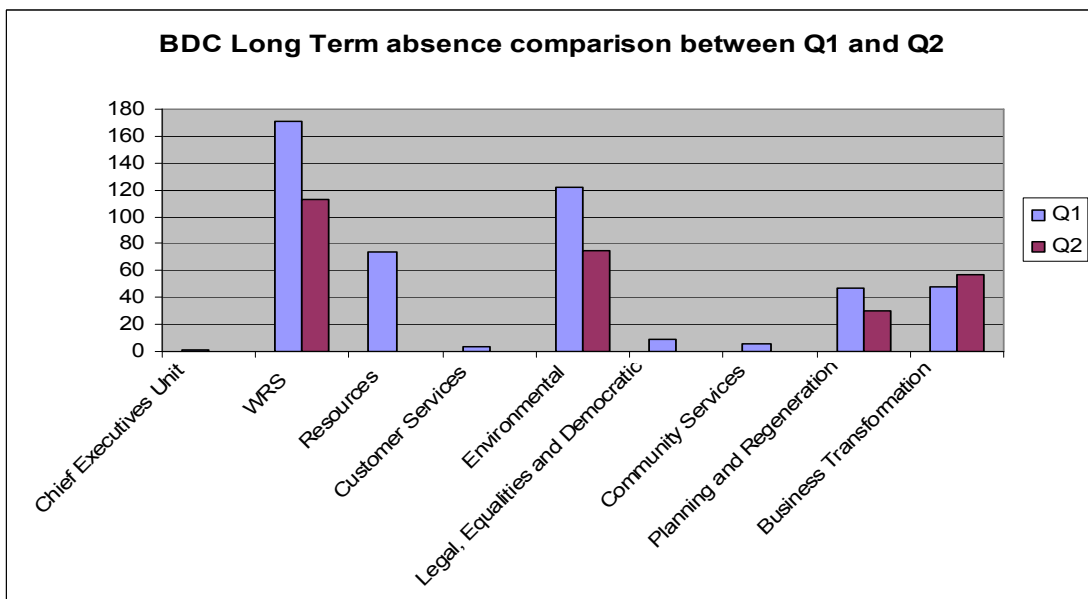
3.17 The following graph shows a comparison between long-term and short-term absence for the quarter.



3.18 Both short-term and long-term absences have significantly reduced this quarter. Five out of the nine service areas had no long-term sickness absences.

3.19 Of the remaining four service areas, there is not a significant difference between the amounts of long-term and short-term absence. The slightly higher proportion of long-term absence in Business Transformation is as a result of a single long-term absence case which is being managed with the support of HR.

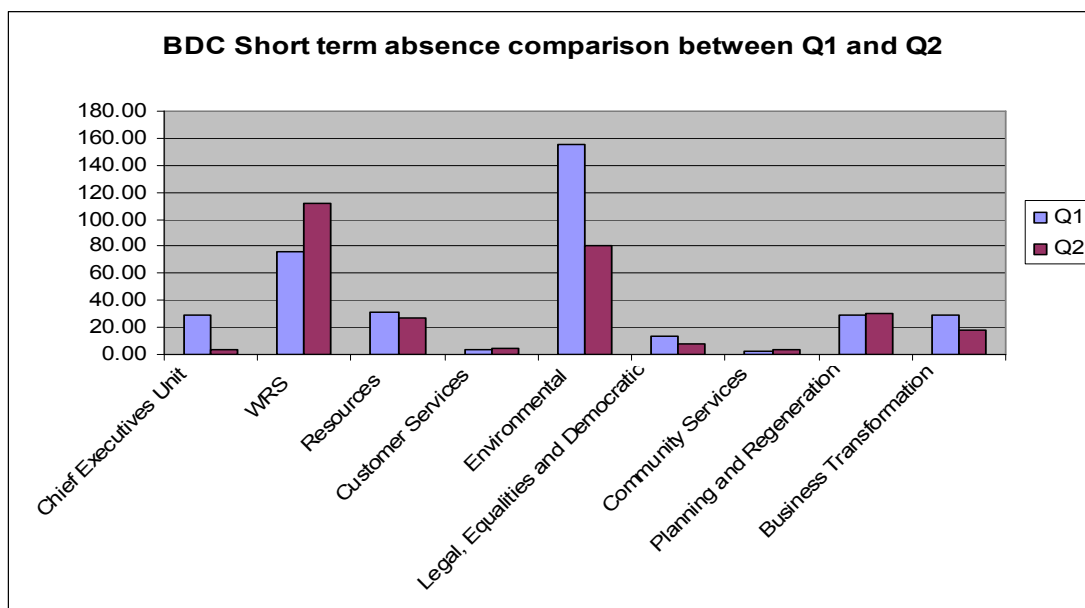
3.20 Long-term absence for the quarter July – September 2012, compared to the previous quarter



## **Overview & Scrutiny Board**

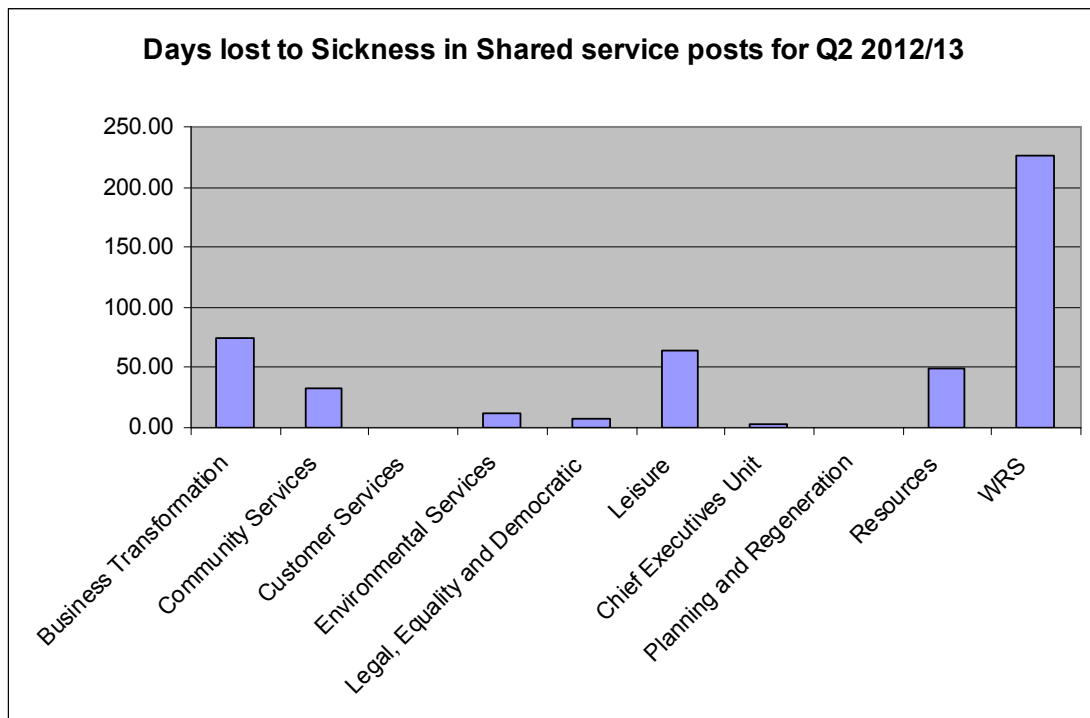
21<sup>st</sup> January 2013

- 3.21 Overall the number of days lost due to long term absence has reduced significantly.
- 3.22 The CEO Unit, Resources, Customer Services, Legal, Equalities & Democratic and Community Services experienced no long-term absence in this quarter. The HR Advisors have worked closely with managers to achieve this and will continue to do so. The changes to the Sickness Policy will also assist in the ongoing management of long-term absence.
- 3.23 Short-term absence for the quarter July – September 2012, compared to the previous quarter



- 3.24 Short-term absences have also shown a further decrease compared to the previous quarter. This is particularly evident in Environmental Services.
- 3.25 An increase in short-term absences in WRS has been offset by a decrease in the occurrence of long-term absence.
- 3.26 Shared Service Information

The graph below provides an overview of sickness absence levels for all employees who specifically work within shared services for the quarter July – September 2012. Individuals may be employed by either Bromsgrove District or Redditch Borough Council.



- 3.27 This is the first quarter where this data has been available in this format and so a quarter for comparison does not yet exist.
- 3.28 The average days lost per person in shared services for this quarter is 1.3 days, compared to a Council average of 1.5 days.
- 3.29 As a service fully shared, comparative figures are available for Worcestershire Regulatory Services which appears to show high-levels of absence based on the chart above. However the average days lost per person is in fact 1.94, which is only slightly higher than the overall average of the Council.
- 3.30 It should be recognised that WRS has a high number of employees and therefore is likely to show more days lost compared to other services, as demonstrated in the chart above. Long-term absence has almost halved when compared to the previous quarter.
- 3.31 As well as the ongoing support provided by the Human Resources team, new initiatives as already detailed in the report, including changes to the Occupational Health provision and the appointment of a Wellbeing Officer will continue to assist the Council in the ongoing management of sickness absence and the promotion of Wellbeing amongst employees.

**Financial Implications**

- 3.32 The effective management of sickness absence is key in controlling the costs associated with sickness pay and service cover. There are no other financial implications identified.

**Legal Implications**

- 3.33 There are no legal implications identified.

**Service/Operational Implications**

- 3.34 The effective management of sickness absence is key to ensuring service delivery is maintained and associated operational issues are recognised and addressed. There are no other service/operational implications identified.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.35 The effective management of sickness absence is key to maintaining high levels of customer service and should always be carried out in a fair and consistent manner. There are no further customer, equalities and diversity implications identified.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

There are none identified.

**5. APPENDICES**

N/A

**6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

None.

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Mark Stanley, Acting Human Resources and Organisational Development Manager

E Mail: [mark.stanley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:mark.stanley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

Tel: (01527) 64252 ext 1673.



## **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD**

**Meeting 21st January 2013**

### **Response to Overview & Scrutiny Topic Proposal in respect of Community Safety Team**

With regard to the evidence Mr Rowbottom has detailed (see Appendix 1 attached), the response on behalf of the Community Safety Team is as follows:-

The Community Safety Team has followed the Council's Enforcement Policy in all respects of this case. The Enforcement Policy clearly states that whilst there are 5 stages of enforcement available, Enforcement Officers have complete discretion towards what actions are taken and it is not necessary to progress through the stages, therefore there is no 'escalation process'.

The difficulties in this case have been detailed previously and as well as issuing verbal and written warnings to the business, we have also sought legal advice on the merits of pursuing formal legal action using Enforcement powers under the Clean Neighbourhood and Environment Act 2005 section 3 which relates to "Exposing Vehicles for Sale on a Road". The advice from Legal Services is that it would not be in the interests of justice or the public purse to embark on legal action in this case. Even a successful prosecution, which is by no means guaranteed, would only result in a fine for breach of notice. The court could not compel the dealership to stop what they are doing; therefore if they choose to pay a fine and continue this practice, we would be in the position of having to start the whole legal process again. The Community Safety Team has taken the advice of Legal Services which is to continue dialogue with the business and seek to negotiate a solution that ensures that there is no ongoing risk to members of the public. The area is regularly monitored and the business is spoken to any time a contravention to the Act is observed or reported. I understand that Worcestershire County Council has also chosen not to pursue formal action under the Highways Act I presume for similar reasons. Mr Rowbottom has been advised by myself and also by the Head of Customer Services, that action is being taken albeit not the action he would like to see; this was following his formal complaint to the Council regarding this matter.

I am confident that my team can evidence that we have and continue to take every action available to us to resolve this matter to the best of our ability. We have had no complaints about this issue from any other member of the public and we have had no reports from the Street Cleansing team that it has had any impact on the delivery of their duties. Obviously, we continue to monitor the situation and will seek further advice should the situation change significantly.

**Bev Houghton**  
**Community Safety Manager**  
8th January 2013

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## **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL**

**Name of proposer:** Peter Rowbottom

**Tel No:**

**Email:**

**Date:** 19 November 2012

**Title of Proposed Topic:** FAILURES OF BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL  
COMMUNITY SAFETY DEPARTMENT

### **Specific subject areas to be investigated:**

The failure of the community safety team to take effective action to deal with daily offences being committed by a local business, Stratstone, 94-96 Kidderminster Road , Hagley.

### **Reasons why this subject should be considered:**

In order to ensure the integrity of the council's enforcement policy which oblige relevant departments to take effective action which resolves the contraventions of law by ensuring they do not continue. In addition, such action will deter other businesses from committing further offences in future.

### **Evidence to support the need for this particular investigation:**

Since at least June 2011 the Community Safety Team have been made fully aware that Stratstone were committing (daily) offences under section 3 of the Clean Neighbourhoods Act 2005, Exposing vehicles for sale on the public highway. Unfortunately the CST have only given verbal and/or written warnings to the business. Despite offences continuing daily the CST have failed to follow the council's agreed enforcement policy and use the escalation process for enforcement action. To this day the offences continue each day.

In addition, daily offences are also being committed under section 166 of the Highways Act 1980, Forecourt abutting on streets. On a daily basis the business park 6 or more of their showroom vehicles across the entire stretch of public footpath which abutts their business. I presume this prevents the council street cleaning department from carrying out their duties at this location.

The following bodies and individuals have been made fully aware of these offences, including a residents' petition being submitted to Hagley Parish Council some years ago:

Hagley Parish Council, Hagley Ward District Councillors, Worcestershire County Council, the Hagley Ward County Councillor, Bromsgrove District Council, District Councillor Mike Webb portfolio holder. None of these bodies or individuals have taken effective action, in fact some have taken no action at all.

**Therefore, on both issues, the CST have totally failed to deal with the daily offences being committed and have therefore failed to ensure compliance by the company concerned, and have failed to follow the council's own agreed enforcement policy.**

**Council priorities it links to:**

**Environment  
Sense of community and well-being**

**Possible key outcomes:**

Compliance with environmental legislation and consequential deterrence of future offences.

**In conclusion, I believe there has been unsatisfactory progress and performance on the above issue.**

**I also believe that these are important issues for residents, hence the residents' petition submitted to Hagley Parish Council relating to Stratstone.**

**I believe this is a topic where the Overview and Scrutiny could feasibly and constructively make recommendations.**

**I believe this department is a poorly performing service if such an issue as I highlight above cannot be resolved.**

Yours faithfully

Peter Rowbottom

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
<p><b>Quarter 2 Finance Monitoring Report</b></p>	<p>The Board considered the Finance Monitoring Report which details the Council's financial position for the period July – September 2012,</p>	<p>The following actions were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) The inclusion of any cost for bed and breakfast accommodation as a separate item in future reports.</li> <li>b) Members requested confirmation of when the 'hardship' fund payments would be made and the criteria that needed to be met in order to receive such a payment.</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.</p> <p>Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.</p>	<p>To be included in the Quarter 3 Report.</p> <p>As soon as possible.</p>	
<p><b>Quarter 2 Write Off of Debts Report</b></p>	<p>The Board considered the Quarter 2 Write Off of Debts Report for the period July – September 2012.</p>	<p>The following actions were agreed:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a) In respect of write off of Sundry Debtors, Members requested that a breakdown to</li> </ul>	<p>Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.</p>	<p>To be included in the Quarter 3 Report.</p>	

**- 2 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 17TH DECEMBER 2012**

		<p>include the number of debtors and transactions be included in future reports.</p> <p>b) In respect of the aged debt profile, Members requested comparative data for previous years.</p>	<p>Director of Finance and Corporate Resources</p>	<p>As soon as possible.</p>	
<b>O/S from meeting held on 16th July 2012</b>					
<p><b>Item 4: Joint Service Review – The Future Configuration of Acute Services in Worcestershire</b></p>	<p>The Board received a presentation from representatives of the Worcestershire Acute Health Trust (WAHT) regarding the current joint service review. A couple of additional pieces of information were requested for the Board’s consideration.</p>	<p>Officers requested that written responses be provided by the WAHT representatives in response to the Board’s questions and circulated for Members’ consideration.</p>	<p>Democratic Services Officer (DSO)</p>	<p>Not specified</p> <p>Email sent to WAHT 19/11/12 – No response received to date (03/01/13).</p>	<p>Expected to be available in November 2012.</p>

# CABINET LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME

**1 FEBRUARY 2013 TO 31 MAY 2013**  
**(published as at 8 January 2013)**

Page 27

This Work Programme gives details of items on which key decisions are likely to be taken in the coming four months by the Council's Cabinet

(NB: There may be occasions when the Cabinet may make recommendations to Council for a final decision. E.g. to approve a new policy or variation to the approved budget.)

Whilst the majority of the Cabinet's business at the meetings listed in the Work Programme will be open to the public and media organisations attend, there will inevitably be some business to be considered that contains confidential, commercially sensitive or personal information. This is called exempt information. Members of the public and media may be asked to leave the meeting when such information is discussed.

If an item is likely to contain exempt information we show this on the Work Programme. You can make representations to us if you consider an item or any of the documents listed should be open to the public.

Agenda Item 13

The Work Programme gives details of items on which key decisions are likely to be taken by the Council's Cabinet, or full Council, in the coming four months.

**Key Decisions** are those executive decisions which are likely to:

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

**Key Decisions** will include:

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

The Work Programme is available for inspection free of charge at The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA from 9am to 5pm Mondays to Fridays; or on the Council's web-site ([www.bromsgrove.gov.uk](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk))

If you wish to make representations on the proposed decision you are encouraged to get in touch with the relevant report author as soon as possible before the proposed date of the decision. Contact details are provided. Alternatively, you may write to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove, B60 1AA or e-mail: [democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:democratic@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

The Cabinet's meetings are normally held every four weeks at 6pm on Wednesday evenings at The Council House. They are open to the public, except when confidential information is being discussed. If you wish to attend for a particular matter, it is advisable to check with the Democratic Services Team on (01527 881409) to make sure it is going ahead as planned. If you have any queries Democratic Services Officers will be happy to advise you.

The full Council meets in accordance with the Councils Calendar of Meetings. Meetings commence at 6pm.



**CABINET MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor R. Hollingworth  
Councillor Mrs. M. A. Sherrey  
Councillor M. J. A. Webb  
Councillor Dr. D. W. P. Booth  
  
Councillor C. B. Taylor  
Councillor M. A. Bullivant

Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Finance, Partnerships and Economic Development  
Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Health and Well-being  
Portfolio Holder for Leisure, Cultural Services, Environmental Services and Emergency Planning  
Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing, Business Transformation (including ICT) with special responsibility for the Town Centre Regeneration and Special Projects  
Portfolio Holder for Planning, Core Strategy and Regulatory Services  
Portfolio Holder for Policy, Performance, Communications, Customer Services, Legal, Equalities, Democratic Services and Human Resources

Decision Including Whether it is a Key Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Medium Term Financial Plan 2013/14 to 2015/16	Cabinet <i>Recommendations to be made to Council</i>	6 February 2013 20 February 2013	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer Resources)	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer 01527 881673
Fees and Charges 2013/14	Cabinet	6 February 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager 01527 64252 ext 3295
Parkside Development Key Decision	Cabinet	6 February 2013	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer	Jayne Pickering , Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer 01527 881673
Partnership Working with Worcestershire Telecare	Cabinet	6 February 2013	Report of the Acting Head of Community Services	Judith Willis Acting Head of Community Services 01527 534149 ext 3348
Redditch Growth Consultation	Cabinet <i>Recommendations to be made to Council</i>	6 February 2013 20 February 2013	Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Mike Dunphy Strategic Planning Manager 01527 881325

Decision Including whether it is a Key Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Treasury Management Statement	Cabinet  <i>Recommendation to be made to Council</i>	6 February 2013  20 February 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources 01527 64252 ext 3295
Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA)	Cabinet	6 March 2013	Report of the Head of Environmental Services	Ceridwen John, Climate Change Manager 01527 64252 ext 3790
Finance Monitoring 2012/13 (Quarter 3)	Cabinet	6 March 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Sam Morgan, Financial Services Manager, 01527 64252 ext 3295
Write Off of Debts 2012/13(Quarter 3)	Cabinet	6 March 2013	Report of the Head of Finance and Resources	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources 01527 64252 ext 3295
Playing Pitch Strategy	Cabinet	3 April 2013	Report of the Head of Leisure and Culture	Karl Stokes, Parks and Green Spaces Services Manager 01527 64252 ext 3377
Local Authority Mortgage Assistance Scheme	Cabinet	3 April 2013	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer 01527 881673

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## OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

### WORK PROGRAMME

#### 2012-13

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

#### **RECOMMENDATION:**

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

#### ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
21st January 2013	Homelessness Grants 2012/13 – Update Report	Update requested following meeting 27th February 2012
	Telephony Problems – Presentation from Head of Customer Services	
	Quarter 2 Sickness Absence Performance and Health Report	
	Overview & Scrutiny Topic Proposal – Community Safety Team – Additional Information	Requested at meeting held on 17th December
	Overview and Scrutiny Board Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
	Youth Provision Task Group – Verbal Update	
	Air Quality Task Group – Verbal update	
	Actions List	
	Cabinet Work Programme (for information)	

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
<b>25th February 2013</b>	CCTV Shared Service - Presentation on the role of the CCTV Team (2 of 2)	Topic Proposal submitted and agreed at meeting on 16th July 2012
	Quarterly Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken (1st October to 30th December 2012)	Update requested following meeting 23rd April 2012
	The Living Wage – additional information	Requested at meeting held on 17th December
	Quarter 3 Write Off Of Debts Report	
	Making Experiences Count Quarter 3 Report	
	Sickness Absence Performance and Health for Period ended 31st December 2012	
	Youth Provision Task Group – Verbal Update	
	Air Quality Task Group – Verbal update	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
	Actions List	
	Cabinet Work Programme (for information)	
<b>26th March 2013 (Tuesday)</b>	Council Plan	
	Shared Services – are they Value for Money? Internal Audit Service 1 of 3 meetings	Topic Proposal submitted and agreed at meeting on 16th July 2012
	Making Experiences Count Quarter 3 Report	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
	Actions List	
	Overview & Scrutiny Work Programme 2012-13	
	Cabinet Work Programme (for information)	

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
22nd April 2013	Planning Policy Task Group 12 Month Review	
	Shared Services – are they Value for Money? Property Services	Topic Proposal submitted and agreed at meeting on 16th July 2012
	2 of 3 meetings	
	Quarterly Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken (1st January to 31st March 2013)	Update requested following meeting 23rd April 2012
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee	
	Actions List	
	Cabinet Work Programme (for information)	

### **Budget Meeting Dates (Provisional)**

8th January 2013 – 5.00 p.m.

### **Scrutiny of Crime & Disorder Partnership Meeting Dates**

10th September 2012

### **Reports not allocated**

Annual Review of Call In  
 Countywide Sustainable Community Strategy – this is a ten year strategy and not due to be reviewed until 2014

### **Topic Proposals not allocated**

Shared Services – are they Value for Money? Building Control Services  
 The Work of Regulatory Services  
 The Impact of the Localism Act

### **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TASK GROUP/INQUIRY REVIEWS 2012-13**

Task Group	Date of Review
Planning Policy Task Group	September 2013

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