



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY 16TH SEPTEMBER 2013
AT 6.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

MEMBERS: Councillors P. Lammas (Chairman), R. J. Laight (Vice-Chairman),
C. J. Bloore, B. T. Cooper, R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce,
J. M. L. A. Griffiths, H. J. Jones, L. C. R. Mallett, S. P. Shannon,
C. J. Spencer, C. J. Tidmarsh and L. J. Turner

AGENDA

1. To receive Apologies for Absence and notification of Substitutes
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 15th July 2013 (Pages 1 - 6)
4. Update on the Bromsgrove Town Centre Regeneration and Public Realm Improvements - Presentation
5. Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal - Car Parking Charges (Pages 7 - 16)
6. Making Experiences Count Quarter 1 Report (Pages 17 - 38)
7. Quarter 1 Finance Monitoring Report (Pages 39 - 58)
8. Quarter 4 Sickness Absence and Performance Health Report (Pages 59 - 62)
9. Air Quality Task Group Draft Final Report (Pages 63 - 106)
10. Artrix Outreach Work Task Group Report (Pages 107 - 110)
(Appendix 1 – Overview & Scrutiny Exercise Scoping Checklist TO FOLLOW)

11. WRS Joint Scrutiny Exercise - Verbal Update
12. Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Board - Verbal Update
13. Cabinet Work Programme 1st October to 31st January 2014 (Pages 111 - 116)
14. Action List (Pages 117 - 120)
15. Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme (Pages 121 - 124)
16. 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

4th September 2013



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 15TH JULY 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. Lammas (Chairman), R. J. Laight (Vice-Chairman), S. J. Dudley, J. M. L. A. Griffiths, L. C. R. Mallett (Present from Minute No. 1/13 to Minute No. 12/13), J. A. Ruck, C. R. Scurrall (Substituting for R. L. Dent), R. J. Shannon (Substituting for C. J. Bloore), S. P. Shannon, L. J. Turner and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillor M. A. Bullivant and Councillor M. A. Sherrey

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. A. De Warr, Ms. L. Jones and Ms. A. Scarce

1/13 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

Nominations for Chairman were received in respect of Councillors P. Lammas and L. C. R. Mallett.

RESOLVED that Councillor P. Lammas be elected as Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.

2/13 **ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN**

Nominations for Vice Chairman were received in respect of Councillors R. J. Laight and L. C. R. Mallett.

RESOLVED that Councillor R. J. Laight be elected as Vice Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.

3/13 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C. J. Bloore, B. T. Cooper, R. L. Dent and C. J. Spencer.

4/13 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

Councillor J. M. L. A. Griffiths declared a Disclosable Pecuniary Interest as a Member of Bromsgrove Arts Centre Trust in respect of item No. 12. As such Councillor Griffiths withdrew from the meeting and was not present and took no part in its consideration and voting thereon.

5/13 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 22nd April 2013 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

6/13 **MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT QUARTER 4 REPORT**

The Head of Customer Services introduced the report and highlighted the following points:

- The number of days taken to respond to complaints and comparable data for the previous year and how the slight slippage in this was being addressed.
- Outstanding issues being dealt with by the Ombudsman (there had been a total of 6 over the year, which compared relatively well against other authorities).
- A slight decrease in the number of complaints in respect of refuse and recycling due to the ongoing trial of a new system where the operational staff were dealing directly with enquiries.
- The downward trend in customer contact and the increase in payments online and by phone.
- The Every Customer, Every Time – Everybody Matters Action Plan. Members were informed that there had been considerable progress with much of the action plan having been completed.
- The review of the process and the current trial to cut out steps in the complaints system by Managers discussing directly with complainants issues in order to establish the real problem at an earlier stage and how the customer would like it to be resolved.

Members discussed the use of the free press and the Council's web pages to advertise such things as the Christmas refuse collections and the Head of Customer Services agreed to report Members concerns that not everyone had access to either of these forms of advertisement to the relevant Head of Service..

The Head of Customer Services confirmed that compliments and complaints in respect of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) were not included within this report and were reported on an annual basis to the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee. Officers informed Members that this was an area which would be considered under the WRS Joint Scrutiny Exercise.

The Board discussed the following areas in detail:

- The use of telephone answer machines and out of date messages on these. (New guidance was being developed in respect of this, which would apply to all staff.)
- The importance of the Board receiving the report on a regular basis, despite it being available through the Orb and in the Members' Room.

- The public's interest in the information provided and its availability on the Council website via the Customer Service pages.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the report be noted; and
- (b) that the Overview & Scrutiny Board continue to receive the report.

7/13

YOUTH PROVISIONAL TASK GROUP DRAFT FINAL REPORT

The Chairman of the Task Group introduced the report and informed Members that the Task Group had taken the opportunity to visit youth groups throughout the district in order to get a better understanding of what was available and to hear the views, first hand, of the young people.

The Board discussed the inclusion of a further recommendation which would enable the Council to take responsibility for youth provision following the changes which had taken place at Worcestershire County Council (WCC) and the introduction of the Positive Activities Scheme. The Chairman of the Task Group explained that within the terms of reference of the Task Group the aim had been to ascertain what was currently available, not only through the Scheme but also through the voluntary sector or privately run activities. The Task Group acknowledged that cutbacks had been made at all levels, including WCC, but it had been pleasantly surprised by the number of activities which were still available and the innovative way in which these were carried out. Although it appeared that there was a reduction in the number of paid youth workers, a great deal of the activities were being provided by volunteers, which in many cases had shown a great community spirit and the Task Group wished to highlight this good work.

Members discussed each recommendation and raised concerns over the changes which had taken place at the Ryland Centre, requesting that recommendation 3 be amended to highlight the need for the funding from Sandwell Leisure Trust to be allocated to activities within the Bromsgrove Town Centre area. Recommendation 10 was discussed in detail as Members were concerned that there was clearly a specific need for youth provision for the disaffected young people and those not in education, employment or training within the District and it was this group in particular that would benefit greatly from that provision.

The Board also discussed the information which had been provided by Members and the Chairman of the Task Group confirmed that not all Members had responded, hence recommendation 4. The Board asked that the information provided be made available in some way on the Council's website. Officers explained that this had been discussed with the Communications Manager who had intimated that the difficulty with such information was that it quickly became out of date and was therefore difficult to maintain. However, officers agreed to discuss this further with the Communications Manager with the possibility of attaching some sort of disclaimer to the document.

The Chairman of the Task Group gave her thanks to both Members and Officers for the work carried out in bringing the report to the Board.

RESOLVED that the Youth Provision Task Group Report and Recommendations be submitted to Cabinet for approval subject to the amendment of recommendation 3 as detailed in the preamble above.

8/13 **QUARTER 4 SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH REPORT**

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources informed Members that a written report for Quarter 4 Sickness Absence Performance and Health would be available at the meeting to be held on 16th September 2013 and that the Board would be given the opportunity at that meeting to discuss how it would like to receive the sickness performance and absence data in future.

9/13 **THE LIVING WAGE REPORT - ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources informed Members that this was the third report received by the Board and that it contained information on the challenges and impact of ensuring that the Living Wage was paid to contractors of the Council. The report also highlighted issues which could have an impact on the implementation and monitoring the payment of the Living Wage going forward. Members discussed the following areas in detail:

- Clarification as to members of staff receiving the Living Wage.
- the mechanism which could be put in place to encourage contractors to pay the Living Wage.
- any finance cost to the Council in monitoring contractors.
- What duty, if any, the Council had to ensure it's contractors paid the Living Wage.

After further discussion it was

RESOLVED that no further action be taken in respect of the Living Wage.

10/13 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2012/13**

The Board considered the Draft Annual Report and was reminded that previous reports had been submitted to Council for information.

RESOLVED that the Overview & Scrutiny Board Annual Report 2012-13 be submitted to the Council meeting to be held on 25th September 2013 for information.

11/13 **APPOINTMENT OF MEMBERS TO THE JOINT WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES TASK GROUP**

The Board was reminded that at the meeting held on 26th March 2013 it had agreed the terms of reference for the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services Task Group, subject to the appointment of representatives. The

nominated representatives should include either the Chairman or Vice Chairman together with a substitute member. Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that Councillor P. Lammas be lead representative and Councillor R. J. Laight be substitute representative.

12/13 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL - OUTREACH PROVISION AT THE ARTRIX ARTS CENTRE**

Members discussed the proposal which had been put forward by Councillor P. McDonald and agreed that this was a valid topic which covered a specific service. The Board was informed that during the course of the Youth Provision Task Group's investigations the Outreach Co-ordinator had been interviewed and had provided information on the work which was carried out and details of funding streams. The Group had also discussed the work of the Outreach Co-ordinator with the Artistic Director whilst visiting the Centre. Members discussed the possibility of setting up a task group and Officers advised that capacity for this would be available from September, upon completion of the Air Quality Task Group. After further discussion it was

RESOLVED that the topic be included within the work programme and a task group established with Councillor S. P. Shannon as Chairman.

13/13 **AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP**

The Chairman of the Task Group was invited to provide Members with an update of the work of the Task Group.

The Chairman informed Members that the subject of air quality was particularly topical at the moment as a significant amount of press coverage had been received in respect of both the UK's continued breach of air pollutant levels (it was not anticipated to reach acceptable levels for a number of years) and recent medical evidence which linked poor air quality to heart failure and shortening of life.

The Group had held four meetings since the last update and witnesses had included representatives from Worcestershire Regulatory Services, the Hagley Parish Air Quality Group and the Public Health Consultant from Worcestershire County Council. The Task Group had also sent a response to the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Air Quality Action Plan consultation. A further meeting of the Task Group would take place on 18th July which would be attended by the Strategic Planning Manager and the Network Control Manager from Worcestershire County Council.

The Chairman confirmed that the Task Group remained on schedule to bring its final report before the Board at its meeting to be held on 16th September 2013.

14/13 WORCESTERSHIRE HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE

As Councillor Cooper had given his apologies for this evening's meeting a written update had been received which would be provided to all Members by email. Officers confirmed that the main item on the agenda for the meeting on 25th June 2013 of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) had been an update on the state of the Acute Hospitals reconfiguration and that the Committee had been told that the Joint Service Review was now completed and that two broad options were left for consideration.

15/13 CABINET WORK PROGRAMME 1ST AUGUST TO 30TH NOVEMBER 2013

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources explained to the Board that this was an opportunity to pre scrutinise any appropriate items from the Cabinet Work Programme if it so wished. The Members discussed the Capital Programme in respect of the Bromsgrove Town Centre, Public Realm Improvements and although this was expected to go to Cabinet on 4th September, which would not allow the Board the opportunity to pre-scrutinise it, Members were in agreement that it would be useful to receive an update on the current position.

RESOLVED that the Senior Project Manager give a presentation to the Overview and Scrutiny Board on the Bromsgrove Town Centre, Public Realm Improvements at the meeting to be held on 16th September 2013.

16/13 ACTION LIST

Members noted the outstanding actions and that where appropriate further information would be provided as soon as possible.

17/13 OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME

The Board considered the Work Programme and discussed the length of both this evening's meeting and the meeting to be held on 16th September, following the addition of 2 items as detailed in the preamble above and considered the option of holding a further meeting in September to allow the Board to debate the items in more detail. Officers informed Members that the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Joint Scrutiny verbal update would not be a significant item, as it was unlikely that the initial meeting would be set up prior to this. The option was also available to move the Planning Policy Task Group 12 month review to the October meeting. After further discussion it was

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

The meeting closed at 8.10 p.m.

Chairman

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**16th September 2013****SCRUTINY INVESTIGATION PROPOSAL**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Mike Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	No
Relevant Head of Service for Overview and Scrutiny	Claire Felton – Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Wards Affected	All wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	No – not at this stage
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 An Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal Form relating to car parking charges has been completed by a member of the public, Mr. C. W. Bateman, on behalf of the Bromsgrove Forum for Older People and is submitted for consideration by the Board.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Board considers the completed proposal form (at Appendix 1) and agrees to one of the following:
- (a) that further information be requested from a relevant source before deciding whether or not further investigation is required;
 - (b) that the topic is included on the work programme for further investigation at a future date;
 - (c) that the topic is included on the work programme and a Task Group is established to undertake a more in-depth investigation, appoint a Chairman for the Task Group and set a time scale for completion of the investigation; or
 - (d) take no further action.

3. KEY ISSUES**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 There are no financial implications directly relating to this report, however, if the proposal is accepted, any implications would be considered as part of the subsequent investigation undertaken.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no legal implications directly relating to this report, however, if the proposal is accepted, any implications would be considered as part of the subsequent investigation undertaken.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

16th September 2013

Service/Operation Implications

- 3.3 An Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal Form relating to car parking charges has been completed by a member of the public, Mr. C. W. Bateman on behalf of the Bromsgrove Forum for Older People.
- 3.4 If the Board decides that it does wish to investigate this topic further, it then needs to decide whether it is appropriate for the Board itself to undertake the investigation or whether a more in-depth investigation is required and a task group established.
- 3.5 Another option is for the Board to request further information on the topic from a relevant source to assist Members in deciding whether an investigation is required.
- 3.6 Alternatively, the Board could decide that it is not a topic it wishes to investigate, in which case no further action would be required.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.7 N/A

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 N/A

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Proposal Form
Appendix 2 – Supporting Evidence

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. KEY

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Amanda Scarce – Democratic Services Officer
E Mail: a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881443



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL

Name of Proposer: <u>C.W. BATEMAN (BROMSGROVE FORUM FOR OLDER PEOPLE)</u>	
Tel No: <u>01527 875092</u> Email: <u>charlie23589@aol.com</u>	
Date: <u>24/07/2013</u>	
Title of Proposed Topic:	CAR PARK CHARGES
Specific subject areas to be investigated:	BROMSGROVE CAR PARKS.
Reasons why this subject should be considered:	GOVERNMENT POLICY and HEALTH OF BROMSGROVE HIGH STREET
Evidence to support the need for this particular investigation:	ALTRINCHAM COUNCIL DATA ATTACHED TO E-MAIL
Council priorities it links to:	HIGH STREET REGENERATION
Possible key outcomes: (i.e. what do you anticipate could be achieved?)	A FAR GREATER NUMBER OF VEHICLES BEING PARKED IN BROMSGROVE

Please indicate if any of the following apply to the proposed subject area:

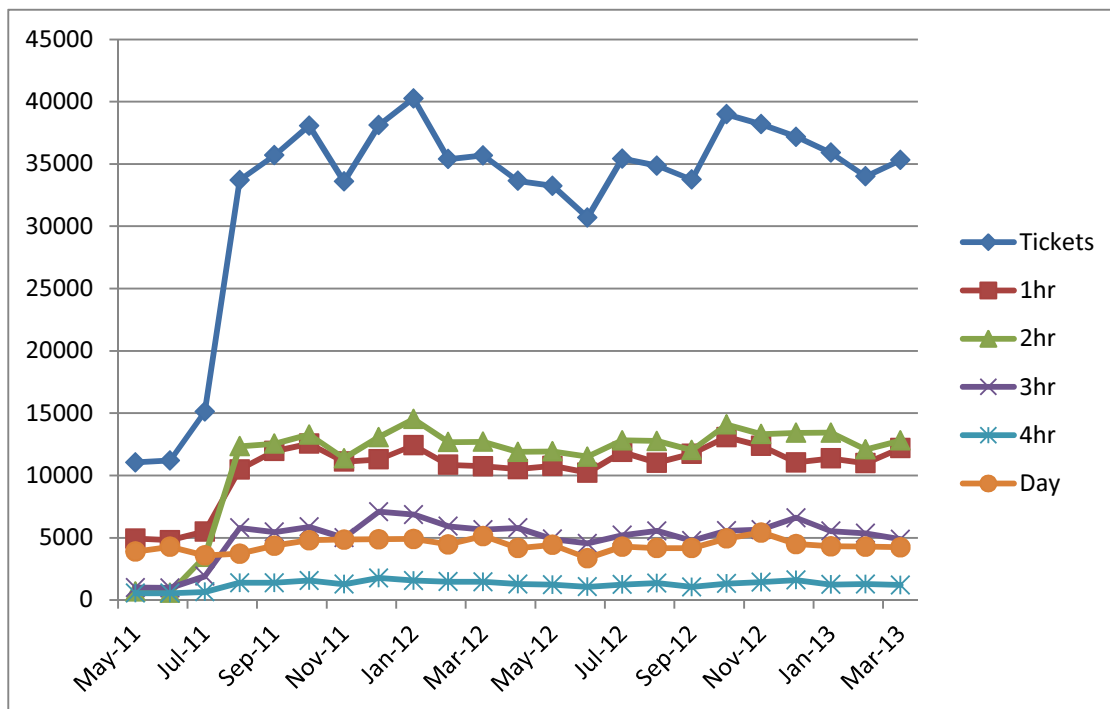
CRITERIA	NO	YES	Why?
Is it a priority issue for the Council or the Local Strategic Partnership?			
Is it an important issue for local residents?			
Is it a topic where Overview and Scrutiny could feasibly and constructively make recommendations?			
Is it a topic where external review would be helpful?			
Is it a topic where a review could be made in time to make recommendations for the executive decision making process?			
Is it a poorly performing service?			
Is it a review that could render significant savings or value for money?			
Is the topic strategic in scope?			

Please return completed forms to: Committee Section,
Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council
Email: scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk

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Altrincham Car Park usage figures

	Tickets	1hr	2hr	3hr	4hr	Day
May-11	11045	4926	683	993	549	3894
Jun-11	11202	4806	591	979	555	4271
Jul-11	15114	5495	3470	1917	652	3580
Aug-11	33704	10481	12337	5784	1386	3716
Sep-11	35699	11957	12541	5457	1384	4360
Oct-11	38074	12547	13280	5873	1568	4806
Nov-11	33589	11104	11375	4996	1265	4849
Dec-11	38108	11294	13072	7090	1776	4876
Jan-12	40260	12413	14524	6861	1561	4901
Feb-12	35392	10855	12673	5921	1474	4469
Mar-12	35678	10738	12701	5647	1456	5136
Apr-12	33636	10503	11889	5793	1282	4169
May-12	33241	10767	11927	4888	1236	4423
Jun-12	30694	10225	11504	4545	1063	3357
Jul-12	35427	11881	12817	5198	1242	4289
Aug-12	34860	11018	12760	5548	1357	4177
Sep-12	33745	11735	12032	4766	1044	4168
Oct-12	38988	13078	14084	5564	1314	4948
Nov-12	38183	12366	13315	5650	1433	5419
Dec-12	37168	11050	13421	6595	1607	4495
Jan-13	35901	11363	13434	5538	1249	4317
Feb-13	33997	10981	12089	5354	1284	4289
Mar-13	35315	12185	12804	4877	1209	4240



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From: C Bateman
Sent: 24 July 2013 15:44
To: Amanda Scarce
Cc: Kevin Dicks
Subject: Topic Proposal

Hi Amanda,
Proposal attached, and evidence.

Pasted from Altrincham web site.
Low cost Monday to Saturday rates of 10p for one hour, 30p for two and 70p for three hours"

Dear Charles, thank you for being patient in waiting for a response, I have attached some figures that show the increased sale of pay and display tickets in Altrincham
Regards

Nicola
Environment Transport Operations
Trafford Council

Kind regards,

Charlie

From: C Bateman
Sent: 29 July 2013 19:20
To: Amanda Scarce
Cc: Kevin Dicks; snowcar111@btinternet.com; mary@hedgehog-art.co.uk
Subject: Re: Topic Proposal

Hi Amanda,
The Government support 'high streets' in respect of setting low parking charges and removing petty restrictions. Please add this to our Topic Proposal. (Pasted from the web - 29th July)

The Government has previously issued guidance to councils encouraging them to attract shoppers by setting competitive parking charges and urging them to improve the quality of parking in town centres.

Tory local government minister Brandon Lewis said: "This Government has scrapped Whitehall rules that previously told councils to hike up parking charges, adopt draconian enforcement and impose arbitrary limits on off-street parking spaces.

"Councils now need to play their part in reining back in the overzealous culture of municipal parking enforcement.

"They should adopt a common sense approach. Ministers are considering what further steps can be taken to ensure that town hall parking policies and practices support local high streets."

Kind regards,

Charlie

PS. Our request does not include the 15 minute parking on double yellow lines suggested by Eric Pickles.

From: C.Bateman
Sent: 08 August 2013 16:22
To: Amanda Scarce
Cc: Kevin Dicks
Subject: Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal

Hi Amanda,

In addition to the Altrincham data please make the board aware of the following points.

Kind regards,

Charlie

Car Parking Charges – O&S topic proposal

- The surplus from car parking last year (2012/13) was just over £500k – from an income of just over 1.4 million
- Motorists have won a landmark judgement after the High Court ruled it illegal for a cash-strapped council to hike parking charges as a revenue-raising stealth ‘tax’ to subsidise its other services.
- Brandon Lewis, Minister for Local Government, said: ‘This Government has been very clear that parking charges are not, and should not be, a town hall stealth tax on local residents. We have scrapped the Labour Government's guidance which pressured councils to hike up parking charges.
- Indeed, making sure that car parking charges are reasonable is an important way in which councils can help support their local high streets and local shops.’

From: C.Bateman
Sent: 09 August 2013 11:25
To: Amanda Scarce
Cc: Kevin Dicks; snowcar111@btinternet.com; mary@hedgehog-art.co.uk
Subject: Re: Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal

Hi Amanda,
Many thanks,

This is our third request !! We expect some action this time!!
Regards,
Charlie

**41/11 SCRUTINY OF ALL BROMSGROVE CAR PARKS (REDUCTION IN THE
NUMBER OF TICKETS SOLD) - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TOPIC
PROPOSAL REPORT**

The Board considered the Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal put forward by a resident, Mr Charles Bateman. As the Board had recently completed a Task Group in respect of the Recreation Road South Car Park and in light of the findings of that report and the imminent review of the car parking operation, it was

RESOLVED that no further action be taken.

**97/11 DISCOUNTED PARKING CHARGES - OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY
TOPIC
PROPOSAL REPORT**

The Board considered the Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal put forward by a resident, Mr. Charles Bateman, in relation to discounted parking charges. As the Board had recently completed a Task Group in respect of the Recreation Road South Car Park and in light of the agreement at the Cabinet meeting held on 22nd February 2012 for a cross party review to be carried out in respect of car parking, Members agreed it was not appropriate to investigate the issues raised in this Topic Proposal until such time as that review had been completed.

RESOLVED that the Board receive, upon completion, the report on the Review of Car Parking before giving further consideration to the Topic Proposal in respect of Discounted Parking Charges.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: 16th September 2013

MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT - QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT

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

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides the Board with customer feedback data for the first quarter of 2013/14

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

2.1 Note the contents of the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 This report details the customer feedback received by the authority during the 1st quarter of 2013/14, including Local Government Ombudsman complaints and the outcomes of customer complaints.

3.2 The report also provides demand data across the main access channels.

Financial Implications

3.3 There are no direct financial implications, although failure to deal appropriately with complaints can lead to financial recompense being necessary.

Legal Implications

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

Service/Operational Implications

3.5 The Every Customer, Every Time, Customer Experience Strategy was launched in March 2011 and sets out our vision for excellent customer service provision and improving the customer experience when having contact with the Council.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: 16th September 2013

- 3.6 As an authority committed to improving customer care customer feedback and demand data is used to measure what is happening in our systems, and to inform improvements.
- 3.7 Quarterly reporting is intended to ensure Members of the Council and customers are updated in respect of customer feedback, especially complaints made in respect of service provision.
- 3.8 Good customer service has improved value for money by reducing failure demand. Improvements to the way we handle complaints has resulted in less officer time spent chasing responses and re-investigating.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.9 It is important to monitor aspects of customer service to ensure that we are improving and developing. Customers need to know that we respond properly to complaints and act on the issues raised to reduce the possibility of them happening again.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 It is important to use the Council's complaints or compliments to measure how well the system is meeting its purpose and to act on those complaints to fix the system where it is failing.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - **Quarterly Customer Feedback Report Quarter 1
2013/14**

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Amanda de Warr
E Mail: a.dewarr@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 881241



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

**Making Experiences Count
Quarterly Customer Service Report**

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

1st April 2013 – 30th June 2013



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

1. Introduction

This report details the customer feedback received by Bromsgrove District Council during the period from 1st April 2013 to 30th June 2013.

It also provides information about the customer demand received through the customer service team and payment channels.

2. Customer Feedback Analysis

57 complaints were received during this quarter because we did not meet the customer's expectations, or failed to meet our own standards, or the customer was unhappy with an outcome. Details of all complaints received can be found at the end of this report in Appendix A.

49 complaints (85%) were answered in 15 working days or less. 8 complaints took longer than 15 working days to respond to.

We also received **24** compliments.

Complaint figures have more than doubled since last quarter when we received **24** across the Council. We can see that the majority of the complaints for this quarter have been triggered by the Route Optimisation project for Refuse and Recycling and issues with the telephony service within the Revenues team.

The Route Optimisation project has seen a change of collection days for the majority of residents in Bromsgrove along with new routes, new team members and new patterns of duty for refuse and recycling teams. This has resulted in **19** complaints which is higher than usual. However, with approximately thirty nine and a half thousand households to deal with, it is a surprisingly lower figure. The crews have been very flexible during this period of change and have gone the extra mile to help customers who have been confused by the new collection arrangements. It is expected that complaints about collections will continue to rise in the next couple of months as residents get used to the change in collection days.

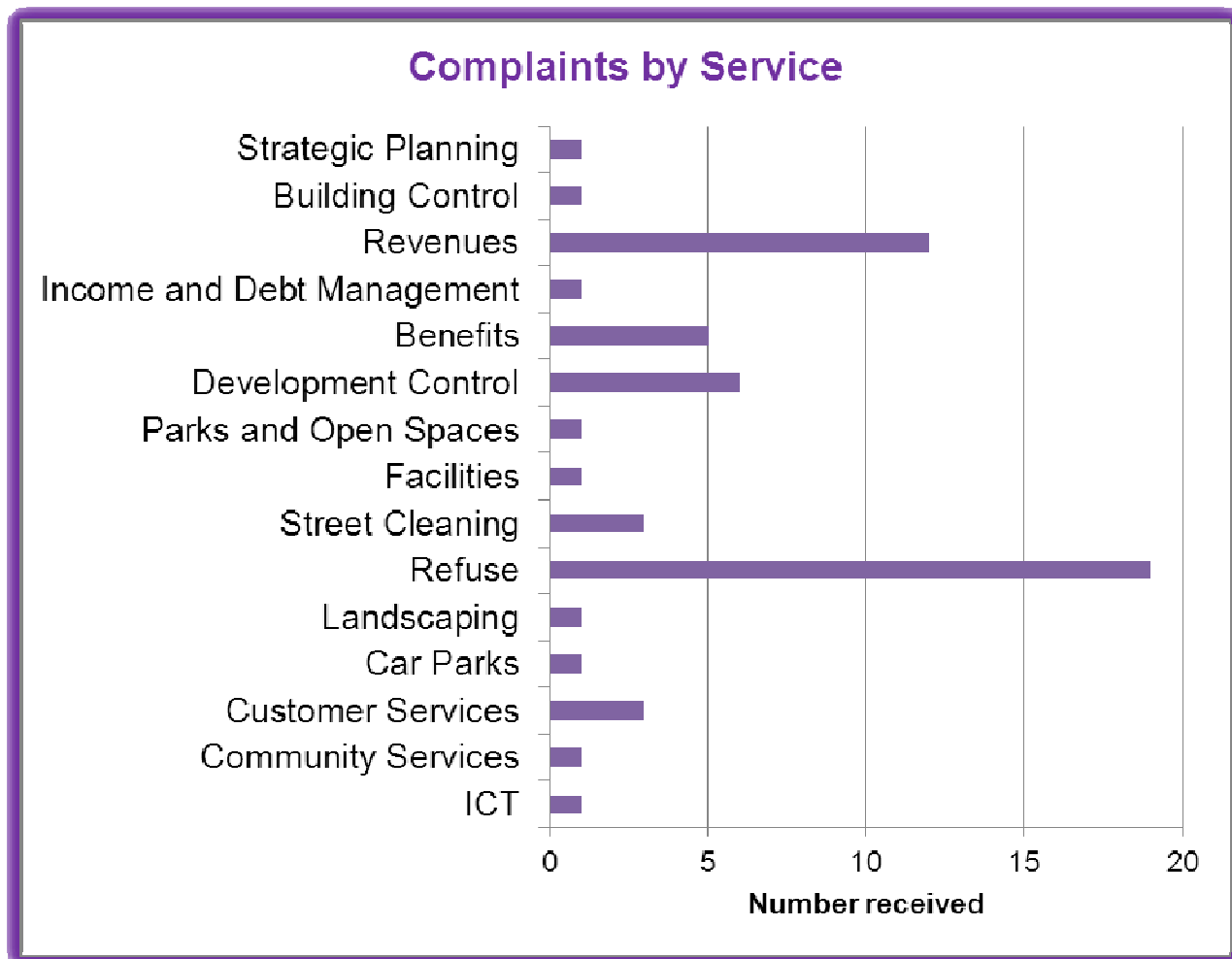
The Revenues team has been experiencing problems with their telephony service which has caused calls to go unanswered or to be cut off. However, a new contact centre module for the Revenues team is due to be installed shortly. This should alleviate any of these types of problems and allow officers to give a quicker response.

The common themes in the complaints received this quarter were:

- Automated systems not working properly.
- Problems getting through on the telephone.
- Bins not being put back in safe positions.
- Missed bins.
- Staff being unfriendly.
- Not doing what we promised.
- Brown Bin stickers causing confusion.
- Not responding to customers calls and queries.
- Unacceptable delays in taking action.
- Not keeping customers informed of changes/cancellations of service.

Number of complaints by service (detailed)

The following table provides a more detailed breakdown of complaints by service.



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

Some of the changes made as a result of complaints include:-

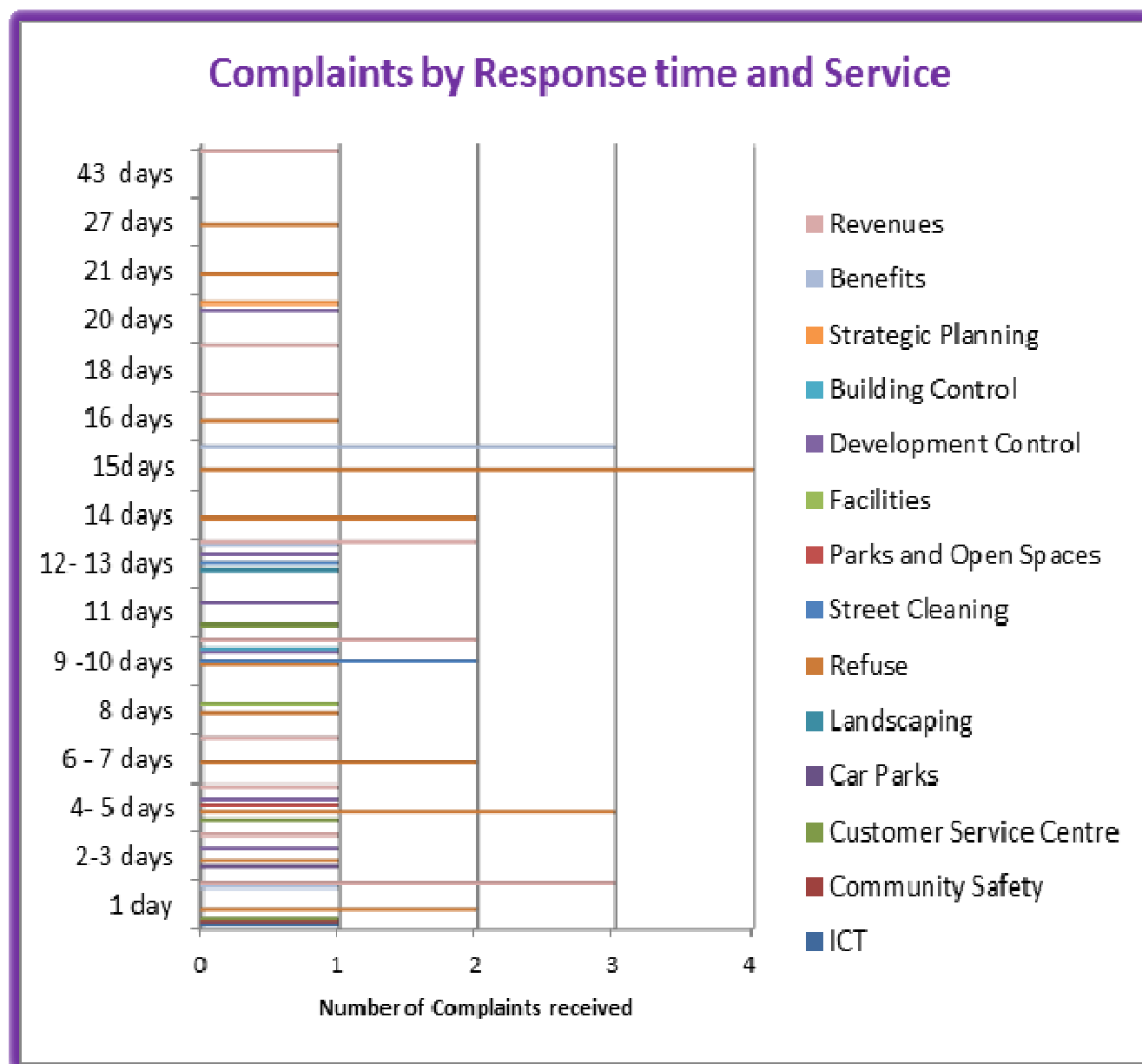
- Amended Council Tax documents with revised opening hours.
- Review of the garden waste sticker system underway.
- Improved template and system for email responses to planning queries.

Number of complaints escalated to Head of Customer Services

There were no complaints escalated to the Head of Customer Services for further investigation or action.

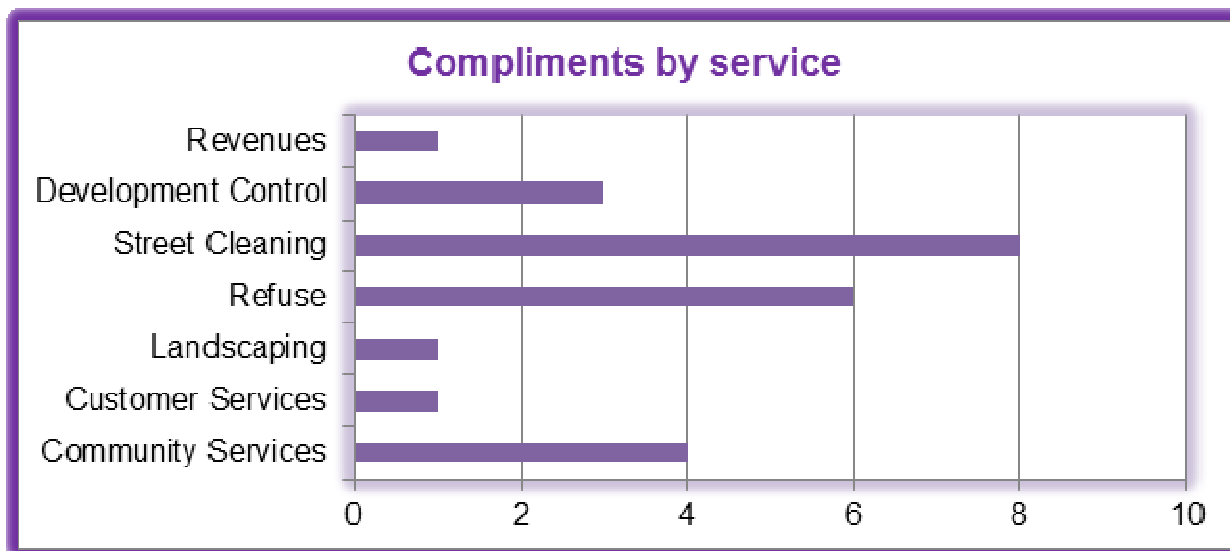
Time taken to respond to complaints

We aim to respond to customer complaints within 15 working days and 85% of complaints received during this quarter were dealt with within that timeframe. Where it has taken us longer to respond than expected, (6 cases) customers were informed that there would be a delay, except where the customer could not be contacted (2 cases).



Happy Customers!

From the **24** compliments received we can see that customers appreciate the range of services the Council provides, especially when we deal with their requests in a timely and professional manner.



Here are some of the compliments we have received for information.

Team	Compliment Detail
Lifeline	Customer had a fall in the garden and called back in to say what a marvellous service we give and thanked us very much for our help.
Customer Services	Customer received a parking fine recently. He called into the customer service centre and was helped to complete an appeal form. The appeal has been upheld and he does not have to pay the fine. He was helped at customer services by Nicki Grainger. He wanted his thanks passed on to Nicki as he said she was extremely helpful and courteous.
Refuse	Customer spoke to Sandra at the depot to arrange a sofa to be collected. She would like to say how helpful Sandra was, as there were a few complications regarding the collection, as the customer lives on a narrow road. Also, she would like to thank the crew who collected it at the time that they said that they would.
Street Cleaning	Customer telephoned to pass on her thanks to the crew for the excellent job done in cleaning up Beoley Lane. She said that they had been very thorough.
Street Cleaning	Customer would like to compliment Allan the Sweeper who takes his time sweeping the frontage of the bank and the way he keeps this area clean and tidy.
Development Control	Customer emailed to say "Great service from Development Control"

3. Local Government Ombudsman Complaints

There was 1 complaint referred from the Ombudsman this quarter.

- The customer is unhappy with the decision for a planning application close to his home. A response to the Ombudsman is currently being prepared.

This quarter there has also been a total of four complaints that the Ombudsman considered directly without an investigation and decided not to take any further. These are detailed below:

- Customer complaint about New Homes Bonus Scheme.
- Complaint about Council Tax Setting.
- Complaint about development control- application process.
- Complaint about Hagley, 106 monies and the way in which Cala Homes planning application dealt with.

4. Customer Service Centre Information

This section provides some statistical information in respect of the amount of customer demand received via the telephone, face to face and through our payment channels.

The operational purpose of the Customer Services team is **‘Help me get the support I need with my issue or problem’**. Most customer demand is now passed to expert teams and the customer service staff act as a filter to ensure that the customer gets to see or speak to the right expert.

We use this information to help us understand the demand on all Council services.

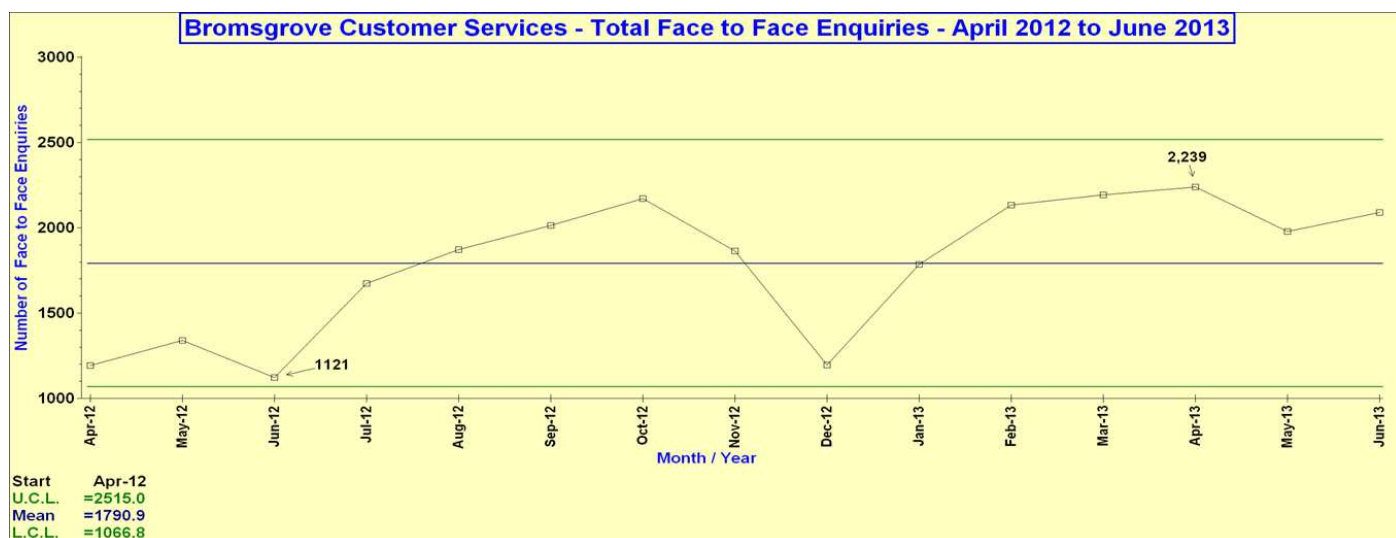
The following tables and charts show the numbers of customer transactions recorded and trends over time.

Face to face demand at the Customer Service Centre

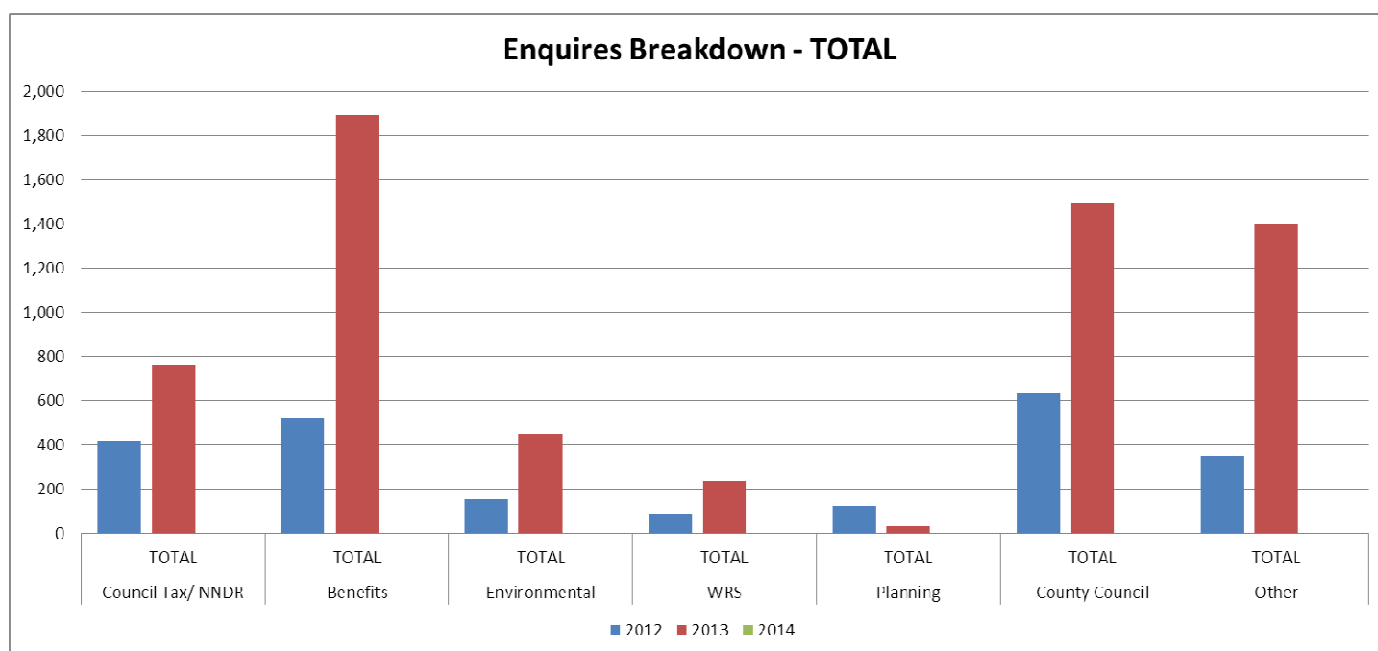
The following chart shows the total face to face enquiries being dealt with at the customer service centre on a month by month basis since April 2012. This is showing that there has been increase in face to face business since July 2012, but this is not the case. In June 2012 we implemented a new queue management system and therefore the data from July 2012 is more accurate.

We can see that the total amount of demand has remained reasonably predictable since February 2013. This is unusual as we would normally see a dip during February and a peak in March/April.

As we continue to chart the demand data we will be able to see whether this changes over the coming months.

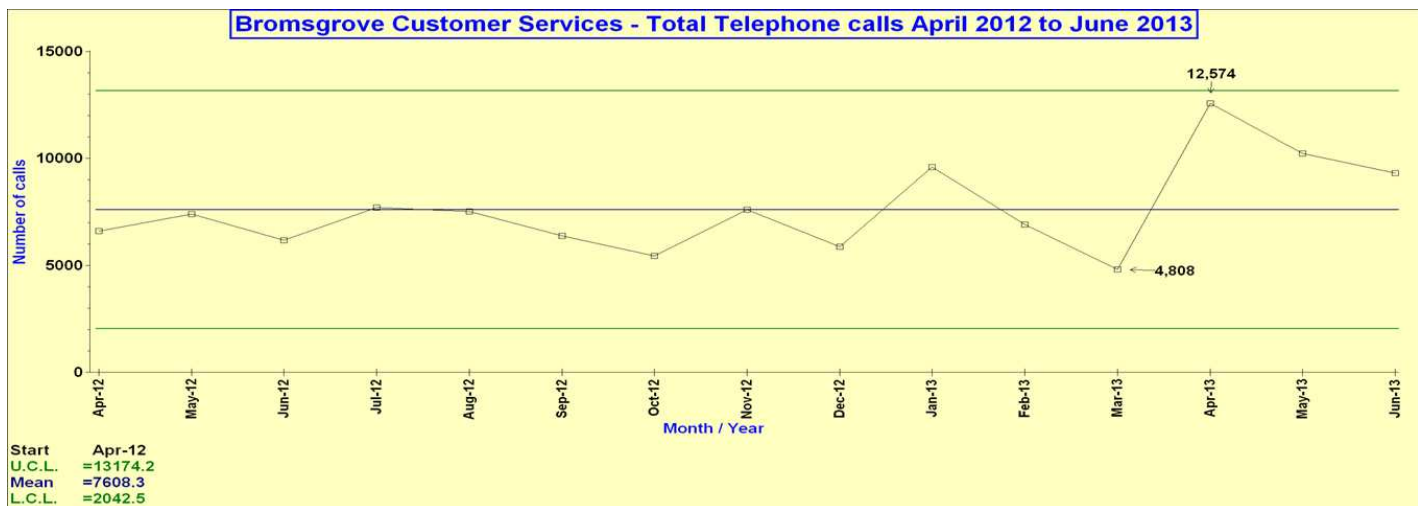


The following chart shows the breakdown of face to face customer enquiries received during the 1st quarter of 2013/14, compared with the same period last year. Due to the change in recording data during 2012/13 the data for that period cannot be used for comparison, only as an indicator of the spread of enquiry volumes.



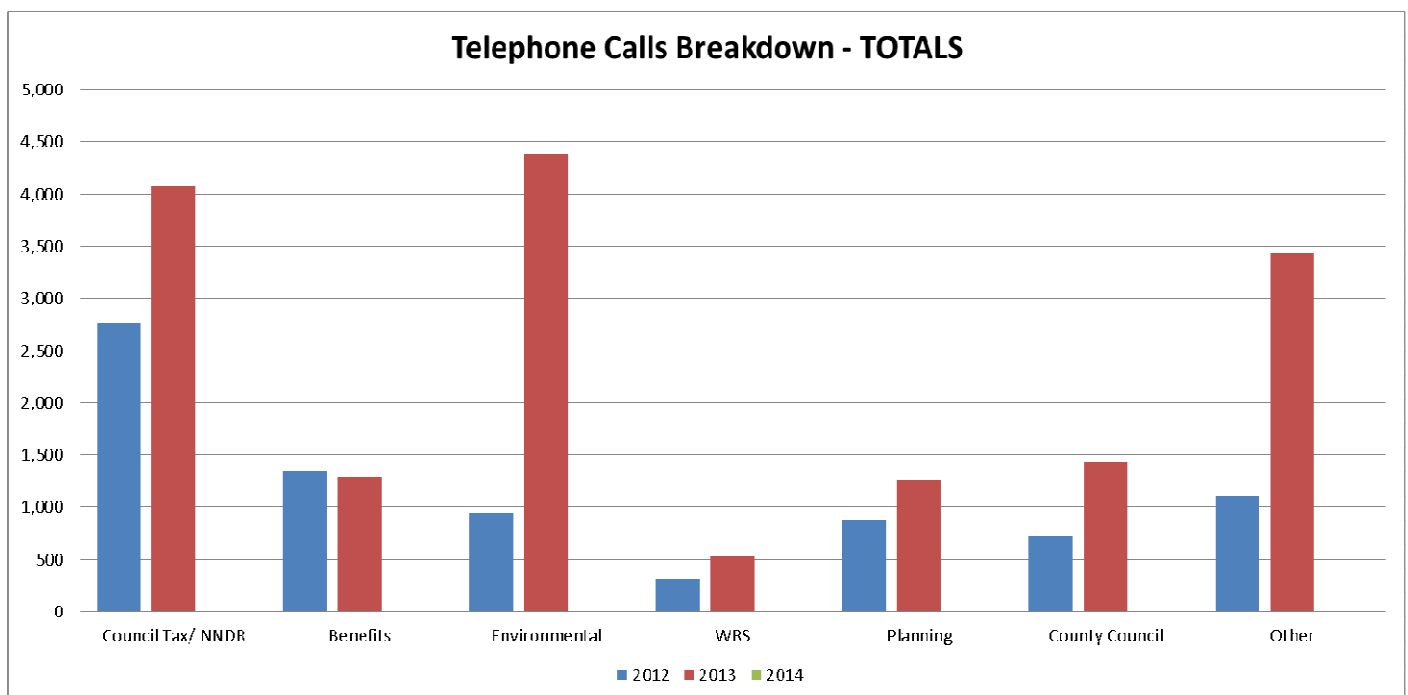
Telephone demand received

The following chart shows the total telephone calls recorded on the customer service systems from April 2012 until the end of June 2013. This shows a significant peak during April 2013 and a sustained increase in calls received over the first quarter of 2013/14 compared with the same period last year.



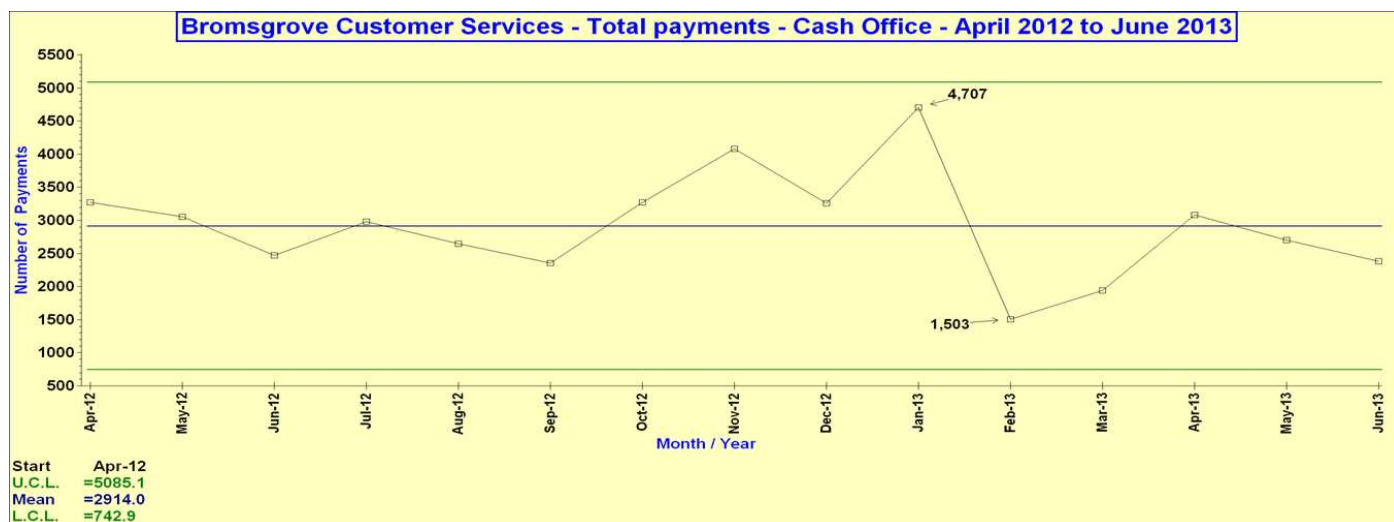
The following chart shows the breakdown of calls received via the switchboard and customer contact centre phone lines by department during the quarter. (Calls made to direct dial lines are not recorded and therefore not included.)

This shows the significant peak in calls as a result of the changes to the waste collection service, and also an increase in calls relating to Council Tax.

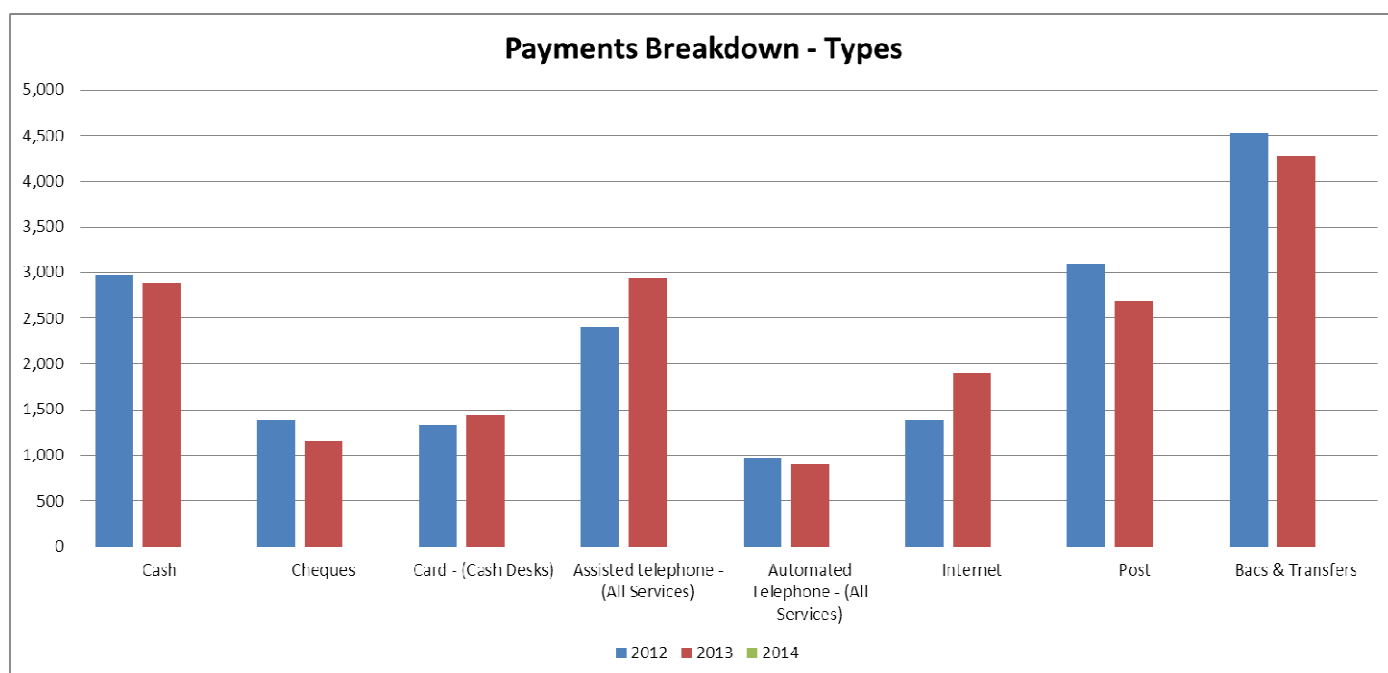


Payments

The following chart shows a month by month comparison of payments received by the cash office and customer services staff during the period April 2012 – July 2013. The peaks in November and January are due to the volumes of garden waste invoices dealt with at that time. We see an annual dip in February as Council Tax installments drop.



This chart shows the breakdown of payments across all payment channels and shows an increase in telephone and internet payments.



Amanda de Warr
 Head of Customer Services
 July 2013

Details of complaints received and outcomes

Complaint details	Days taken to respond	Action taken	Outcome update from Head of Service
Business Transformation			
Customer reported that the automatized payment system not working.	1 day	Spoken to customer and agreed we will look at the technical reason for the failure and correct it before calling him back again to confirm all is ok.	No further action.
Community Services			
Customer unhappy that he hasn't received a response to his email regarding litter at the back of a business premise this was forwarded to the Community Enforcement Team.	1 day	Customer makes significant number of reports about Community Safety issues and it is not possible to update him on progress on them all even though appropriate action is being taken.	No further action taken
Customer Services			
Customer unhappy that Bromsgrove Council is not in the telephone directory	4 days	Explanation given to customer about costs associated with having the number in the main part of the telephone directory. Customer advised where to find the number in the general community section.	No further action
Customer rang to complain about the quality of the recorded message on the telephone system at BDC switchboard. He thinks that the announcer sounds "drunk or drugged".	11 days	Discussed this with the customer and agreed this because the announcer has a regional accent and may not be clear as customer currently has ear complaint.	No further action at this time.
Customer unhappy that she was kept on hold for 50 minutes and is concerned that other people are having this problem.	10 days	Customer using old telephone number which had not been routed into new telephone system when changed over. Now routed correctly.	ICT deleting this number

Leisure and Culture			
Customer unhappy about details given to police by an usher (caretaker) about an incident at planning committee that claimed he was the person causing a nuisance which started a criminal investigation against him.	8 days	Customer informed that this is a police matter	Since the receipt of the letter the customer has contacted the Council to discuss this matter. He is now aware of the Council's view and has indicated although he disagrees he is happy to disagree at this stage. As such the matter is considered as closed.
Customer unhappy about the dangerous state of the play area in Stoke Road.	5 days	Customer contacted and plans for the play area discussed.	No further action
Environmental Services			
Customer was walking along the pavement and two men were using sit-on mowers to cut the grass. One of the men was looking behind him, talking to the other operative and almost ran her over. She had to swerve out of his way. He did not apologise or even acknowledge his mistake.	12 days	Letter of apology sent	Operatives have been spoken to about taking care and acting courteously when mowing. NB This seems to be an isolated incident.
Customer complained that a neighbour's garden waste was emptied when it has a 2012 label on it. Customer unhappy that they may be subsidising other households.	10 days	The charge had been paid and crew had checked this. Customer informed.	We are currently carrying out a Transformation Review of garden waste and looking at the need for stickers.
Customer complained that Waste Crew left the empty bins in the middle of shared driveway to 5 houses causing an obstruction. Customer could not exit the end of driveway and had to stop the car and get out and move the bins.	1 day	Apology given to customer.	The crews have been spoken to about this as part of the Route Optimisation changes to ensure bins are returned properly.

Customer complained that Waste Crew has access to a key safe to access the bins, and are not securing the key after use. Customer reported that the crews rarely put the key away and lock it back up resulting in security concerns.	14 days	Officer has spoken to the crews about this and has apologised to customer	The Team Leader is monitoring this situation.
Customer on assisted collection complained bins are not being returned to agreed place	27 days Problem contacting the customer	Apology given to customer and crews informed	The crews have been spoken to about this as part of the Route Optimisation changes to ensure bins are returned properly.
Customer is unhappy that crews left his bin a long way down the road away from his house and they often leave it in the middle of his drive.	4 days	Spoken to crew and advised them of problem	The crews have been spoken to about this as part of the Route Optimisation changes to ensure bins are returned properly.
Customer unhappy with the attitude of a member of the waste crew who told her to empty the bin herself when she questioned why it hadn't been emptied.	21 Staff concerned on leave	Apology given to the customer- staff attitude will be monitored.	Being monitored
Customer unhappy about the amount of cigarette ends outside the Dolphin Centre	13 days	This area is cleaned regularly every day and this was explained to the customer.	Environmental Services to liaise with Leisure Services regarding cigarette bins and signage.
Customer complained that he was woken up by street cleaning machine outside his home at 6.25am.	10 days	Customer contacted and informed this this wasn't our machine	No further action.
Customer complained that they had got wet when paying money to the Council when paying to park and requested covers.	3 days	Replied to the customer in a letter explaining that we will consider their suggestion of covers over the parking machines.	No further action.
Customer wrote to complain about her bins and other people's bins are being carelessly left after being emptied and reported that this has happened on numerous	15 days	Apology given to customer and assurance that we are working to improve this situation	The crews have been spoken to about this as part of the Route Optimisation changes to ensure bins are returned properly.

occasions.			
Customer hadn't put the brown bin sticker on her bin. Spoke to the bin man who said he couldn't empty it without the sticker. She told him she had paid but they still didn't empty the bin	16 days	Contacted resident to explain the crew were acting on instructions. Not to empty garden waste bins without the correct sticker.	Garden waste team investigating
Customer unhappy that the truck for recycling cannot fit down her street to collect the recycling what is the street meant to do with the recycling?	14 days	Contacted the customer and explained the situation. Agreed alternative collection site.	We have revised the collections to some hard to reach properties as part of Route Optimisation changes and will be reviewing others in October.
Customer emailed about missed bin and also reported failure to reply to a missed bin collection online report.	5 days	Crew have not been collecting weekly as they thought the property could do with going fortnightly but did not have the authority to do this and did not inform the customer.	Crew spoken to. Issue also resolved via route Optimisation. Apologies given to the customer.
Customer reported that the collection on Friday mornings coincides with school opening and causes an obstruction in the very busy road outside, with cars then mounting pavements (with children inside!) to get past the collection vehicle.	15 days	This will be reviewed by officers.	New proposals are being drawn up to try and avoid this.
Customer complained that they had ordered grey bin and not received it.	15 days	Additional resources have been allocated to catch up with excessive workloads.	Two crews have been working continuously, which include Monday working to catch up. New bin deliveries are expected in early July to meet demand.
Customer complained that whilst driving, they had approached a bend only to be faced by a waste collection truck parked on the wrong side of the road, and on the bend.	15 days	Crews have raised the issue of the speed of this vehicle. They could have been broken down or a similar vehicle parked up. The	This vehicle was not parked but carrying out collection duties.

<p>The customer reported that there were two passengers in the truck, one of whom could easily have got out and directed traffic past the dangerously-parked vehicle.</p> <p>When customer got home, the two brown bins had been left across his drive, but the grey one was nowhere to be seen.</p>		<p>crew were not parked illegally and were carrying out their daily duties</p>	
<p>Customer unhappy about the crews returning her bins and leaving them across her drive. She lives on the A38 and has specifically positioned her bins for easy access and storage because of the position of her property - if the bins are left in the middle of her drive she has to stop in the middle of a very busy road on the brow of a hill. She feels it is no more effort to return the bins to the correct storage space within her side of her drive.</p>	6 days	<p>Apology given as we failed to return bins to a safe location</p>	<p>Passed to officer to address with crew.</p>
<p>Customer complained about a crew member looking in her bin and taking out 2 atlas books, whilst emptying her recycling bin.</p>	5 days	<p>Spoken to customer and resolved the complaint immediately. Crew members have been spoken too regarding ownership of waste products presented</p>	<p>No further action required</p>
<p>Customer reported difficulties contacting the Environmental Services team.</p>	7 days	<p>Apologised to customer - asked what number was being used and gave direct line for Env Service for future reference – tested line and did not experience what customer did.</p>	<p>No further action required</p>
<p>Customer unhappy that after reporting a missing bin it wasn't collected as arranged and when he reported it again a week later he was promised a call back but didn't get one! . Customer has also waited</p>	5 days	<p>Bin has been collected and customer contacted to apologise.</p> <p>High volumes of calls have impacted on the waiting times to get through to the</p>	<p>No further action required.</p>

over 30 minutes each time to get through to the number called		team dealing with enquiries.	
Customer unhappy as her request for additional green bin has not been responded to even though she has emailed 3 times.	1 day	Apology given and bin delivered	No further action required as due to high volume of issues at this time.
Customer lives in a block of flats, with three very large dumpsters for refuse, which are kept in a fenced off area. A few weeks ago she came home to find all three dumpsters in her parking space. She had to get help to move them before she could park. She didn't complain at the time, because it's never happened before. On 12/06/13 bin men did not return the bins but left them behind her car, and she couldn't move it.	8 days	Advised supervisor to address crew to ensure bins are put back behind fenced off area and not left in car park	Supervisor to speak to crew to ensure bins are put back behind fence.
Planning and Regeneration			
Customer feels that she has not been given the right advice for a steel support to be fitted during buildings work and now damage has appeared as a result of lack of support to the ceiling	10 days	Explanation given to customer about the building control service	No further action required
Customer unhappy about the planning grant and decision notice for Old Birmingham Road.	13	Explanation given to customer	No further action required
Formal complaint regarding handling of planning decision for two dwellings at 79 Old Birmingham Road.	10	Explained to the customer that we are certain that the process and final decision procedure for this application has been handled correctly.	No further action required
Parish Council concerned about development at Old Fiery Hill.	20	Letter sent on behalf of Monitoring Officer explaining situation.	No further action required
Customer concerned about information on the 106 monies not being on our website.	4 days	Customer contacted and told that we agree that it would be better if our website could be improved but that we can't make the	No further action required

		changes in line with the timescales for live applications in Hagley. He understood and appreciated this. In any case we are already working with the local community to identify issues.	
Customers concerned about a confusing email he received from the Council.	3 days	The template response has been tested and fixed. Apology given to customer.	No further action required
Customer unhappy with the response he received from his planning objection.	11 days	This was an administrative error- apology given to the customer	No further action required
Customer unhappy that neighbour next door has not completed repair works to his listed property and that it looks unsightly and the noise of the repairs is stressful. He also wants to know why the Council hasn't followed up the enforcement notice.	20	We responded to his complaint in writing explaining our remit and answering other queries. We have arranged a meeting with him, neighbour, Ruth Bamford, Dale Birch and Mary Worsfold.	No further action required
Resources			
Customer phoned Saturday morning, very upset regarding Council Tax reminder she had received. She is unable to call during the week as she is at work until 6pm. She was very unhappy as the letter she received states the service is open on a Saturday and she always used to be able to resolve these issues on a Saturday. She wants to know why there is nobody available from Council Tax to provide this service and has requested a manager call her.	43 Several calls made before making contact with customer	Spoke to customer and resolved situation.	Amended documentation with revised opening hours
Customer complaining about the 'bedroom tax'. He has autism and has medical documents to prove he	15 days	Customer's expectation is different to what the Council can provide. However there is an	

requires an extra bedroom. He has a bedroom converted to a bathroom which was converted before he moved in to property. Says people older have been allowed an extra room so is accusing BDC of age discrimination. Has been informed by benefits that his benefit will be reduced. Says this is unfair. Property was given to him to meet his needs. Has applied to BDC for a grant to change the bathroom back to a bedroom but this was denied.		appeal taking place	
Customer unhappy with the attitude of a member of the benefits team. Customer not happy that the rest of the office would have been able to hear their conversation as customer could hear everything as not on hold.	15	Apology given to customer and reminder issued to staff to give name and to put call on hold	No further action
Customer has been trying to resolve revised and correct Council Tax bills for two months." I am making every effort to notify you of changes at a difficult time for me and the position is far from satisfactory".	3 days	Apology given to customer. Reminder to staff to respond in timely fashion to complaint and provide full and accurate reasoning for refusal to award discount	No further action
Customer rang today to speak to a manager. He had just been into the CSC to pay his Council Tax and was told he owed more than he thought. He was very upset and said he feels upset every time he has to go in the CSC. He always comes away feeling bad.	1 day	No further action taken as staff have gone the extra mile to help the customer	No further action
Customer complained that he had phoned twice to speak to council tax, but that the system then cut him off because no officers were free.	9 days	A letter of apology was issued apologising for the problems with the phones and access to speak with a member of staff	Contact Centre module to be installed shortly. Should alleviate problem.

Customer complained that she had tried numerous times and cannot get through to council tax. She is not happy and doesn't like the way it just cuts her off at the end.	6 days	A letter of apology was issued apologising for the problems with the phones and access to speak with a member of staff	Contact Centre module to be installed shortly Should alleviate problem
Customer posted in Direct Debit mandate for Council Tax payments at least 3 weeks ago. She is now in France (she spends half the year there) and has been told that she has received a demand letter from Council tax advising she has seven days to pay her council tax. She has called 6 times today from France to speak to Council tax and has been unable to get through to the department.	4 days	Apology offered to customer and this was accepted. Account updated	Contact Centre module to be installed shortly. Should alleviate problem
The customer has tried to contact benefits several times. Most times she gets transferred through and gets a voicemail or is cut off. After several attempts the customer finally got through in which she asked for a change of circs form which she claims it was never sent as hasn't received it. She then phoned again and again she was told a form will be sent. Since this she has had a letter off us telling her, her benefits have been suspended to do a change and that there is no record of her requesting these forms.	1 day	Apology given for not noting original request.	Contact Centre module to be installed shortly. Should alleviate problem
Customer informed Benefits of new bank details for housing benefit and visited the centre on several occasions to check they were going to pay the Housing Benefit into his new account, on each visit customer was assured that it would be paid into the new	14 days	Mistake made. Faster payment made and customer able to pay rent	Not feasible to put anything in place to prevent a similar mistake.

account. When payment was made it went into the old now closed account - this has caused problems as customer now has no money to pay rent. Customer reported that a member of the benefits staff had told them that the bank will return the money to the council but until this happened they cannot pay any money.			
Customer complaining she is paying council tax and not getting the service she deserves - rang could not get through and the automatic payment systems does not work.	18 days	Customers account up to date, no arrears.	Contact Centre module to be installed shortly. Should alleviate problem. Maintenance of ATP being carried out 03/07/2013.
Customer tried to contact revenues several times following a reminder notice for council tax he claims does not owe. It was for a previous address and he had previously been assured he had paid everything that was owed Numerous calls were made to CSC who tried in vain to connect him with the revenues department -- there was no holding facility or opportunity to leave a message for someone to phone him back.	16 days	Customer contacted and he is happy that the matter is now resolved in the form of a payment received	Contact Centre module to be installed shortly. Should alleviate problem
Customer complained about level of service. Customer reported that as a single parent on a small salary they cannot afford to suddenly be sent a large bill for any amount owing, hence the reason for immediate notification. Customer reported that they have also gone from a weekly wage to monthly so need to know how much the new direct debit payment will be and from when the change will start as soon as possible.	9 days	Telephone call has been made by customer and an apology has been made for the delay in getting back to her	

Customer contacted CSC to query correspondence from Finance with invoices relating to life line equipment, Letter had wrong name for reference and resulted in her being transferred to four different people before arriving back at Customer Services where she was informed she would have to be transferred to someone else. Customer feels this is extremely confusing for elderly vulnerable people.	1 day	Dealt with call at point of contact	This issue is being looked at as part of a Lifeline income billing and collection intervention
Customer is unhappy that she has received a court summons for her business rates after making an arrangement plan.	13 days	Customer contacted to discuss her payment options and apology given for her earlier query not being responded to correctly.	Business Rates matter resolved, Revenues Manager telephoned customer and discussed issues.
Customer has sent in a complaint card saying that she received a letter regarding Council Tax regarding information about her son who passed away 8 years ago. This was very upsetting and has had an impact on her health.	13 days	The Council were not aware of this and apology given to the customer.	No further action
Customer rang Revenues and was very upset at the way she was spoken to. She said officer was very rude and not respectful	13 days		

Overview & Scrutiny Board

16 SEPTEMBER 2013

APRIL - JUNE (QUARTER 1) FINANCE MONITORING REPORT 2013 /14

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Roger Hollingworth
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas Head of Finance and Resources
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To report to Cabinet on the Council's financial position for the period April - June 2013 (Quarter 1 – 2013 /14)
- 1.2 At Council Tax Setting members approved a number of savings, these are detailed in Appendix 2 with an update on progress

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the Overview and Scrutiny Board note the current financial position on Revenue and Capital as detailed in the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 This report provides details of the financial information across the Council. The aim is to ensure officers and members can make informed and considered judgement of the overall position of the Council.
- 3.2 During the budget process Heads of Service identified various savings that they would achieve during 2013/14. Details of these and there progress are included in Appendix 2.
- 3.3 A separate finance report for each department plus a council summary is shown on the following pages.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

16 SEPTEMBER 2013

Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Overall Council

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Environmental Services	4,036	191	253	62
Community Services	2,447	449	442	-7
Leisure & Cultural Services	1,962	531	531	0
Planning & Regeneration	1,193	98	91	-7
Pre-Regulatory Services	740	50	45	-5
Customer Services	1	91	89	-2
Finance & Resources	773	26	5	-21
Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services	1,377	203	162	-41
Business Transformation	40	484	449	-35
Corporate Services	1,695	518	526	8
SERVICE TOTAL	14,264	2,641	2,593	-48
Interest Payable	75	19	0	-19
Interest on Investments	-67	-17	-20	-3
COUNCIL SUMMARY	14,272	2,643	2,573	-70

Financial Commentary:

- Environmental Services – initial issues relating to Route optimisation of waste rounds teething problems which will delay anticipated savings. It is anticipated these will not be material.
- Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services – £28K of savings are predominantly due to vacant posts in all three areas, however a service review has taken place and the new structure came in to effect from 01/07/13. Budgets will be revised and reflected in the 2nd Qtr report. There are also savings within the Members services as not all of the posts were appointed to in the 1st Qtr, there is also an under spend from the Members training budget.
- Finance & Resources variance is due to the Corporate training budget as explained further below.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

16 SEPTEMBER 2013

Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14 – Overall Council

Department	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Budget April – June £'000	Actual spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April – June £'000
Environmental Services	1,725	427	430	3
Community Services	993	86	89	3
Leisure & Cultural Services	933	174	172	-2
Planning and Regeneration	4,473	9	9	0
Pre-Regulatory Services	56	3	3	0
Financial Services	25	25	17	-8
Business Transformation	34	34	11	-23
TOTAL	8,239	758	731	-27
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• North Cemetery Phase 2 – will begin this year, meeting with designers to take place• Within Business Transformation requirements for members and the Microsoft Office Project are currently under review.				

Overview & Scrutiny Board

16 SEPTEMBER 2013

Environmental Services	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14
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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Environmental Services

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Car Parks/Civil Parking Enforcement	-495	-87	-43	44
Cemeteries/ Crematorium	89	10	7	-3
Cesspools/ Sewers	-82	-26	-10	16
CMT	0	13	13	0
Depot	21	222	202	-20
Grounds Maintenance	631	104	101	-3
Highways	255	38	26	-12
Public Conveniences	42	9	10	1
Refuse & Recycling	2,241	-303	-266	37
Street Cleansing	1,290	192	191	-1
Transport	-48	-14	-10	4
Waste Management Policy	-5	9	9	0
Climate Change	48	12	6	-6
Land Drainage	49	12	17	5
TOTAL	4,036	191	253	62

Financial Commentary:

- Reduced income for car parks which officers are reviewing.
- Following the route optimisation of Waste rounds, there have been a few issues which have caused delay. This has meant that some of the anticipated savings will be delayed. Senior managers and financial officer will be meeting to go through the budgets and saving predictions before the half year.

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Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 Environmental Services

Service	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April – June £'000
Depot Site Security	46	22	22	0
Vehicle & Equipment replacement programme	1,303	346	350	4
Rollout Bins – Round Extension	150	38	38	0
North Cemetery Phase 2	179	0	0	0
Cemetery Toilets	23	1	1	0
Bromsgrove Monument – Armed Forces Monument	20	20	19	-1
CPE (Civil Parking Enforcement)	4	0	0	0
TOTAL	1,725	427	430	3
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • North Cemetery Phase 2 – will begin this year, meeting with designers to take place • A separate report will be coming to Members regarding the Cemetery toilets and the requirement for additional budget. 				

Community Services	Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14
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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Community Services

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Housing Strategy	1,875	271	260	-11
Community Safety & Transport	551	171	175	4
Community Cohesion	21	7	7	0
TOTAL	2,447	449	442	-7
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • There are no significant variances to report at this stage 				

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Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 Community Services

Service	Revised Budget 2013/14 £'000	Budget April – June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April – June £'000
Strategic Housing	993	89	89	0
TOTAL	993	89	89	0
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">Expenditure is expected within the forth coming quarters				

Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Leisure and Cultural Services

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Business Development	30	235	241	6
Cultural Services	337	72	72	0
Leisure & Cultural Management	-12	14	14	0
Parks & Open Spaces	468	43	36	-7
Sports Services	1,139	167	168	1
TOTAL	1,962	531	531	0
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none">The underspend within Parks & Open Spaces is due to a vacant post. This has now been filled with effect from July.				

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Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 Leisure and Cultural Services

Service	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Budget April – June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April – June £'000
Sports Facilities	468	103	103	0
Play Areas	370	71	69	-2
Other Schemes	95	0	0	0
TOTAL	933	174	172	-2
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The Section 106 funded project at Wythall Community Park was included in the MTFP for 2013/14 as £152K. However, the total Section 106 receipt is £303K, so the Capital Programme needs to be increased by an additional £151K. 				

Planning and Regeneration	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14
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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Planning and Regeneration

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Building Control	-5	-34	-42	-8
Development Control	494	37	33	-4
Strategic Planning	470	75	65	-10
Economic & Tourism Development	226	29	28	-1
Emergency Planning	13	3	3	0
Land Charges	-50	-22	-14	8
Town Centre Development	45	10	18	8
TOTAL	1,193	98	91	-7

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Financial Commentary:

- Strategic Planning received reimbursement of underspent contribution to WCC for Community Infrastructure Levy work.

Capital Budget summary Quarter 1(April – June) 2013 /14 Planning and Regeneration

Service	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Budget April – June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April – June £'000
Town Centre Development - Project Management	54	0	0	0
Town Centre Development – Public Realm	919	9	9	0
Parkside School - New Offices	3,500	0	0	0
TOTAL	4,473	9	9	0

Financial Commentary:

- Town Centre Development – Public Realm awaiting works to be carried out by WCC before our work can commence.

Regulatory - Client	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14
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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Regulatory Client

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Environmental Health	922	91	86	-5
Licensing	-182	-41	-41	0
TOTAL	740	50	45	-5

Financial Commentary:

- Environmental Health transferred to Regulatory Services 1st June 2010

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Worcestershire Regulatory Services	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14
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Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 Regulatory Services

Service	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Budget April – June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April – June £'000
Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Programme (WETT)	56	0	0	0
TOTAL	56	0	0	0
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The expenditure is jointly funded by all partners in accordance with the business case. The budget for 13/14 is £503k, BDC share at 11.05% £56k. 				

Customer Services	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14
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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Customer Services

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Customer Services	1	91	89	-2
TOTAL	1	91	89	-2
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> There are no significant variances to report at this stage 				

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Finance and Resources	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14
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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Finance and Resources

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Accounts & Financial Mgmt	-16	117	117	0
Human Resources & Welfare	0	68	48	-20
Revenues & Benefits	789	-159	-160	-1
TOTAL	773	26	5	-21

Financial Commentary:

- There is an under spend on Corporate Training in this Qtr as Human Resources are currently visiting management teams to establish training requirements, to be reviewed for 2nd Qtr.

Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 Financial & Resources

Service	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Budget April – June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April – June £'000
Income Management PCI Compliance	25	25	17	-8
TOTAL	25	25	17	-8

Financial Commentary:

- The scheme is currently in progress and more costs are expected to be incurred

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Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14
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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April – June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
CMT	0	12	12	0
Democratic Services & Member Support	1,166	113	91	-22
Elections & Electoral Services	204	12	11	-1
Legal Advice & Services	7	66	48	-18
TOTAL	1,377	203	162	-41

Financial Commentary:

- Legal, Equalities & Democratic Services – £28K of savings are predominantly due to vacant posts in all three areas, however a service review has taken place and the new structure came in to effect from 01/07/13. Budgets will be revised and reflected in the 2nd Qtr report.
- There are also savings within the Members services as not all of the posts were appointed to in the 1st Qtr, there is also an under spend from the Members training budget.

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Business Transformation	Quarter 1 (April - June) 2013 /14
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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Business Transformation

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
IT Services	29	450	424	-26
Business Transformation	0	16	9	-7
Policy & Performance	11	18	16	-2
TOTAL	40	484	449	-35
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> The underspend within IT Services is due to vacancies within the department and re-negotiation of software contracts The underspend within Business Transformation is due to vacancies within the department 				

Capital Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 Business Transformation

Service	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Budget April – June £'000	Actual Spend April – June £'000	Variance to date April – June £'000
Member ICT Facilities	9	9	0	-9
Sunray Devices	9	9	11	2
ESX Services	16	16	0	-16
TOTAL	34	34	11	-23
Financial Commentary: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Member ICT Facilities are currently being reviewed ESX servers are part of the Office project which is currently under review 				

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Revenue Budget summary Quarter 1 (April – June) 2013 /14 – Corporate Services

Service Head	Revised Budget 2013 /14 £'000	Profiled Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date April - June £'000
Corporate Resources	1,614	445	461	16
Corporate Admin / Central Post / Printing	81	73	65	-8
TOTAL	1,695	518	526	8

Financial Commentary:

- The underspend within Corporate Admin, Central Post and Printing is related to vacant posts within the department, these are due to be filled in August.
- The overspend within Corporate Resources is due to the vacancy management provision which is offset by underspends in departments within departments.

4. TREASURY MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The Council's Treasury Management Strategy has been developed in accordance with the Prudential Code for Capital Finance prudential indicators and is used to manage risks arising from financial instruments. Additionally treasury management practices are followed on a day to day basis.
- 4.2 The Council receives credit rating details from its Treasury Management advisers on a daily basis and any counterparty falling below the criteria is removed from the list of approved institutions.
- 4.3 Due to market conditions the Council has reduced its credit risk for all new investments by only investing in the highest rated instruments and has shortened the allowable length of investments in order to reduce risk.
- 4.4 At 30th June short term investments comprised:

	31st March 2013 £000	30th June 2013 £000
Deposits with Banks/Building Societies	10,800	12,000
Total	10,800	12,000

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Income from investments and other interest

- 4.5 An investment income target of £67k has been set for 2013 /14 using a projected return rate of 0.75% – 1.50 %. During the past financial year bank base rates have remained 0.5% and current indications are projecting minimal upward movement for the short term.
- 4.6 In the 3 months to 30 June the Council received income from investments of £20k.

5. REVENUE BALANCES

5.1 Revenue Balances

The revenue balances brought forward at 1 April 2013 were £3.093m (subject to audit). Excluding the impact of any projected over or under spends it is anticipated that £97k will be transferred from balances during 2013 /14 to fund revenue expenditure; giving a current projected balance at 31 March 2013 of £2.996m.

Legal Implications

None.

Service/Operational Implications

All included in financial implications.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

None as a direct result of this report

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

8. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Reserves Transfers to be approved
Appendix 2 Review of savings identified in budget round
Appendix 3 Capital Program to be approved

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Available from Financial Services

10. KEY

Overview & Scrutiny Board

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None

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Bromsgrove District Council									
Earmarked Reserves Final Accounts Schedule									
2013/14									
Description	Cost Centre	Balance at 31 March 2013 (Q4) £000	Transfers In (New Reserves) £000	Transfers In (Existing Reserves) £000	Budgeted release (budget saving 13/14) & budgeted R&R £000	Drawdown from Reserves £000	Q1 movement	Balance at 30 June 2013 (Q1) £000	Purpose (New Reserves)/ Comments
Ballot box and Booths	XX767	-10				7	7	-3	
Health and Wellbeing (CM20)	XX772	-9				5	5	-4	
TRUNK/AOHN	XX779	-85		-23		15	-8	-93	
Apprenticeships	XX816	-32				5	5	-27	
CRC New Burdens	XX818	-13		-16			-16	-30	
Welfare Reform Act - Benefits	XX825	-19		-13			-13	-32	
Localising C/Tax New Burdens Grant	XX832	0	-42				-42	-42	
Local Authority Data Sharing (LADS)	XX833	0	-13				-13	-13	
		-1,994	-55	-53	0	32	-76	-2,069	

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SAVINGS - Including additional income (income growth)

Description	Department	Net saving planned 2013/14	Commentary (link to priorities etc)	Comments at end of first quarter
Duplicate pension backfunding budget	BDC Res Client Community	32		Savings will be met
Basement Project	Community	26	Will be funded from reserve for 2013/14 only	Budget given up as expenditure met from reserve. Saving based on 2012/13 figures therefore if expenditure and income does not change the saving will be met
Lifeline	Community	41	Savings from Shared Service	Saving based on 2012/13 figures therefore if expenditure and income does not change the saving will be met
CCTV	Community	56	Savings from Shared Service	Increased income from SLA with WFDG.
CCTV income SLA	Community	26	Income generation from selling service to external organisations	
HIA (home improvement agency) SLA	Community	0	See pressure tab for new SLA - Derek Allen	
The Tunk - section 10	Community	0	See pressure tab for new SLA - I have new SLA	
The Lounge	Community	0	See pressure tab for new SLA	
Amphlett Hall	Corporate	10	Grant	SLA agreement finished in March 2011, no payments made since this time
External Audit Fees	Corporate	68	Reduce fees to indicative 12/13 fee structure	
Shared Service Comms/Print/Graphics	Corporate	1	Shared services	
Customer Services	Customer	117	Salaries - reduction in CSA requirements through transformation of service delivery	A number of vacant posts were deleted and the budget for those posts removed for 2013/14 onwards therefore the salary savings will be achieved. Staff numbers have reduced therefore it is expected that training requirements will reduce in line with the revised budget.
Customer Services	Customer	1	Training - reduced staff base requiring training	
Customer Services	Customer	2	Cleaning - through renegotiation	The cleaning contract has been renegotiated and the savings will be met. The expected changes due to transformation have been implemented therefore the savings will be achieved.
Customer Services	Customer	2	Cash collection - through transformation of system this reducing need for collection at Council House	
Courty Elections income	Elections	0	Funding from C.C - see Pressure tab	
Stop locking cemetery gates	Environmental - Bereavement	6	We currently have a contract with an individual to look all the cemetery parties at both the Bromsgrove Cemetery and North Cemetery. Potential implications gates would be left unlocked, it is possible this could lead to antisocial behaviour however pedestrian access is permitted in Redditch without consequences	
Stop free parking at Christmas	Environmental - Car parking	10	Currently we offer free car parking in BDC car parks on the 2 weekends before Christmas	Any savings will be achieved in latter part of 3rd qtr (for last two weekends before Christmas)
Improve working rota's cleansing	Environmental - Cleansing	9	Due to improved working rota's the cleansing team are able to offer a part time post as a saving	This will be achieved in 2013/14 salaries
Stop locking park gates	Environmental - Grounds	-1	We currently pay GM operatives £4K to look Sanders park. Net of revenue costs for new bollards. Locking the gate only prevents vehicle access, the bollards would be to prevent vehicles from driving on the grass. Again possible antisocial behaviour if car drivers meet in the car park. Pedestrian access would be unaffected.	Spend to save bid - savings budgeted 2014/15 onwards
Use of Red diesel	Environmental - Grounds	2	Currently the whole BDC fleet runs on white diesel. Some bits of equipment such as tractors and mowers could run on Red diesel which attracts a lower duty.	Red diesel usage has not been implemented in first quarter
Route optimisation BDC	Environmental - Refuse	74	This will see a reduction in the number of rounds and there is therefore a saving in terms of staff and vehicles. Expenditure of 10k will be incurred to implement link to unavoidable. Due to the implementation of route optimisation it is expected to reduce the current rounds by one, this saving has been pro rata as implementation will not occur until part way through 13/14, the following year 14/15 onwards will benefit from the full annual saving of 102k *** (ie an additional saving of 28k on the previous year)	Following the route optimisation of waste rounds there have been a few teething problems. This has meant some of the anticipated savings will be delayed. Managers and finance to meet to go through budgets & saving predictions before 2nd qtr & allocate savings across budget heads within cost centre DW11.
Switch bin type	Environmental - Refuse	10	This would see us replace some of the diamond lift bins in a area of the district with comb lift that are cheaper. This is possible because of the route optimisation and move to all green all grey collections but it needs to be done on an area basis so that crews only collect one type of bin.	This saving should be met as new bins have been purchased
Change of vehicle type	Environmental - Refuse	15	Removal of hire costs by replacing with own smaller vehicles actual saving is £25k but there is a £10 running cost for the new vehicle. Net of Revenue saving of £15K.	Hired vehicle will be used to mid August due to major repairs on existing fleet vehicle reducing the saving by approx £2k
Extend garden waste using Gens to inaccessible areas	Environmental - Refuse (garden waste)	59	Need to check if it should just be the extra income between 99 & 105 ie additional 6 in second year	Savings based on rolling out service to inaccessible areas - Managers to meet and discuss delivery of this and report back at qtr 2
Additional Income Cesspools	Environmental - waste	9	Marketing cost see revenue bid	Savings based on increased customer base - this has been delayed due to resources needed for additional emptyings at Frankley Green and Dodford pumping stations (as previously reported)
Housing Benefit Admin Grant	Finance	20	Additional subsidy payable for 13/14 only.	
NNDR	Finance	6	Additional cost of collection allowance	NNDR 1 form completed and income for cost of collection confirmed
NNDR	Finance	91	Reliefs within calculation of retained rates figure	

SAVINGS - Including additional income (income growth)

Description	Department	Net saving planned 2013/14	Commentary (link to priorities etc)	Comments at end of first quarter
Members allowances	Legal	17	These are underpends that need to be agreed with members before they can be removed	These reductions were made in 13/14 budget, however a 3% increase was agreed after the reduction, but this should not impact on the current budget.
Operational budgets	Legal	52	Potential savings from staff reductions through transformation. Savings within operational budgets for printing, books and publications as a result of shared operational resources with Redditch.	Up to the 1st Qtr there are salary savings, however a restructure of the whole service has taken place and comes into effect 01/07/13. An update at 2nd qtr will give an accurate position for saving made in 13/14.
Income from WCC	Legal	15	Contractual income for legal support provided to Worcester City Council	This figure is now going to be 10,000 from Worcester City, however a further SLA has been negotiated with Worcester County bringing in an additional 8,000 per year pro-rated for 13/14 to 6,500.
Alotments	Leisure	2	Saving based upon increasing the fees and charges by 40% to bring the applicable fee in line with other local authorities. On this basis a sixteenth of an acre plot (standard size) would increase from £28.00 to £40.00 per annum or from £2.33 per month to £3.33 per month. This price increase is staged process and we will increase accordingly in 2014/15 also.	Saving is based on charge increasing from Oct'13. However, the increase is currently subject to a legal challenge so it will depend upon the outcome of that.
Cleaners	Leisure	12	Following the reduction in the usable parts of the Council House building and the changes within services as part of the shared service process there is less demand for cleaning. As such the cleaning service requires less capacity/resource and the current vacant position (vacated following a resignation) will be offered as an ongoing saving. There will be no reduction in service standards based on this recommendation.	The vacancy saving available was actually lower than in the establishment because additional hours were being covered by existing staff & agency. However, this saving can be contained within the bottom line of the Council House Cost Centre due to a rates reduction & lower maintenance costs.
Parks	Leisure	12	As part of a review of the Parks & Green Space Service it has been identified that the current parks information service at Sanders Park during the summer months can be operated in a different way which reduces the requirement to appoint seasonal staff to cover this area and will use an existing capacity within the park team more effectively to cover the day time operation of the service. Casual cover will still be required at weekends and bank holidays (Inc leave cover) and this provision has been maintained as part of the review. There will be no reduction in service provision based on this recommendation.	Staff costs have not reduced by the expected level due to cover for absence & work on transformation. However, this saving can be contained within the bottom line of the Cost Centre due to lower maintenance costs.
Parks	Leisure	5	Increased income based upon maximising the operation of the parks services and implementing additional charges/promotions linked to commercial activities in the park areas, renegotiation of contract arrangements and the use of the parks as venues for activity programmes etc.	As at the end of Quarter 1 the additional income target has not been reached. However, the intention is to review income received to date to identify opportunities for the remainder of the year & I have been assured that the target will be met.
Dolphin	Leisure	5	Freeze R&M spend at the DC based on the limited life expectancy of the building and the CSC.	On target
Arts Dev	Leisure	6	Arrix funding excludes an annual RIP increase and as such can be frozen until the contract expires in March 2015 at £120,000. As from April 2015 the members have indicated that they will be funding the Arrix at £60k per annum offering BDC a £60k per annum saving.	On target
Town Heritage Post	Planning	0	Lottery Funding for Town Heritage post (4 years)	
Building Control	Planning	15	Posts	Posts given up in 2013/14.
	Resources	37	Additional revenues transformation savings	This service is now shared and the savings have been met through a staffing restructure.
Reduced Hours	Resources	5	In Human Resources	This has been achieved as a member of staff asked for a reduction in hours from 01 Apr 13.
Shared Benefit Mgrs	Resources	46	Need to check with TK if ongoing.	This saving should be met as the Shared Mgmt is set to continue.
	Resources	2	Reduction in hours - term time hours	This has been achieved as a member of staff asked for a reduction in hours from 01 Apr 13.
Childcare vouchers	Resources	2	Administration costs less	This will be achieved as administration costs are considerably less than anticipated.
Training budget	Resources	50	Corporate Training budget	The reduction was made in 13/14 budget and currently looks on target to be met.
Treasury Mgmt	Resources	22	Shared Treasury Mgmt	This is currently being looked at, and will update in 2nd qtr.
Equalities Bids	Transformation - Equalities	0	Linked to revenue bids for equalities money	
Helpdesk costs	Transformation - IT	14	Redesign of the helpdesk potentially means no requirement for outside support	Savings will be met as contract for helpdesk not renewed
Hardware costs	Transformation - IT	70	Renegotiation of contracts	This will be met as contracts have been renegotiated.
Spatial Contract	Transformation - IT	10	Change of contract terms	Savings will be met as contracts have been renegotiated.
				Smartpoint savings will not be achieved in 13/14 due to the timings of the contract cessation date which will not finish until the end of 13/14 therefore savings will not be met this year. LANDesk savings will be achieved as contract has not been renewed
Software Costs	Transformation - IT	9	Contracts no longer required - LANDesk and Smartpoint	
WCC analyst costs	Transformation - Policy	7		
Additional transformation savings	Resources	30		Post removed from salary budget and costs built in for WCC analyst
Transformation Savings	Corporate	20		

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SICKNESS ABSENCE PERFORMANCE AND HEALTH FOR PERIOD ENDING 31st March 2013

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Mark Bullivant
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas, Head of Finance and Resources
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To report to Overview and Scrutiny Board on Bromsgrove District Council's performance for the fourth quarter (January to March 2013) in relation to sickness absence.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

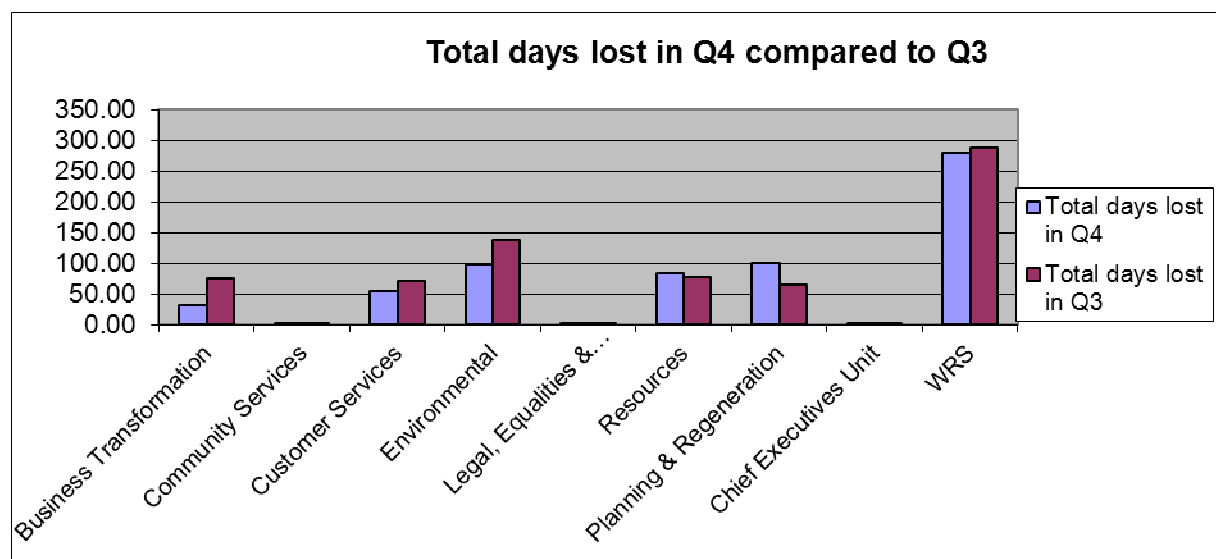
The Overview and Scrutiny Board is requested to note the report

3. KEY ISSUES

Analysis of the monthly statistics for the quarter

Statistics for the quarter January to March 2013 compared to the previous quarter

- 3.1 The graph below shows sickness absence for Bromsgrove District Council employees in the quarter January to March 2013, compared to the previous quarter (October to December 2012).

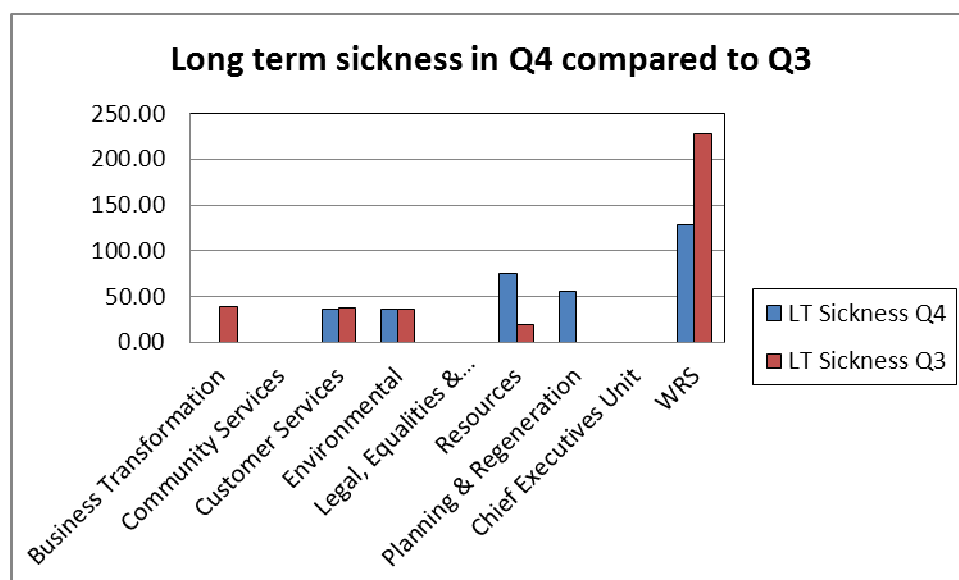


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- 3.2 The average days lost per person for this quarter is 1.62 days per person compared to 2.16 days in the previous quarter. This reflects an annual of 6.89 days which is a significant reduction on the annual estimated 8.75 days per employee.
- 3.3 In addition there has been an overall reduction in sickness absence from last quarter.
- 3.4 Further information in relation to long-term and short-term absence levels are detailed later in the report.

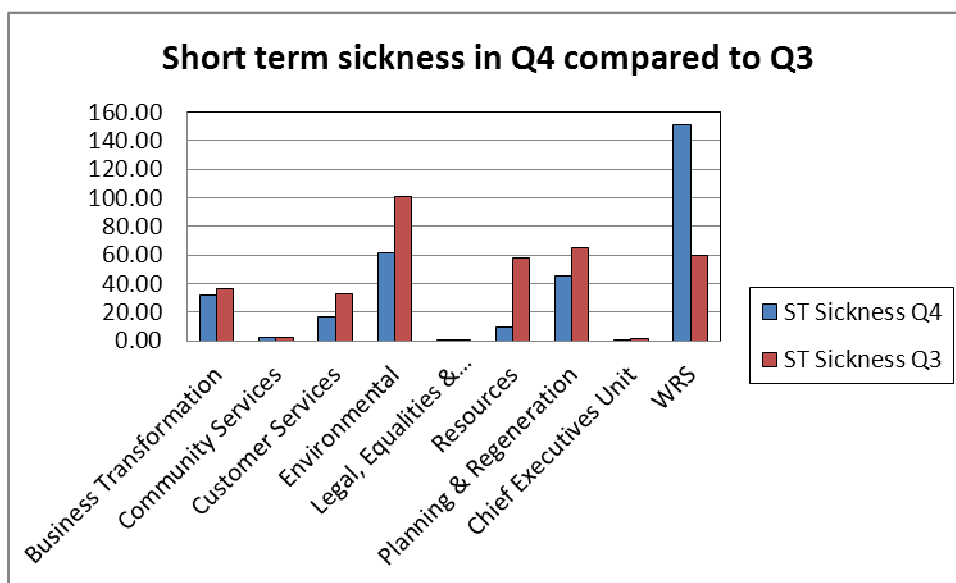
Long-term absence for the quarter January to March 2013, compared to the previous quarter (October to December 2012)



- 3.5 Overall there has been a reduction in the number of days lost due to long term absences. However there has been an increase in long term absences in Resources and Planning & Regeneration. HR continues to work with Service Managers and as a result a number of employees have returned to work which will be reflected in the next quarter report. Ongoing cases continue to be actively managed with the support of Human Resources
- 3.6 The reduction in long term absence in WRS, Business Transformation and Customer Services, this is as a result of long term cases being resolved either through the employees returning to work or the dismissal of employees through capability due to ill health.
- 3.7 There has been no change in the level of absence within Environmental services, service managers continue to work with HR and Trade Unions.

- 3.8 Changes were introduced in July to the Councils Sickness Policy which should assist in the reduction of long term absence. In addition to this HR are currently working with managers to review how sickness absence is being reported and how staff are being supported on their return to work.

Short-term absence for the quarter January to March 2013, compared to the previous quarter (October to December 2012)



- 3.9 Overall figures show a reduction in short-term absences compared to last quarter. The main absence reason remains as a result of sickness and diarrhoea and also seasonal related illness such as colds and infections which is to be expected during the winter months. This is particularly evident in WRS as these teams were particularly effected by a number of seasonal viruses.
- 3.10 In addition to the recent changes to the Sickness Absence Policy, staff and managers are able to meet with the Council Wellbeing Officer at one of the wellbeing Surgeries, held the last Tuesday of every month, to discuss any work related issues that affect wellbeing. HR will also continue to provide support and guidance to assist the Council in absence and the promotion of Wellbeing amongst employees, including awareness on topics such as healthy eating, how to keep well in the winter months.

Financial Implications

- 3.11 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.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

16th September 2013

AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service for Overview and Scrutiny	Claire Felton – Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	All Ward Councillors were invited to join the Task Group
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

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

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **Members are requested to:**
- (a) **consider and approve the report and the recommendations attached at Appendix 1; and**
 - (b) **submit the report and recommendations to the Cabinet for approval.**

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 These are detailed within the attached report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 These are detailed within the attached report.

Service/Operation Implications

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

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 16th September 2013

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.4 N/A

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 N/A

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Air Quality Task Group Report

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

See attached report for details.

7. KEY

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Bromsgrove District Council



Air Quality Task Group Report

September 2013



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

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MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK GROUP

Councillor Sean Shannon (Chairman)
Councillor Chris Bloore (withdrew)
Councillor James Brogan
Councillor Margaret Buxton
Councillor Steve Colella
Councillor Brian Cooper
Councillor Keith Grant-Pearce (withdrew)
Councillor Pete Lammas
Councillor Luke Mallet
Councillor Peter McDonald
Councillor Chris Scurrall
Councillor Les Turner

SUPPORTING OFFICER DETAILS

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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

“What is Air Quality?”

Air quality generally refers to levels of pollution contained in the air that we breathe. Air quality falls when chemicals, particulates, or biological matter is present in the air. This contamination can cause harm to humans and other species. A range of illnesses have been linked to poor air quality these include respiratory, cancers, organ failures and brain damage. It is recognised that people who live in areas with poor air quality are prone to deteriorating health and a reduced life expectancy. Poor air quality also damages the natural environment and contributes to the destruction of fragile ecosystems. It has been established that the principle source of pollution to the air in the four **Air Quality Management Areas** (AQMAs) around Bromsgrove district is from road transport emissions and this is exacerbated by congestion and traffic jams.

Production of this report results from a comprehensive examination of evidence and data related to a complex subject matter. It has included interviews with experts from across the fields of science, medicine, planning, and transport infrastructure. Members of the Task Group and the Democratic Service Officers have endeavoured to produce a report that will inform and influence those responsible for implementing measures to improve the air quality across the district.

During the Task Group work timetable, a consensus of concern developed related to recommendations from the original 2007 report and subsequent review in 2009 not being actioned or implemented. It is vitally important that the Overview and Scrutiny Board will be provided with regular progress reports from The Air Quality Steering Group, and that the Air Quality Action Plan be closely monitored on a regular basis.

Finally, thanks go to the Task Group Members for their support, local knowledge and views together with Democratic Services Officers, Amanda Scarce and Jess Bayley for their organisational and research skills and keeping the Task Group on track.

Councillor Sean Shannon
Chairman of the Air Quality Task Group

SUMMARY OF RECOMMENDATIONS

Worcestershire Regulatory Services have considered the recommendations and commented on and provided estimates for, financial implications, resource implications and timescales. It should be noted that these are all based on the current proposed financial contribution from the Partner Authorities at this time. This is subject to change depending on budget and resource demand.

CHAPTER 1 – Review of the Air Quality Scrutiny Report December 2007

Recommendation 1	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
<p>That further consideration be given to the implementation of the following approved recommendations, which remain outstanding, from the original report (full details are provided within the body of the report):</p> <p><u>Recommendation 1 – Low Emission Zones</u> Further consideration be given for LEZs to be included within the Air Quality Action Plan.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 7 – Town Centre Redevelopment</u> A representative from Worcestershire Regulatory Services to be included within the membership of the Town Centre Redevelopment Group.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 8 – High Street and The Strand</u> Although not declared as an AQMA the continued monitoring of the air quality at Davenal House should take place and consideration be given to alterations to the traffic lights.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 17 – Taxi Rank</u> Regular reminders to taxi drivers in respect of leaving their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at a taxi rank.</p>	Councillor Kit Taylor	<p>[R1] Initial consideration estimated as 6 months. Feasibility Study as 1 year and implementation is unquantifiable at this time.</p> <p>[R7] Unknown</p> <p>[R8] Unknown - Annual review of relevance.</p> <p>[R17] to be clarified by AQTG</p>

Recommendation 1 (continued)		
<p>Financial Implications</p> <p>[R1] Consideration initially is proposed to be covered by existing budgets (estimated as £1000)². A Feasibility Study would require Defra Grant application or Authority funding (estimated as greater than £100,000)¹.</p> <p>[R7] None - Proposed to be covered by existing budgets.</p> <p>[R8] None - Proposed to be covered by existing budgets.</p> <p>[R17] None - Potentially included within existing WRS budgets.</p> <p>Resource Implications</p> <p>[R1] Officer resource (estimated as STO x 24 days and TSO x 12 days and preparation time)</p> <p>[R7] None - Officer resource (proposed to be covered by existing resource)</p> <p>[R8] None - Officer resource (proposed to be covered by existing resource)</p> <p>[R17] None – Officer resource (proposed to be covered by existing resource)</p>		

CHAPTER 2 – Worcestershire Regulatory Services

Recommendation 2	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
<p>(a) That separate Air Quality Action Plans be produced for the four AQMAs in Bromsgrove district in order to address the particular circumstances in each location.</p> <p>(b) That the Action Plans contain specific targets and detail projected timeframes and all actions should be implemented within those timescales.</p>	Councillor Kit Taylor	<p>(a) 6 months (b) After 2023 – dictated by estimate of timescale of measure that would take the longest to achieve.</p>
<p>Financial Implications</p> <p>(a) WRS staff cost estimated as £900² (cost incurred as Countywide AQAP already produced)</p> <p>(b) Proposed to be covered by existing budgets</p> <p>Resource Implications</p> <p>(a) WRS Officer resource (estimated as STO for 20 days and SP for 5 days and additional costs)</p> <p>(b) WRS Officer resource (to be covered by existing Officer resource)</p>		

Recommendation 3	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
That a separate Air Quality Steering Group should be established in respect of the four AQMAs in Bromsgrove district.	Councillor Kit Taylor	After 2023 – dictated by estimate of timescale of measure that would take the longest to achieve.
<p>Financial Implications Annual cost of £250² (cost incurred as this would be in addition to Group already proposed)</p> <p>Resource Implications WRS Officer resource (estimated as STO for 3 days per meeting twice a year and preparation costs)</p>		

Recommendation 4	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
That the Overview and Scrutiny Board be provided with regular progress reports from the Air Quality Steering Group.	Councillor Kit Taylor	Quarterly following the commencement of the Steering Group.
<p>Financial Implications None – Proposed to be covered by existing budgets with current proposals as Countywide Air Quality Action Plan Progress Report to be reported to Defra Annually. (if Bromsgrove specific Air Quality Steering Group) then additional cost of estimated £250².</p> <p>Resource Implications None – if current proposal with WRS Officer time proposed to be covered by existing officer resource (if Bromsgrove specific Air Quality Steering Group then WRS Officer resource estimated as STO at 5 days and SP for 1 day annually and preparation costs.</p>		

Recommendation 5	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
<p>Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) applies for funding from the DEFRA Air Quality Grant Programme.</p> <p>If the first application is not successful the WRS should persist in submitting further applications in subsequent years.</p>	<p>Councillor Kit Taylor</p>	<p>After 2023 – dictated by estimate of timescale of measure that would take the longest to achieve.</p>
<p>Financial Implications None – proposed to be covered by existing budgets</p> <p>Resource Implications WRS Officer resource (proposed to be covered by existing resource)</p>		

CHAPTER 3 – The Role of Worcestershire County Council

Recommendation 6	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
<p>Worcestershire County Council applies for funding from the Worcestershire Local Transport Body in order to fund traffic management measures that will tackle air pollution in the Bromsgrove AQMAs.</p>	Councillor Kit Taylor	As soon as possible/within 12 months following completion of the Task Group.
<p>Financial Implications There are no financial implications for Bromsgrove District Council.</p> <p>Resource Implications There are no resource implications for Bromsgrove District Council.</p>		

Recommendation 7	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
<p>Worcestershire County Council liaises with local bus operators to establish a local bus quality partnership in order to investigate the potential to update the bus fleets operating within Bromsgrove District.</p>	Councillor Kit Taylor	As soon as possible/within 12 months following completion of the Task Group.
<p>Financial Implications There are no financial implications for Bromsgrove District Council.</p> <p>Resource Implications There are no resource implications for Bromsgrove District Council.</p>		

CHAPTER 4 – Health Implications

Recommendation 8	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
That the health implications of air pollution be the focus of a detailed review by Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC).	Councillor Margaret Sherrey	6 months from notification of the request.
<p>Financial Implications There are no financial implications for Bromsgrove District Council.</p> <p>Resource Implications There are no resource implications for Bromsgrove District Council.</p>		

Recommendation 9	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
That the regular monitoring of particulate air pollutants within the Bromsgrove District's four AQMAs is carried out by Worcestershire Regulatory Services.	Councillors Kit Taylor/ Margaret Sherrey	As soon as practicably possible once funding has been secured.
<p>Financial Implications Estimated £50-75,000 for purchase and installation of Automatic Analyser, estimated £3-8,000 annual service and maintenance costs, estimated data management & QA/QC costs £5-10,000 annually and estimated £2-3,000 annual cost of electricity/phone³. Estimated £5,000² annual WRS staff and mileage costs to calibrate and maintain equipment.</p> <p>Resource Implications Estimated WRS Officer resource (TSO x 3hrs a fortnight to calibrate and 20 miles @45p/mile each occasion).</p>		

CHAPTER 5 - Conclusion

Recommendation 10	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
That Bromsgrove District Council sends a letter to the relevant Government Minister urging him/her to accelerate efforts to address problems with the higher emission levels from HGVs.	Councillor Kit Taylor	To be sent immediately following approval of the recommendation.
<p>Financial Implications There are no financial implications arising from this recommendation.</p> <p>Resource Implications There are no additional resource implications.</p>		

Recommendation 11	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
That Bromsgrove District Council sends a letter to DEFRA urging it to review the role of those responsible for Air Quality.	Councillor Kit Taylor	To be sent immediately following approval of the recommendation.
<p>Financial Implications There are no financial implications arising from this recommendation.</p> <p>Resource Implications There are no additional resource implications.</p>		

Recommendation 12	Portfolio Holder	Completion Date
The Overview and Scrutiny Board consider launching a separate review of CO ₂ emissions in the District.	Councillor Mark Bullivant	To be included within the work programme immediately following approval of the recommendation.
<p>Financial Implications There are no financial implications arising from this recommendation.</p> <p>Resource Implications There are no additional resource implications.</p>		

THE TASK GROUP WISH TO HIGHLIGHT THE FOLLOWING:

The Task Group was aware that recommendations in respect of the following would not be appropriate; however, it would like to bring these to officers' attention for further consideration.

- The Task Group had considered recommendations in respect of a continuous slip road on the A38 north at Junction 1 of the M42 gyratory and part-time traffic lights also being introduced at this junction. However, the advice received from WCC and WRS was contradictory in its nature and the Task Group therefore agreed it would not be appropriate for this to be included within its report.

The Task Group would suggest that further consideration is given to this to clarify the position and the feasibility of the changes suggested.

- The Task Group noted that there were other specific actions which, though potentially capable of addressing air quality issues in the district, may not be suitable as a recommendation. This included the suggestion that signs could be installed at junctions in the four AQMAs urging drivers to turn off their engines at junctions and traffic lights in order to reduce air pollution in the vicinity.

The Task Group would suggest that the Air Quality Steering Group give consideration to the feasibility of this suggestion.

- During the course of its enquiries the Task Group were provided with information on the "Make Sundays Special" project which has been set up in Bristol by the current elected Mayor. The vision of this was "to create a greener city that promotes and improves health and wellbeing of all its citizens". This involved a part of the city centre being closed to traffic one Sunday a month, two such events have already taken place and been hailed as a success.

Whilst the Task Group appreciates that such a project would not be appropriate for Bromsgrove District it would suggest that consideration is given to this in other more suitable areas of the county, for example Worcester City.

INTRODUCTION/BACKGROUND INFORMATION

The Overview and Scrutiny Board received a presentation on the work of the Local Strategic Partnership at its meeting held on 22nd October 2012. Following this presentation the Board agreed at its following meeting, in November 2012, to set up a Task Group which would investigate the air quality issues in the District including revisiting the Air Quality Scrutiny Report which was prepared in December 2007.

Under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995 local authorities have a statutory duty to undertake periodic reviews of ambient air quality within their boundaries. The Council therefore has a statutory duty to review and assess air quality against national air quality standards and objectives. If any air quality objective is not likely to be met an Air Quality Management Area (AQMA) must be declared for the relevant pollutant.

At the time of the original report being published there was one AQMA within Bromsgrove District. Since that date a further 3 AQMAs have been declared. It is these 4 AQMAs which the Task Group has focused its work on, together with measures which could be taken to generally improve air quality.

For information the details of the AQMAs are:

Lickey End, Bromsgrove

Date of Detailed Assessment:	January 2001
Date of Declaration:	26 th July 2001
Date of Further Assessment:	September 2002

Redditch Road, Bromsgrove

Date of Detailed Assessment:	July 2009
Date of Declaration:	17 th February 2010
Date of Further Assessment:	March 2012

Kidderminster Road, Hagley

Date of Detailed Assessment:	July 2009
Date of Declaration:	17 th February 2010
Date of Further Assessment:	March 2012

Worcester Road, Bromsgrove

Date of Detailed Assessment:	July 2010
Date of Declaration:	24 th October 2011
Date of Further Assessment:	March 2012

The key objectives of the Task Group were to promote the understanding of air quality issues within the District, highlight progress being made by the Council and others to address the issue of poor air quality within the district and to make recommendations that would assist in making improvements to the environment and lives of residents.

(Full details of the Terms of Reference are available at Appendix 1 of this report.)

The Task Group has held a total of 13 meetings and interviewed numerous internal and external witnesses. The Task Group has also considered written evidence from a number of sources and considered information provided by Parish Councils and residents. The initial meeting of the Task Group took place on 4th December 2012 when Members considered the terms of reference and discussed in detail how it would carry out its investigation. The penultimate meeting of the Task Group took place on 8th August 2013 when Members formulated the recommendations which are now outlined within this report and the final meeting took place on 22nd August 2013 to discuss the draft report before submitting it to the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its September 2013 meeting.

CHAPTER 1 – REVIEW OF THE AIR QUALITY SCRUTINY REPORT DECEMBER 2007

One of the main areas of investigation, detailed in the Task Group's terms of reference, was to revisit the Air Quality Scrutiny Report prepared in 2007 (which had subsequently been reviewed in February 2009). Officers were tasked with providing updates on the implementation of all the recommendations which had originally been agreed by Cabinet on 9th January 2008. There had been 21 recommendations in the report one of which was rejected. At the review in February 2009 it was noted that 6 of the recommendations had been completed and no further work was required in respect of those, but the remaining 14 recommendations were either partially implemented or required ongoing work. The aim of the review was to ascertain whether that ongoing work had continued.

Officers were able to provide the Members with a comprehensive update on those 14 recommendations and following discussions Members requested that further action should be considered in respect of 3 of those recommendations, together with a refresh of a completed recommendation (No 8). The detailed wordings of those recommendations are recorded in Appendix 2. The reasoning behind the Task Group's decision is detailed below:

Recommendation 1 – Low Emission Zones (LEZs)

Initially, the Cabinet resolved that this recommendation be deferred until further information was available regarding the results of the scheme which was shortly to be introduced in London. However, Members of the former Scrutiny Steering Board questioned the decision and Cabinet reconsidered its response and in March 2008 agreed "that the relevant Portfolio Holder, in Conjunction with the Chairman of the Air Quality Task Group take the matter further with the appropriate officers at Worcestershire County Council (WCC)." The February 2009 update stated that the Executive Director, Partnerships and Projects had sent a letter to WCC's Highways Unit in April 2008 asking them to explore designation of roads as Low Emission Zones (LEZs), various reminders had been sent but a response remained outstanding.

When Officers reviewed this recommendation in January 2013 it appeared that this remained outstanding and the following response was received from WCC "*a limited amount of investigation work had been done however to date there are no resources available to fund the required detailed technical work and design work involved. Work will be required to understand what the impact on the wider highway network would be and to understand whether the introduction of a Low Emission Zone would achieve the required outcome.*"

A response was also received from the Senior Practitioner, Pollution at Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS), which stated "*WRS were not involved in the previous work on this matter; however LEZs are something that will be included in the Action Plan.*"

Upon receipt of the draft document for consultation, Air Quality Action Plan for Worcestershire, Members found that reference was made to LEZs. Although it is made clear in the Action Plan that LEZs have significant financial implications, reference is made to an LEZ having a higher cost-benefit in large urban areas and where there are a number of AQMAs including Bromsgrove. The Task Group therefore agreed that this should be given further consideration and supports the Air Quality Steering Group undertaking feasibility studies to assess whether LEZs would be a viable option in specific locations, as stated in the Action Plan.

Recommendation 7 – Town Centre Redevelopment

The Town Centre Redevelopment Steering Group (originally an LSP Theme Group) was requested to consider air pollution caused by traffic congestion when looking at redevelopment of the town. In February 2009 it was understood that the recommendation had been implemented and work was continuing, with various proposals submitted for improvements to specific road junctions and proposed changes to filtering arrangements and traffic management.

When Officers requested a further update in January 2013 the following responses were received; WCC *“it has at WCC level and was considered when (the) application was submitted. Subsequently a sum has been agreed between the developer and the local authorities as part of the process of the application.”* WRS responded that *“as WRS are not involved in either group, I can not comment further than saying that WRS are in communication with the policy and development control planners to make sure that air quality issues are high on their agenda.”*

The response received from WRS has led the Task Group to request that this recommendation be revisited and that a representative of WRS be included within the membership of the Town Centre Redevelopment Group.

Recommendation 8 – High Street and The Strand

Air Quality at this location was specifically mentioned as the original Task Group were informed that although it had not been declared as an AQMA, there were air quality issues in the vicinity of Davenal House, Birmingham Road, Bromsgrove. The recommendation made specific reference to reviewing the timing of the traffic signals and the monitoring of air quality.

The February 2009 update referred Members to the response in respect of recommendation 7 (as detailed above). In January 2013 WRS responded *“monitoring has been continuous at Davenal House since 2003. Recent conversations with the Planning Team indicate that alterations to the traffic lights are planned but do not believe this has been undertaken at this time”*.

The Task Group therefore request that the monitoring continues and if alterations to the traffic lights are deemed necessary this matter is finally addressed.

Recommendation 17 – Taxi Rank

The Licensing section was requested to remind taxi drivers not to leave their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at a taxi rank, the incentive being it would save fuel and that it was an offence to leave a vehicle running when not in the vehicle and any person doing so was at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice. In February 2009 Members were informed that, as agreed, a newsletter incorporating this information had been sent to all taxi drivers and operators in February 2008.

Officers passed on the following response from WRS to Members in respect of this recommendation as they were keen to ensure that the taxi drivers/operators received regular reminders in respect of this. *“Since the previous update, when a newsletter incorporating the message was sent to all taxi drivers and operators, there are no records that indicate the exercise has been repeated. The feasibility and effect of adoption of the Road Traffic Act to restrict such activity would be considered as part of the Action Plan.”*

The Task Group agreed that a requirement for repeat action on this by Licensing should be incorporated within the Air Quality Action Plan and reference is made within the draft to cars being the biggest source of roadside pollutants within some areas. It should also be stressed to the taxi operators/drivers that such action was an offence and that any person doing so was at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice.

It was noted that if this was to be included within the Action Plan it would need to be a general air pollution measure rather than specific to the AQMAs within Bromsgrove district as there are no taxi ranks within those AQMAs.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

Recommendation 1
<p>That further consideration be given to the implementation of the following approved recommendations, which remain outstanding, from the original report (full details are provided within the body of the report):</p> <p><u>Recommendation 1 – Low Emission Zones</u> Further consideration be given for LEZs to be included within the Air Quality Action Plan.</p> <p><u>Recommendation 7 – Town Centre Redevelopment</u> A representative from Worcestershire Regulatory Services to be included within the membership of the Town Centre Redevelopment Group.</p>

Recommendation 8 – High Street and The Strand

Although not declared as an AQMA the continued monitoring of the air quality at Davenal House should take place and consideration be given to alterations to the traffic lights.

Recommendation 17 – Taxi Rank

Regular reminders to taxi drivers in respect of leaving their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at a taxi rank.

CHAPTER 2 – THE ROLE OF WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES

As one of the key outcomes of the Task Group's terms of reference was to promote the understanding of air quality issues within the District Members agreed that it would be useful to ask residents for their views on air quality in general. With this in mind a press release was issued on 12th December 2012 asking residents to get in touch. In total 7 responses were received, predominantly from residents within the Hagley area. An email was also sent to all Parish Clerks asking for help by providing any information they had on the topic or if they were aware of any issues with air quality within their parish. The Task Group received 3 responses to this request.

The Task Group was also made aware of the Hagley Parish Air Quality Group who it was understood had carried out indepth investigations into air quality issues as there was an AQMA within the area and it had also carried out a local survey in respect of health problems residents suffered with air quality being the suspected cause (further details are provided within Chapter 4 of this report). Members of this group were invited to a meeting of the Task Group and provided details of their investigations and spoke at length of their concerns and discussed how they believed improvements to air quality could be made.

As Worcestershire Regulatory Services was responsible for monitoring air quality throughout the District, the Task Group was provided with evidence, both written and verbally, from the Senior Practitioner, Pollution WRS. Updates were provided in respect of those recommendations which had been approved and statistical information was provided in respect of the four AQMAs within the District. The Task Group discussed in detail with the Senior Practitioner, Pollution WRS its concern that there had been very little, if any, improvement in the air quality of those AQMAs and that it appeared that little or no action was being taken to address this. Three of the AQMAs had Action Plans in place which needed to be refreshed. Members were informed that, as required under legislation, WRS was in the process of producing an Air Quality Action Plan which would cover AQMAs within the County of Worcestershire. This was a total of 10 AQMAs (including the 4 within Bromsgrove) – 3 in Worcester City, 2 in Wyre Forest and 1 in Wychavon. The Task Group's initial reaction to the production of an overarching Action Plan was that each of the AQMAs would have very different needs and the document could become too big, impractical and difficult to use. This view was also shared by the Hagley Parish Air Quality Group during their discussions with Members as it was felt that the circumstances varied so much between each AQMA.

A Member of the Task Group informed it that during the previous 12 months he had been approached by WRS with a view to joining a Steering Group which he understood would contribute to the content of the Air Quality Action Plan. It was confirmed by Officers that this was best practice and DEFRA guidelines suggest that *"local authorities may wish to set up a steering group to take forward the development and implementation of an Action Plan."* It was also suggested that

the steering group could play a key role in formulating the annual Action Plan Progress Report. The Task Group was therefore disappointed to be informed that the Steering Group would not be in place until after the Air Quality Action Plan had been agreed.

The Senior Practitioner, Pollution WRS also provided the Task Group with general information about the role of WRS within the Planning process and the impact of developments of various types (including housing developments) on air quality and the advice that WRS would provide in order to mitigate any problems.

The Air Quality Action Plan went out to consultation in April 2013 and the Task Group took the opportunity to review this in detail and fed back their comments to WRS (a copy of the content of that letter is attached at Appendix 3). The Task Group Members agreed that the Action Plan was “unfocused” and did not have any real targets or timescales and that this was due to it covering 10 AQMAs all of which had very different needs. Many of the actions detailed in the Action Plan were generic and the Task Group questioned how WRS could raise awareness of air quality in order to successfully implement changes as detailed in those generic actions and measure their effectiveness. Members were also concerned that a large number of the actions would require a feasibility study before the cost, impact and effectiveness could be understood, so timescales and close monitoring would be imperative for these actions in order to ensure that those studies were carried out. It was agreed that the Action Plan had very few targets or measures with which to monitor any improvements in air quality. Both quantitative and qualitative targets and deadlines should be included in order to ensure that the Action Plan can be monitored to keep it “on track” or the appropriate officers held to account if this was not the case.

As previously stated in Chapter 1 in respect of Low Emission Zones, the Task Group agreed that although it is made clear in the Action Plan that LEZs have significant financial implications, reference is made to an LEZ having a higher cost-benefit in large urban areas and where there are a number of AQMAs including Bromsgrove. The Task Group supports the Air Quality Steering Group undertaking feasibility studies to assess whether LEZs would be a viable option in specific locations, as stated in the Action Plan and that these studies should be carried out as soon as possible for the Bromsgrove District.

In respect of the forming of a single Steering Group, Members also raised concerns as they believed that this would be unmanageable due to the geographical area and the number of authorities involved. The make up of such a Steering Group was also questioned, as again this could lead to difficulties in not only arranging convenient meetings but also in the number of people involved.

The Task Group agreed that as Bromsgrove District had the largest number of AQMAs not only should it have separate Air Quality Action Plans but also a Steering Group which would be dedicated to implementation of that Action Plan. A Bromsgrove Air Quality Steering Group would be more familiar with local

circumstances and could make good use of local knowledge. Again, this view was shared by the residents consulted by the Task Group during its investigations.

When considering all the points included in this section of the report the Task Group agreed that it was important that the actions within the Plan were monitored and reported back to each authority to ensure that sight was not lost of the importance of the Action Plan and Air Quality generally. In the case of Bromsgrove District Council the Task Group agreed that this could be done through regular updates being provided to the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

Recommendation 2

- | |
|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">(a) That separate Air Quality Action Plans be produced for the four AQMAs in Bromsgrove district in order to address the particular circumstances in each location.(b) That the Action Plans contain specific targets and detail projected timeframes and all actions should be implemented within those timescales. |
|---|

Recommendation 3

That a separate Air Quality Steering Group should be established in respect of the four AQMAs in Bromsgrove District.

Recommendation 4

That the Overview and Scrutiny Board be provided with regular progress reports from the Air Quality Steering Group.

During the course of its investigations the Task Group's attention was brought to various funding opportunities that were available to local authorities in respect of assistance in making improvements to air quality. In particular, Members noted that Bromsgrove District Council was eligible to apply to the DEFRA Air Quality Grant Programme. The aim of this programme was to support eligible capital expenditure by English local authorities on their air quality management duties under Part IV of the Environment Act 1995. Whilst it was noted that applications for the 2013/14 funding had now closed, Members were keen for this opportunity of funding to be explored in future years. The Task Group agreed that the feasibility studies needed in respect of Low Emission Zones and previously mentioned in Chapter 1, could be an ideal project to be carried out with the assistance of such funding.

The Task Group wished to stress the importance of accessing such grants in order to progress the improvement of air quality within the District as quickly and cost effectively as possible.

(For information Worcester City, Wychavon and Wyre Forest Councils were also listed on the Eligibility and Criteria Assessment list provided by DEFRA.)

WRS has confirmed that it proposes to apply for funding for specific measures as they are identified as relevant and appropriate and Defra advice would be sought on ensuring applications were considered as favourably as possible.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

Recommendation 5
<p>Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) applies for funding from the DEFRA Air Quality Grant Programme.</p> <p>If the first application is not successful the WRS should persist in submitting further applications in subsequent years.</p>

CHAPTER 3 – THE ROLE OF WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL

As the Task Group's investigations progressed it was apparent to it that many changes which needed to be made to improve air quality, not only in Bromsgrove District, but throughout the county, were reliant upon Worcestershire County Council (WCC). Those changes also came at a financial cost, which the Task Group appreciated would be difficult for WCC to cover in the current economic climate. However, after investigation the Members agreed that there were various options available to WCC which could be investigated in order to receive funding for particular projects. By working in partnership there could also be opportunities to receive grants for example towards updating bus fleets.

The Task Group understood that the Local Transport Boards (LTB) would provide funding for major transport schemes in local areas from April 2015. Membership of the Board in Worcestershire and the local criteria for funding remained to be confirmed at the time of writing this report. However, the confirmed allocated funding for the Worcestershire LTB was announced on 16th July 2013 and for the period 2015/16 to 2018/19 totalled £7.7million. There is no guarantee at this stage that the criteria would encompass a focus on air quality. However, as a number of the actions listed in the Draft Air Quality Action Plan would require significant funding (for example the introduction of Low Emission Zones) funding from the LTB could potentially assist with a number of the actions listed.

Reference throughout the investigations was made to public transport, not only to the service provided but also to the quality of the vehicles which were used. It was acknowledged that the age of a vehicle could have a significant impact on the emissions which it produced, which in turn impacted on the air quality. During an interview with the Transport Planning Officer WCC the Task Group was informed that measures taken by WCC to address air quality issues included promoting sustainable travel; developing the cycle network, improvements to the local bus network and influencing travel behaviour, particularly with a view to encouraging greater use of public transport. This view was also reiterated within the Draft Air Quality Action Plan when reference was made to Voluntary Bus Quality Partnerships, with a view, for example, to encouraging bus companies to improve emission performance of fleets through rolling vehicle replacement programmes and integrating bus services with rail networks and new developments.

Voluntary Bus Quality Partnerships are informal agreements between relevant bus operators and local authorities that are not enshrined in legislation. These partnerships are usually formed between a local authority and bus operator(s) and each party makes a commitment to improvements that will result in the enhancement of services within the area, whether it be through improvement to infrastructure or better vehicles.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

Recommendation 6

Worcestershire County Council applies for funding from the Worcestershire Local Transport Body in order to fund traffic management measures that will tackle air pollution in the Bromsgrove AQMAs.

Recommendation 7

Worcestershire County Council liaises with local bus operators to establish a local bus quality partnership in order to investigate the potential to update the bus fleets operating within Bromsgrove District.
--

CHAPTER 4 – HEALTH IMPLICATIONS

During its investigations the original Task Group had, in December 2007, held the view that poor air quality could have serious effects on people's health as it could trigger and exacerbate respiratory illnesses such as asthma. The Task Group received information from both the World Health Organization (WHO) and Defra where air pollution had been cited as an environmental risk to human health. In particular air pollution had been linked to respiratory illnesses and heart conditions. The current Task Group therefore requested current data from the Public Health Consultant, WCC in order to establish whether this was the case and whether there had been an increase within the district and in the AQMAs in particular.

The Public Health Consultant attended as a witness and provided Members with a report which covered hospital admissions for respiratory illness, broken down into the 4 AQMAs and covering 3 x 3 year periods (2004/05 – 2006/07, 2007/08 – 2009/10 and 2010/11 – 2012/13, together with average comparisons for both Bromsgrove and Worcestershire. This information was also broken down into specific Electoral Ward areas. It was noted that very few of the relevant Electoral Ward areas had higher admission rates than the Worcestershire average, the only exception being St Johns which fell within the Worcester Road AQMA and Charford which had postcodes which fell into both Worcester Road and Redditch Road AQMAs. However, Members were informed that caution needed to be taken as there could be a number of reasons as to why the respiratory disease admission rates were higher for example in areas of deprivation and lifestyle choices.

Although Members accepted that the evidence did not support their concerns they agreed that, as there were 4 AQMAs within Bromsgrove District and 10 throughout Worcestershire, it would be useful for a more in depth study to be carried out by the Health and Wellbeing Board. The Public Health Consultant informed Members that the Health and Wellbeing Board had consulted last year on priorities for the Joint Health and Wellbeing Strategy and air quality was not highlighted as an issue.

A Task Group meeting was also attended by representatives (a GP, a Parish Councillor and a local resident) from the Hagley Parish Air Quality Group and the Hagley Action Group, who had carried out a health survey in response to worries from some residents (around 4,000 homes had received "door stop" visits, the findings of which led to the survey) who were concerned about the effects of the AQMA on themselves and their children. The health survey was a study of 182 respondents based within the Hagley AQMA and the questions ranged from the types of symptoms suffered to how long the resident had lived in the area and whether they were smokers. The Group had carried out a great deal of research and had spoken to a health expert on air pollution at Kings College, London. Members were provided with a copy of that survey and a summary of the responses received. The representatives spoken about their concerns, the

potential worsening of the air quality and measures that they felt could lead to improvements.

Although accepting of the information provided by the Public Health Consultant, the Task Group agreed that the subject continued to be of concern to both Members and residents living in the vicinity of an AQMA. The Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), also a Member of the Task Group, suggested approaching HOSC requesting that it carry out a detailed review, particularly in light of further information which had been provided. This information was in respect of new evidence, which had recently been in the news and referred to two papers published by the Lancet which made reference to a link between levels of air pollution (particulates, sulphur dioxide, carbon monoxide and nitrogen dioxide) and hospitalization and death in patients with chronic heart failure. The units used for the levels of nitrogen dioxide in the paper were different from those used in Worcestershire so direct comparison with the data that had been provided would need expert interpretation. The second paper showed a significant association between exposure to particulates and the risk for adenocarcinoma of the lung (this is not the type of lung cancer associated with smoking) in European populations. Unfortunately the Task Group believed that the levels of particulates in the Council's AQMAs were not recorded and therefore it was not currently possible to check the levels.

It is appreciated by the Task Group Members that the cost of monitoring particulate air pollutants would be costly; however this could be a specific measure to which WRS could apply for funding as detailed in Recommendation 5 of Chapter 2 to this report.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

Recommendation 8

That the health implications of air pollution be the focus of a detailed review by Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC).
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Recommendation 9

That the regular monitoring of particulate air pollutants within the Bromsgrove District's four AQMAs is carried out by Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

CHAPTER 5 - CONCLUSION

Upon conclusion of its investigations there were two issues which were apparent to Members, both of which were outside of the Council's control and which could make a significant impact on air quality; these were pollution from HGVs and a clearer steer on responsibility for air quality within the District in order for actions to be taken to make improvements.

Whilst it was acknowledged that Air Quality was a worldwide problem and that although Bromsgrove had four Air Quality Management Areas, the largest number in Worcestershire, the Council was limited in the way it could make improvements. The Task Group agreed that this should not deter the Council from taking whatever actions it could to either make changes and/or raise awareness of the issue and its causes. It was understood that pollution from vehicles was a major contributor, in particular from HGVs, which had an impact on the District due to the road network, any changes to which were unfortunately outside of the Council's control. Whilst significant improvements to motor vehicle engines have been made in recent years and which have led to reduced emission levels, HGV improvements were long overdue. Members considered the best way in which to support and encourage such and it was agreed that the Council should write to the appropriate Government Minister requesting action be taken on this issue.

Throughout its investigations it was also apparent to the Task Group that, although the Council was responsible for air quality and the action plan in respect of Air Quality Management Areas, much of the work to address the problem was outside of the Council's control, thus making it difficult to implement changes, for example in respect of highways issues and improvements. It was clear from the evidence received that there was no "joined up" working on this subject and neither the Council nor Worcestershire County Council was able to take the lead role. Within the Draft Air Quality Action Plan it was in fact stated that *"It is generally recognised that although a Local Authority has the responsibility of managing the air quality in their areas they are unlikely to have direct control or capability to effect real reductions in pollution levels."* During an interview with the Senior Practitioner, Pollution at WRS the Task Group was informed that this was something which Defra would be reviewing and it was anticipated that more defined guidelines would be published. The Senior Practitioner, Pollution was however unable to confirm a timescale for this review.

It should also be noted that whilst under legislation, the Council was responsible for producing an Air Quality Action Plan for each Air Quality Management Area, there was no legal requirement to implement the Action Plan.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

Recommendation 10

That Bromsgrove District Council sends a letter to the relevant Government Minister urging him/her to accelerate efforts to address problems with the higher emission levels from HGVs with a copy of the letter also being sent to the local M.P. (<i>See Appendix 4 for suggested wording</i>).

Recommendation 11

That Bromsgrove District Council sends a letter to the relevant Government Minister responsible for DEFRA urging him/her to review the role of those responsible for Air Quality with a copy of the letter also being sent to the local M.P. (<i>See Appendix 4 for suggested wording</i>).

Finally, at an early stage within the investigation it became apparent to Members that the scope of the Task Group was large and it would be difficult to complete within the timescale allocated. At the meeting held on 9th January 2013 the Climate Change Manager raised concerns that consideration of information about CO₂ Emissions alongside data on the subject of air quality would be distracting and would require Members to dedicate a much longer timescale to complete the review. After discussions it was therefore agreed that the Task Group would concentrate on reviewing Air Quality with a recommendation that an investigation into CO₂ Emissions be included within the Overview & Scrutiny Board's Work Programme. The Task Group's terms of reference were amended and the Board informed at the meeting held on 25th February 2013.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

Recommendation 12

The Overview and Scrutiny Board consider launching a separate review of CO ₂ emissions in the District.
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Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY EXERCISE SCOPING CHECKLIST

This form is to assist Members to scope the overview and scrutiny exercise in a focused way and to identify the key issues it wishes to investigate.

- Topic: **Air Quality Task Group**

- Specific subject areas to be investigated:

To revisit the Air Quality Scrutiny report prepared in December 2007. This will include:

- Investigating whether the recommendations have been implemented successfully.
- The effect of poor air quality on residents within the District
- Progress made to date in improving air quality in the District.
- Future plans to improve air quality in the District.

- Possible key outcomes:

(i.e. please state what Members hope to achieve through this investigation):

- Promote the understanding of air quality issues within the district.
- Highlight progress being made by the Council and others to address the issues of poor air quality within the district.
- Make recommendations which would assist in making improvements to the environment and lives of residents within the district.

- Should the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) be invited to give evidence? **YES**

- Which officers should be invited to give evidence?

(Please state name of officer and/or job title)

Head of Regulatory Services, Head of Environmental Services
Environmental Health Team Representative
Climate Change Manager
Relevant Portfolio Holder
Relevant Ward Members
Parish Councillors

- Should any external witnesses be invited to give evidence? **YES**
If so, who and from which organisations?

Representatives from:
Highways Agency, Worcestershire County Council's Transport Team, Worcestershire Acute Health Trust.

- What key documents/data/reports will be required?

Air Quality Scrutiny Report (December 2007)
Air Quality a Strategy for Hereford and Worcestershire (November 2008)
Air Quality Progress Report 2010: Bromsgrove District Council (May 2010)
WCC Transport & Air Quality Policy
Health Profile for Bromsgrove district

- Is it anticipated that any site visits will be required? **YES ***
If so, where should members visit?

Possibly – may become more apparent as the investigation is carried out.

- Should a period of public consultation form part of the exercise? **NO**
If so, on what should the public be consulted?

(Please Note: A separate press release requesting general comments/suggestions from the public will be issued in the normal way at the beginning of the investigation.)

- Have other authorities carried out similar overview and scrutiny exercises? **NO***
If so, which authorities?

Not that we are aware of.

- Will the investigation cross the District boundary? **NO***
If so, should any other authorities be invited to participate? **NO***
If yes, please state which authorities:

- Would it be appropriate to co-opt anyone on to the Task Group/Board whilst the Overview and Scrutiny exercise is being carried out? **NO***
If so, who and from which organisations?

- What do you anticipate the timetable will be for the Overview and Scrutiny exercise?

It is anticipated that this review could be completed in a maximum of five months with a draft report being presented to the Board meeting to be held on 17th June 2013.

FULL WORDING OF RECOMMENDATIONS FROM DECEMBER 2007

AS DETAILED IN RECOMMENDATION 1 OF THIS REPORT

Recommendation 1 – Low Emission Zones

This Council considers applying to Worcestershire County Council for certain roads to be made low emission zone roads therefore limiting access to certain types of vehicles which reduce air quality. Specifically, the Task Group believe the following roads/areas should be low emission due to high NO₂ levels:

- Approximately a 2 mile radius around Bromgrove town centre
- A38 Bypass in Rubery
- All roads in Rubery with a weight restriction
- A456 in Hagley
- A491 in Hagley

Recommendation 7 – Town Centre Redevelopment

The Town Centre Redevelopment Steering Group (LSP Theme Group) be requested to consider air pollution caused by traffic congestion when looking at redeveloping the town. This would include the Group looking at the possibilities of having vehicle access to The Strand from Birmingham Road (by Davenal House) and investigate, in partnership with Worcestershire County Council Highway's, whether or not it might help decrease traffic congestion and therefore lower the air pollution at this location which has high NO₂ levels.

Recommendation 8 – High Street and The Strand

- (a) Request that Worcestershire County Council review the timing of the traffic signals located at the top end of the High Street by The Strand with a view to reducing the build up of standing traffic;
- (b) If (a) is agreed and County Council decide to amend the timing of the traffic signals, request that they monitor the traffic congestion before and after making the alteration to measure whether the action has had a positive impact; and
- (c) If (a) is agreed, request Environmental Health monitor air quality around Davenal House, Birmingham Road before and after the alteration to measure whether it has helped improve air quality (which is known to be poor at this location).

Recommendation 17 – Taxi Rank

The Licensing Section be requested to remind taxi drivers not to leave their engines running whilst waiting for the next fare at a taxi rank. As an incentive to change their behaviour, it should be pointed out that (a) it will save fuel; and (b) it is an offence to leave a vehicle running when not in the vehicle and any person doing so is at risk of receiving a fixed penalty notice. This information could be included in a newsletter for example.

Response from Task Group to WRS Air Quality Action Plan Consultation
27th June 2013

I have been asked to respond to the Air Quality Action Plan consultation on behalf of the Air Quality Task Group which has been set up by the Overview & Scrutiny Board at Bromsgrove District Council. Where an AQMA is in a specific Ward the relevant Councillor will also respond to the consultation individually.

The Task Group has held discussions with Mark Cox – Senior Practitioner, Pollution WRS and Andy Ferguson, Central Operations Team Manager, WRS and has expressed its concern over a number of issues in respect of air quality in Bromsgrove District. Some of the areas that have been discussed are detailed below, together with other areas the Task Group has considered at its meetings:

- Little or no improvement to air quality appears to have been made since the implementation of three of the AQMAs (and Action Plans) in Bromsgrove.
- That although actions were being taken these appeared not to be actually addressing the problem, only mitigating its effects.
- That the Action Plan previously developed for the AQMAs in the District did not result in tangible improvements in those areas and the concern is that this will be the case with the latest action plan.
- That air quality did not appear to be a priority in respect of strategic planning, planning applications and the town centre regeneration programme.
- Improvements to public transport, including its availability and the types of vehicles used.
- Members believe the action plan is “unfocused” and does not have any targets or timescales. This is due to it covering 10 AQMAs all of which have different needs. This should have been broken down into more specific areas and as Bromsgrove has the greatest number then it may have been more appropriate for it to have a separate Action Plan.
- How WRS could raise awareness of air quality and the successful implementation of changes as detailed in the generic actions and the effectiveness of those actions.
- Clarification on whether the Steering Group is a single steering group for all 10 Worcestershire AQMAs? If so, Members believe that this would be unmanageable due to the geographical area and as Bromsgrove has the largest number of AQMAs it would be appropriate for a Steering Group to be set up specifically for the District.
- Why the decision has been made to form a steering group after the Action Plan consultation rather than before and therefore allowing the group to assist with the development of it.

Recommendation 10 - Suggested Wording for Transport Minister Letter

Bromsgrove District Council holds the unfortunate position of being responsible for four Air Quality Management Areas. Following the completion of its investigations, the Overview and Scrutiny Board Air Quality Task Group, which was set up to investigate the effect of poor air quality on residents and actions which the Council could take to improve air quality, has brought to the Council's attention information which shows that HGVs are the largest source of pollution within one of these AQMAs.

Whilst excellent progress has been made in the manufacture and use of cleaner motor vehicles, HGVs are sadly falling behind with this development. The Council therefore urges you to take action in order to ensure that this problem is addressed at a national level. The Council would also urge you to investigate actions that could be taken to enable more large vehicles to be fuelled by alternative fuels such as methane.

In a report commissioned by the Road Transport Association (RTA) it states that operators of national heavy goods vehicle fleets are considering wider use of natural gas powered vehicles to help achieve operational efficiencies and reduce greenhouse gas emissions, in order to provide the necessary confidence in making these investments Government need to support the development of national refueling infrastructure, provide stability in future duty rates for road gas fuel and work with vehicle operators to understand the barriers to wider uptake and work with the operators to remove those barriers. This Council supports the RTA in this request and would ask that the Government not introduce punitive tax measures and encourage RTA members to switch to cleaner fuels.

Recommendation 11 – Suggested Wording for Defra Letter

Bromsgrove District Council holds the unfortunate position of being responsible for four Air Quality Management Areas. Following the completion of its investigations, the Overview and Scrutiny Board Air Quality Task Group, which was set up to investigate the effect of poor air quality on residents and actions which the Council could take to improve air quality, has brought to the Council's attention the need for further clarification to be provided on responsibility for tackling air quality.

Following the findings of this investigation the Council would urge DEFRA to review its guidelines in respect of the lead authority for air quality as it has become apparent to this Council that although it is responsible for air quality the majority of actions which need to be put in place to make improvements to this come under the remit of the County Council, thus limiting the actions that this Council can take to make improvements. A clearer steer on the role of the lead authority, which this Council strongly believes should be the County Council, for air quality would enable work to be carried forward more effectively and ensure that appropriate action is taken where necessary.

DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

As there was an Air Quality Management Area in the ward of the majority of Members of the Task Group it was agreed that it was not necessary to declare this as an interest at the meetings.

The following interest was also declared during the Task Group's investigation:

Councillor	Interest Declared
Councillor L. Mallett <i>(Pecuniary disclosable interest)</i>	Employed by the British Heart Foundation. (The British Heart Foundation had provided funding for research, the details of which were provided to Members at the meeting held on 18th July and further discussed on 8th August 2013.)
Councillors S. Colella, L. Mallett and S. Shannon	Wished it to be noted that they had already approached WRS with a view to joining the Air Quality Steering Group.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Task Group wishes to thank the Democratic Services Officers, Amanda Scarce and Jess Bayley for their support throughout the Task Group's investigations.

Thanks also go to all those Ward Councillors, Parish Councils and residents who took the time to respond to requests for information.

WITNESSES

The Task Group considered evidence from the following sources before making its recommendations:

Internal Witnesses:

Ruth Bamford – Head of Planning and Regeneration
Mike Dunphy – Strategic Planning Manager
Ceridwen John – Climate Change Manager

Worcestershire Regulatory Services:

Mark Cox – Senior Practitioner (Pollution)
Andy Ferguson – Central Operations Team Manager

Councillors:

Councillor Kit Taylor – Portfolio Holder for Planning, Core Strategy & Regulatory Services

External Witnesses:

Liz Altay – Public Health Consultant, Worcestershire County Council
David Balme – Transport Planning Officer, Worcestershire County Council
Steve Harrison – Transport Strategy & Policy Team Leader,
Worcestershire County Council
Sally Everest – Network Control Manager, Worcestershire County Council
Representatives from Hagley Parish Air Quality Group (Dr. Steve Pannell,
Fran Evans, Parish Councillor Paul Johnson)

KEY DOCUMENTS

Air Quality Scrutiny Report December 2007
Overview Board – Air Quality Review February 2009
Worcestershire Regulatory Services Air Quality Action Plan for Worcestershire
(Draft Document for Consultation April 2013)
DEFRA Local Air Quality Management Guidance February 2009

Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

Bromsgrove District Council, The Council House, Burcot Lane,
Bromsgrove, Worcestershire B60 1AA

Telephone: 901527) 881288

Email: scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD 16th September 2013

ATRIX OUTREACH WORK TASK GROUP

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor M. J. A. Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Not at this stage
Relevant Head of Service	John Godwin – Head of Leisure and Cultural Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	Not at this stage
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 At the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 15th July 2013, the Artrix Outreach Work Task Group was established, with Councillor S. P. Shannon being appointed as Chairman.
- 1.2 As agreed Members (with the exception of Members of the Cabinet and members of the Artrix Operating Board) were contacted, requesting that anyone who had an interest in becoming a Member of the Task Group contact the relevant officer within a set timescale.
- 1.3 Group Leaders were also informed of the establishment of the new Task Group.
- 1.4 Nine Councillors have shown an interest in joining the Task Group. The Overview and Scrutiny Board Inquiry/Task Group Guidelines (approved by the Board at its meeting held on 1st March 2011) recommend that task groups must be at least 4 but no more than 7 Members (including the Chairman). It is at the Board's discretion as to whether the nine Councillors who have shown interest in the Task Group are appointed Members or alternatively, agree which of the following Members be appointed:-

Councillors B. T. Cooper, R. J. Deeming, S. J. Dudley, P. M. McDonald, L. C. R. Mallett, E. M. Shannon, R. J. Shannon, C. R. Surrell and P. J. Whittaker.
- 1.5 Members should note that Members of a Task Group receive a single payment of £126, whilst the Chairman of a Task Group receives a single payment of £252. This would give a total cost of £1,386.
- 1.6 Members are requested to consider in detail the terms of reference (see Appendix 1 'specific subject areas to be investigated') so as to ensure the Board is clear as to what they expect the Task Group to achieve. The Board can make amendments to the terms of reference if it wishes. Please note that the Task Group members, at the first meeting, will also be given the opportunity to discuss the terms of

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD 16th September 2013

reference. However, should they wish to make any significant changes, this would first need to be approved by the Board.

- 1.7 Members are reminded that when setting a timescale for a Task Group, it is usually expected that a Task Group will conclude its investigations within four to six months from the date of the first Task Group meeting. However, the Board can decide that certain topics require more time to ensure complex issues are properly scrutinised.
- 1.8 It is vital that appropriate officer support is provided to help ensure an effective investigation is undertaken leading to strong recommendations. Taking this into consideration, it is suggested that the Task Group commences its investigation as soon as officer support is available.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Members are requested to:

- (a) consider and agree the membership of the Task Group
- (b) consider and agree the terms of reference of the Artrix Outreach Work Task Group (see attached Overview and Scrutiny Exercise Scoping Checklist at Appendix 1);
- (c) decide upon the length of time the Task Group will have to carry out its investigations (Task Groups are normally expected to conclude their investigations within six months from the date of the first meeting); and
- (d) request the Task Group to commence its investigation as soon as possible.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications directly relating to this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 There are no legal implications directly relating to this report.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.3 None for the purpose of this report.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD 16th September 2013

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.4 There are no implications directly relating to customer/equality and diversity within this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 None for the purpose of this report.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Overview and Scrutiny Exercise Scoping Checklist. **(TO FOLLOW)**

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. KEY

None

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Tel: 01527 881443

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CABINET LEADER'S

WORK PROGRAMME

1 OCTOBER 2013 TO 31 JANUARY 2014

(published as at 3 September 2013)

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.

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)

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

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
Statement of Accounts 2012/13	Cabinet (recommendation to Council)	25 September 2013	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer Resources) – S151 Officer	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer 01527 881400
County Air Quality Action Plan	Cabinet	2 October 2013	Report of the Head of Regulatory Services	Mark Cox, Senior Practitioner, Pollution 01527 881392
Capital Programme – Bromsgrove Town Centre , Public Realm Improvements	Cabinet (May be a recommendation to Council)	2 October 2013	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 Officer	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S 151 Officer 01527 881400
Bromsgrove Cemetery – Toilets Refurbishment	Cabinet (May be a recommendation to Council)	2 October 2013	Report of the Head of Environmental Services	Guy Revans (Head of Environmental Services) 01527 64252 ext 3292
Assistive Technology – Future Working with Worcestershire Telecare	Cabinet	2 October 2013	Report of the Acting Head of Community Services	Judith Willis, Acting Head of Community Services 01527 64252 ext 3348
Review of Policy for the Allocation of Rural Affordable Housing developed under “Exception Site” policy	Cabinet	2 October 2013	Report of the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive	Derek Allen/Amanda Glennie Strategic Housing 01527 881269

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
Air Quality Task Group Report	Cabinet	2 October 2013	Report of the Overview and Scrutiny Board	Sheena Jones, Democratic Services Manager 01527 548240
The Dodford Inn- Application to be included on the Asset of Community Value Register	Cabinet	2 October 2013	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – Section 151 Officer	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director (Finance and Resources) – S151 officer 01527 881400
Membership of Improvement and Efficiency Social Enterprise	Cabinet	2 October 2013	Report of the Chief Executive	Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive 01527 881484
Homelessness Grant on schemes funded 2012/13 and proposed funding 2014/15	Cabinet	4 December 2013	Report of the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive	Derek Allen/Amanda Glennie Strategic Housing 01527 881269
Homelessness Grant Policy	Cabinet	4 December 2013	Report of the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive	Derek Allen/Amanda Glennie Strategic Housing 01527 881269
Playing Pitch Strategy	Cabinet	4 December 2013	Report of the Head of Leisure and Culture	Karl Stokes, Parks and Green Spaces Services Manager 01527 64252 ext 3377

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- 1 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 15th JULY 2013

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
Item 7 – Youth Provision Task Group Draft Final Report	The Board considered the Youth Provision Task Group's draft final report.	The following action was agreed: That officers discuss with the Communications Manager the possibility of attaching the information gather to the Council's website.	Democratic Services Officer	As soon as possible.	
<i>There were no actions arising from the meeting held on 22nd April 2013</i>					
O/S Meeting held on 26th March 2013					
Item 6 – Hardship Fund Payments & Criteria	The Board received a presentation from the Benefits Services Manager.	The following action was agreed: (a) Clarification on the age range for care leavers eligible for this grant. (b) A briefing on the Essential Living Fund to be made available to all Members.	The Executive Director, Finance and Resources Democratic Services Officer in conjunction with the Executive Director, Finance and Resources.	As soon as possible. As soon as possible.	
Item 7 – Quarter 3 Finance Monitoring Report	The Board considered the Finance Monitoring Report which details the Council's financial position for the period October – December 2012	The following actions were agreed: (a) That the Board receive an explanation as to the cause of delay in the work on the	The Head of Environmental Services.	As soon as possible.	Emailed to Members 13/5/13

- 2 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 15th JULY 2013

		Cemetery Toilets. (b) An update on how the £200,000 carried forward by Community Services for 2013/14 for affordable housing programme with BDHT, would be utilised. (c) A briefing note to be provided to Members in respect of the shortfall in income for Planning and Regeneration Services, due to lower than anticipated revenue for planning applications and land charges.	The Head of Community Services. The Head of Planning and Regeneration	As soon as possible. As soon as possible.	Emailed to Members 03/05/13
O/S meeting held on 25th February 2013					
Item 4 – CCTV Code of Practice	The Board considered the CCTV Code of Practice.	The following action was agreed: That the Board receive a report on the revised Code of Practice for consideration and comment.	CCTV and Lifeline Manager	As soon as available.	
Item 6 – Homelessness Grants 2012/13 Update	The Board considered the briefing paper in respect of Homelessness Grants 2012/13	(c) Estimated costs and earmarked reserves in respect of the spare room subsidy for 2013/14 and 2014/15	The Executive Director, Finance and Resources	As soon as possible.	

- 3 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 15th JULY 2013

Item 8 – Quarter 3 Sickness Absence Performance Health Report	The Board considered the Quarter 3 Sickness Absence Performance Health Report	The following actions were agreed: (a) the report to include the number of days for each department equated against the number of staff within that department. (b) The report to include the number of absences in respect of such things as T.A. Service and Jury Service.	The Head of Finance and Resources	Quarter 4 Sickness Absence Performance Health Report	
O/S from meeting held on 17th December 2012					
Quarter 2 Finance Monitoring Report age 119	The Board considered the Finance Monitoring Report which details the Council's financial position for the period July – September 2012,	The following actions were agreed: a) The inclusion of any cost for bed and breakfast accommodation as a separate item in future reports.	Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.	To be included in the Quarter 3 Report.	
Quarter 2 Write Off of Debts Report	The Board considered the Quarter 2 Write Off of Debts Report for the period July – September 2012.	The following actions were agreed: a) In respect of write off of Sundry Debtors, Members requested that a breakdown to include the number of debtors and transactions be included in future reports. b) In respect of the aged	Director of Finance and Corporate Resources.	To be included in the Quarter 3 Report.	As soon as

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		debt profile, Members requested comparative data for previous years.	and Corporate Resources	possible.	
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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

WORK PROGRAMME

2013-14

All meetings commence at 6.00 p.m. in the Committee Room unless otherwise stated.

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
16th September 2013	Presentation - Update on Town Centre Regeneration and Public Realm Improvements	Requested at meeting on 15 th July 2013
	Quarter 1 Finance Monitoring Report	
	Quarter 4 Sickness Absence Performance and Health Report	
	Making Experiences Count Quarter 1 Report	
	Air Quality Task Group Draft Report	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	WRS Joint Scrutiny Exercise – Verbal Update	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Board – Verbal Update	
	Action List	
	Work Programme	
14th October 2013	Quarter 1 Sickness Absence Performance and Health Report	
	Cabinet Response to the Youth Provision Task Group Report	
	Planning Policy Task Group – 12 month Review	
	Quarter 1 Write Off of Debts Report	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	WRS Joint Scrutiny Exercise – Verbal Update	

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
18th November 2013	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Board – Verbal Update	
	Action List	
	Work Programme	
	Update report on the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership	
	Quarters 1 & 2 Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Report	
	WRS Joint Scrutiny Exercise – Verbal Update	
	Cabinet Response to Air Quality Task Group Report	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Board – Verbal Update	
16th December 2013	Action List	
	Work Programme	
	Quarter 2 Finance Monitoring Report	
	Quarter 2 Write Off of Debts Report	
	Quarter 2 Sickness Absence Performance & Health Report	
	Making Experiences Count Quarter 2 Report	
	WRS Joint Scrutiny – Verbal Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Board – Verbal Update	
20th January 2014	Action List	
	Work Programme	
	Quarter 3 Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Report	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Board – Verbal Update	
24th February 2014	Action List	
	Work Programme	
	Quarter 3 Sickness Absence Performance & Health Report	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Board – Verbal Update	
	Action List	

Date of Meeting	Subject	Other Information
	Work Programme	
24th March 2014	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Board – Verbal Update	
	Quarter 3 Finance Monitoring Report	
	Quarter 3 Write Off of Debts Report	
	Making Experiences Count Quarter 3 Report	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	Work Programme	
14th April 2014	Quarter 4 Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Report	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Board – Verbal Update	
	Action List	
	Work Programme	

Scrutiny of Crime & Disorder Partnership Meeting Dates

18th November 2013

Provisional Informal Budget Briefings 5.30 p.m. (Private)

2nd December 2013

7th January 2014

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

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TASK GROUP/INQUIRY REVIEWS 2013-14

Task Group	Date of Review
Planning Policy Task Group	September 2013
Youth Provision Task Group	September 2014
Air Quality Task Group	October 2014