



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY 5TH JUNE 2013
AT 6.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

MEMBERS: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP (Deputy Leader), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, M. A. Bullivant, C. B. Taylor and M. J. A. Webb

AGENDA

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd April 2013 (Pages 1 - 4)
4. Minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 26th March and 22nd April 2013 (Pages 5 - 42)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
5. Minutes of the meeting of the Shared Services Board held on 15th April 2013 (Pages 43 - 46)
 - (a) To receive and note the minutes;
 - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
6. Demonstration of Corporate Dashboard Pilot (Policy Team)
7. The Green Deal (Pages 47 - 50)

8. Financial Reserves Statement 2013 (Pages 51 - 60)
9. 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
10. To consider, and if considered appropriate, to pass the following resolution to exclude the public from the meeting during the consideration of item(s) of business containing exempt information:-

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

<u>Item No.</u>	<u>Paragraph(s)</u>	
11	1 and 4	"

11. Restructure Enabling Heads of Service (Pages 61 - 76)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

28th May 2013



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- Meeting Agendas
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Agenda Item 3

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 3RD APRIL 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors R. Hollingworth (Leader), Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP (Deputy Leader), Dr. D. W. P. Booth JP, M. A. Bullivant and C. B. Taylor

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Ms. C. Flanagan, Mr. D. Allen, Ms. H. Mole, Ms. A. Glennie and Ms. R. Cole

128/12 APOLOGIES

An apology for absence was received from Councillor M. J. A. Webb.

129/12 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST

No declarations of interest were received.

130/12 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th March 2013 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

131/12 WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee held on 21st February 2013 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

132/12 AUDIT BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Audit Board held on 14th March 2013 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be noted.

133/12 DISCHARGING THE HOMELESSNESS DUTY IN THE PRIVATE RENTED SECTOR POLICY

The Cabinet considered a report which referred to the power under the Localism Act 2011, previously adopted by the Authority, to discharge the main

homelessness duty by making an offer of private rented accommodation. The main purpose of the report was to enable Members to consider a detailed policy to allow for the implementation of this decision.

Members were reminded that the option of utilising the private sector by way of offering private rented accommodation, with a minimum twelve month assured shorthold tenancy to those persons presenting as homeless would enable this Authority to accommodate people more easily. Whilst the Authority would continue to have the option of placing households in social housing, the use of suitable private rented accommodation would assist with minimising the use of temporary accommodation such as Bed and Breakfast.

The Strategic Housing Manager and the Strategic Housing and Enabling Officer referred to the amended draft policy which had been developed in consultation with partners and stakeholders. Paragraphs 4.1 and 4.2 of the section "Selecting Households for Properties" had been amended to give officers sufficient flexibility in allocating properties which had been adapted and therefore met the needs of a particular household, or where there was housing debt.

Members noted that officers would need to continue to work closely to develop links with local private Landlords to encourage a supply of suitable and affordable properties with the required minimum twelve month tenancies. In addition officers would be undertaking inspections of the prospective properties to ensure they were suitable in terms of condition and location and complied with all relevant legislation. The policy proposed that all properties be equipped with carbon monoxide alarms to be funded by this Authority.

It was recognised that properties would also need to be assessed to ensure they were affordable. Support in relation to debt and finance management would be available to prospective tenants to minimise the possibility of economic difficulties arising.

It was noted that whilst the majority of properties to be offered would be within the Bromsgrove District, there would be some households with strong connections to neighbouring areas such as Birmingham or Halesowen and therefore in some cases it would be more appropriate to offer accommodation in these locations.

Members recognised that in the current economic climate and in view of the impact of recent and forthcoming changes in Welfare legislation, there was a need for new approaches to be developed in order to address any potential increase in homelessness and were supportive of the new policy. It was noted it was intended to review the policy after a period of twelve months.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Policy to Discharge the Homelessness Duty into the Private Rented Sector attached as an appendix to the report be approved; and
- (b) that the policy be reviewed after a period of twelve months.

134/12 **AMENDMENT TO FEES AND CHARGES FOR BURCOT HOSTEL**

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposed revised set of fees and charges in relation to Burcot Hostel for 2013/2014. This was required as the fees and charges included in the previous report had been based on an incorrect figure.

RESOLVED that the revised fees and charges in relation to Burcot Hostel as set out in the report be approved.

135/12 **PRESENTATION ON TRANSFORMATION WORK AND SYSTEMS THINKING**

The Head of Business Transformation and the Transformation Manager gave a brief presentation on Systems Thinking and reminded Cabinet of the approach which had been taken to improving services.

It was stressed that the approach supported the review of services as a whole rather than specific functions. Systems thinking would be the basis for all future service reviews and improvements to the Council's services. It was vital to understand what Customers required from the service and to gain understanding of how the service works at present and to redesign changes based on this knowledge.

It was felt that it was very important that Members had a fuller understanding of Systems Thinking and the processes involved in Transformation of services. Portfolio Holders in particular had an important role to play and some Members had already participated in practical sessions and attended update sessions.

There was discussion on how Members could become engaged with the process and it was felt that a range of opportunities would be appropriate as some Members would want to become more involved than others.

In particular it was felt that it would be useful if Members could see how the approach was working in practice and perhaps work through some real life scenarios and processes.

Arising from the discussion the Head of Business Transformation undertook to develop a programme to include a range of opportunities to enable Members to become more aware of and involved in Systems Thinking and Transformation. It was recognised it was important for the Political Group Leaders to take the issue back to their Groups and to encourage Member discussion and participation.

The Leader thanked the officers for the useful presentation.

136/12 **ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE - NOMINATION**

The Cabinet considered a report on a request received from Catshill Parish Council to support the listing of Catshill Library, Barley Mow Lane, Catshill as an Asset of Community Value. It was noted that the Library building was owned by Worcestershire County Council and was currently vacant.

It was reported that the Ward Councillors and the County Council had been consulted and had no objection to the asset being placed on the register. It was noted that the final decision in relation to the listing of an asset was delegated to the Head of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED that the listing of Catshill Library as an Asset of Community Value be supported.

The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

TUESDAY, 26TH MARCH 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. Lammas (Chairman), R. A. Clarke (Vice-Chairman), C. J. Bloore, Dr. B. T. Cooper, Mrs. R. L. Dent, Mrs. J. M. L. A. Griffiths, R. J. Laight, P. M. McDonald, S. P. Shannon, L. J. Turner and C. R. Scurrall (Substitute)

Observers: Councillors M. A. Bullivant and Mrs. M. A. Sherrey JP

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. A. De Warr, Mr. M. Hanwell, Mr. D. Taylor, Ms. J. Bayley and Ms. A. Scarce

100/12 **ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN**

RESOLVED that

- (a) Councillor P. Lammas was elected as Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board for the remainder of the municipal year; and
- (b) Councillor R. A. Clarke was elected Vice-Chairman for the remainder of the municipal year.

101/12 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. S. Brogan, K. A. Grant-Pearce and Mrs C. J. Spencer.

102/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

There were no declarations of interest or whipping arrangements.

103/12 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 25th February 2013 were submitted.

Concerns were expressed about the inclusion of the term “bedroom tax” in the minutes, which had been discussed by Members when considering an update on homelessness grants. Members commented that “spare room subsidy” was a more appropriate term and agreed that future references to this process in minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board should use this title.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

104/12 **TELEPHONY PROBLEMS - PRESENTATION FROM HEAD OF CUSTOMER SERVICES**

The Board received a presentation from the Head of Customer Service on the subject of the telephony problems that had been experienced by Bromsgrove District Council's Customer Service Centre in October 2012 (Appendix A).

Members also discussed the following issues in detail:

- The cause of the telephony problems which occurred in October 2012 had never been identified. The potential to identify the problem had been complicated by the fact that multiple organisations were involved with the system including: Bromsgrove District Council, Worcestershire County Council, British Telecom and Vodaphone.
- The Cisco Voice telephone system technology utilised by Bromsgrove District Council was 13 years old. This aging equipment, which underpinned the Worcestershire Hub Service in the district, would need to be updated at a future date.
- Officers had originally been advised that in the event of telephony problems, it would be relatively easy to achieve a switchover to a system utilised by another partner in the Worcestershire Hub. Unfortunately, the temporary switchover to Redditch Borough Council's system had not been straight forward and the Council had required assistance from British Telecom.
- The Council's risk management procedures and Business Continuity Plan had worked well and enabled Officers to continue to provide a service to local customers.
- Further problems with the telephony system had been experienced in March 2013. The Council had learned from previous difficulties and had resolved the problem quickly.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that Community Service Centre staff working at Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council be thanked for their response to the problems with the telephony system and for the service they provided during that period; and
- (b) that the report be noted.

105/12 **HARDSHIP FUND PAYMENTS AND CRITERIA - PRESENTATION**

The Board received a presentation from the Benefits Services Manager on the subject of the Essential Living Fund (Appendix B).

Members were advised that the Essential Living Fund had replaced community care grants and crisis loans. The fund had been allocated by the Government to the County Council in two-tier authority areas such as Worcestershire and was due to come into effect from 1st April 2013. However, delivery of the process in the district had been delegated to Bromsgrove District Council.

Local knowledge and accessibility would underpin management of the fund by the Council. As part of this process Officers would be taking into account applicants' eligibility to apply for other local grants and benefits when determining whether to provide support to an individual using the Essential Living Fund.

During the course of considering this item Members discussed the following points in detail:

- To ensure funding was used to provide the services required by recipients an emphasis would be placed on providing goods rather than cash.
- Members commented that there were various grants available at the local level. It would take time to identify all of these grants and to clarify the eligibility criteria.
- Young people leaving care were entitled to apply for a number of grants. This included a grant to purchase white goods (the Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Resources to clarify the age range for care leavers eligible to apply for this grant).
- A number of Parish Councils provided endowment and charitable funding to people in need. Members suggested that all Parish Councils in the district should be contacted to enable the Council to identify support available to residents at the parish level.
- The potential impact of the spare room subsidy on local families was discussed. Some of the residents affected by the subsidy would be entitled to access a hardship fund, though the support required would be provided on a case by case basis.
- Concerns were expressed with regard to the potential impact that the spare room subsidy could have on foster parents who cared for more than one child at a time. These carers were more likely to have multiple rooms for siblings from the same family to use (and which would not always be in use) and Members were keen to ensure that children remained with their siblings wherever possible. It was understood that there was 12 foster parents in Worcestershire which could be affected, but there was some uncertainty as to whether any were based in the District.
- The amount of funding allocated to the Essential Living Fund was equivalent to the level of funding that had been allocated to crisis loans in 2006 (£101,000). There was the potential that, if there was high demand for assistance using the fund, the budget would be spent before the end of the financial year. Officers would be monitoring expenditure and would report to Cabinet if it appeared likely that this would occur.
- The Board noted that the introduction of the fund would have implications for residents living in the district and Members would need to be familiar with the subject. A briefing on the Essential Living Fund for all Members of the Council was discussed and it was agreed this would be set up in the near future.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

The Executive Director for Finance and Corporate Resources introduced the report, which covered the period April – December 2012. The following salient points were discussed in detail:

- Expenditure by the end of December 2012 had exceeded expectations for the period. To address this Heads of Service had been tasked with ensuring that spending was reduced in the first three months of 2013.
- £2.032 million had been saved in spending on the Council's capital budget during the period.
- Funding on the public realm works in the town centre would be carried forward to 2013/14. It was understood that the work on the new branch of Sainsbury's supermarket, as part of the regeneration programme, would not begin until the Co-operative's lease on the building had ended.
- The delayed works to the cemetery toilets were discussed by Members and it was commented that procurement issues had impacted on delivery of the project. (The Head of Environmental Services to provide an explanation for the causes of this delay).
- Members noted that £200,000 had been carried forward by Community Services to 2013/14 for the affordable housing programme with BDHT. (The Head of Community Services to provide an update in respect of how this funding would be utilised.)
- Sponsorship income had been lower than anticipated at the beginning of the year. To address this situation Officers were aiming to identify further opportunities to obtain income through sponsorship and promotions. (The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources to clarify the financial targets that had been set for income from sponsorship).
- There had been a shortfall in income for Planning and Regeneration Services, due to lower than anticipated revenue from planning applications and land charges. (The Head of Planning and Regeneration to produce a briefing note on this subject for the consideration of the Board).
- The Cabinet had recently approved £30,000 capital expenditure on the purchase of new computer equipment as well as the Treasury Management Strategy for the year.
- Capital receipts valued at £1.8 million would be carried forward to the new municipal year, though it was anticipated that in subsequent years there would be an overspend on the Capital Programme.

RESOLVED that the April – December (Quarter 3) Finance Monitoring Report 2012/13 be noted.

107/12 **WORCESTERSHIRE COUNTY COUNCIL HEALTH OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

The Chairman invited Councillor Dr. B. T. Cooper, as the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) to provide the Board with an update on the work of the Committee.

Members were advised that the latest meeting of HOSC had been cancelled. There had been an informal meeting, focusing on the local health watch. Whilst Councillor Dr. Cooper had been unable to attend this meeting the notes would be made available for Members' consideration once they had been finalised.

108/12 **QUARTER 3 WRITE OFF OF DEBTS REPORT**

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the quarterly monitoring report concerning write offs in the third quarter of 2012/13 and highlighted the following salient points:

- £213,502 of Council tax had had to be included in write offs for the period 1st April 2012 – 31st December 2012. This included £7,861 classified as “statute barred”, which applied to outstanding debts that had not been paid after six years had lapsed, and £23,348 classified as “uneconomical to pursue”, which related to debts valued at a relatively small level.
- £400,731 of unpaid non-domestic rates, mainly due from companies that had ceased trading, had also been included in the Council's write offs.
- A significant portion of the unpaid debts from sundry debtors were unpaid car parking fines. When determining whether to write off these fines Officers considered the amount owed by an individual and how much it would cost the Council to recoup the debt.
- Part paid debts from sundry debtors, valued at £8,299.49 had been written off. These largely comprised funds that had been provided in the rent support scheme, which helped people into accommodation, which had not been paid back. To minimise the potential for similar problems in future years a review of the scheme would be carried out.
- Sundry debts of £633,895.79 had been due on 31st December 2012. The invoices for garden waste collections had been issued shortly before this date which had influenced the figures. The majority of customers had paid for their garden waste collection service by March 2013.
- Officers had been in contact with local companies to find out whether bespoke payment arrangements could be negotiated in order to enable those businesses to pay outstanding non-domestic rate arrears.
- The Council had written off £46,956.26 in overpaid housing benefit during the period. Members were advised that generally, overpayments had been made in cases where individuals had secured employment but had failed to declare their employment status immediately or in cases where the individual had moved away from the area.

An internal audit report that had recently been presented to the Audit Board on the subject of sundry debts was discussed by Members during consideration of this item. The report had contained a number of appendices, including confidential appendices, on the subject of those debts. The reasons why these appendices had been considered in confidential session were discussed and Members debated whether the entire report should have been made available for the Board's consideration alongside the quarterly update report.

Some Members believed the report contain pertinent information which could have facilitated scrutiny of the subject. However, the Board was advised that

the report had already been considered by the Council's Audit Board, which had responsibility for considering information on this subject. In this context Members were advised that the role of the Overview and Scrutiny Board was to consider the Council's policy in relation to the matter as well as the level of debts overall that had been written off by the Council.

RESOLVED that the report on the Quarterly Monitoring of Write Offs for the period 1st April – 31st December 2012 be noted.

109/12 **JOINT SCRUTINY PROPOSAL FROM WYCHAVON DISTRICT COUNCIL - WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES**

The Board considered a proposal, which had been received from Wychavon District Council, to participate in a joint scrutiny review of Worcestershire Regulatory Services. Members were advised that all of the local authorities in Worcestershire, with the exception of Worcestershire County Council, had expressed an interest in participating in the review. Worcester City Council and Malvern Hills District Council had already endorsed the proposed terms of reference.

Members were advised that under the terms of the joint scrutiny protocol, which was endorsed by the Board in 2011, Bromsgrove District Council would be required to host the review because it was the host authority for the shared Worcestershire Regulatory Service.

The review was not due to start until the 2013/14 municipal year. For this reason appointments would not be made to the review until the first meeting of the Board in the new municipal year.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the proposed terms of reference for the joint review of Worcestershire Regulatory Services be agreed;
- (b) that Bromsgrove District Council host the joint scrutiny investigation; and
- (c) that Bromsgrove District Council's representatives on the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services Task Group be agreed at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board on 17th June 2013.

110/12 **YOUTH PROVISION TASK GROUP**

The Chairman of the Youth Provision Task Group provided an update on the work of the Task Group and informed Members that there had been three meetings of the group since the previous meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board.

During this period the Task Group had visited the Stoke Parish Youth Club, which had been an interesting example of a community run project. The youth club had been established by a member of Stoke Parish Council and was successfully managed by the community, though they had received no professional assistance.

The Task Group had held a number of interviews. This had included an interview with pupils from Haybridge High School, about a survey they had undertaken at the school. Ms. TC Peppercorn, the Outreach Co-ordinator from the Artrix, and the Council's Head of Leisure and Cultural Services had also been interviewed.

The Group's next meeting was due to take place on 27th March. During this meeting Members would be interviewing the Operations Manager from the Basement Project and the Chairman of Bromsgrove Rugby Club. Members were also planning to review the evidence they had collected and progress that had been made in their review.

The Chairman explained that the Task Group's final report was due to be presented during the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting on 17th June and subsequently, if the group's recommendations were accepted, to Cabinet on 3rd July 2013. However, the Chairman commented that, whilst she was keen to present the group's report, she was due to be on leave on 3rd July. Members were therefore asked to consider extending the deadline for the review.

RESOLVED that the deadline for presentation of the Youth Provision Task Group's final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board be extended to 15th July 2013.

111/12 **AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP**

The Chairman of the Task Group advised Members that the last meeting of the group had taken place on 5th March 2013. During this meeting the group had considered the information that had been received from representatives of Worcestershire County Council and Worcestershire Regulatory Services in respect of the actions that had been taken to implement recommendations made by the Air Quality Task Group in 2007. Some concerns were expressed about the progress that had been made since completion of the previous review to address air quality issues. The group was aiming to address these issues in more detail and had invited these Officers to attend another meeting to discuss the matter further.

The group had received a number of responses from residents on the subject of air quality, following coverage of the review in the local press. Members had also received information about the approaches that had been adopted by Birmingham City Council and Sandwell Metropolitan Borough Council to manage air quality problems.

The group was due to interview a number of expert witnesses at forthcoming meetings. The Council's Head of Planning and Regulatory Services together with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, the Core Strategy, Regulatory and Strategic Housing Services, Councillor C. B. Taylor, had been invited to attend a meeting of the group. A representative of Worcestershire Primary Care Trust (PCT) had also been asked to provide further information about the health implications relating to air quality.

112/12 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME 1ST APRIL TO 31ST JULY 2013**

Members considered the latest edition of the Cabinet Work Programme. The Board noted that information about the Playing Pitch Strategy had already been reviewed by the Youth Provision Task Group.

113/12 **ACTION LIST**

Members noted that information about the Night Assessment Centre, which had been requested at the previous meeting of the Board, had been circulated for Members' consideration on the morning of Tuesday 26th March. Officers had requested information in response to all outstanding issues and would provide Members with all responses once these had been received.

114/12 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board was advised that the Head of Regulatory Services had arranged to attend the following meeting of the Board to deliver a presentation on the subject of Worcestershire Regulatory Services. This would provide useful background information that could be used by Members when hosting the Joint Review of Worcestershire Regulatory Services in the new municipal year.

A request had also been received from Officers for a presentation to be delivered on the subject of service transformation to the Board. The content of this presentation remained to be clarified, however Members suggested that the inclusion of information on targets, costs, outcomes and achievements would be useful.

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

The meeting closed at 8.15 p.m.

Chairman

**Presentation to Overview and
Scrutiny Board
Telephony Issues – October
2012**

Amanda de Warr



Telephony Issues – October 2012

- Diary of events
 - Thursday 18th October
 - 9:00
 - Problem still on line.
 - Staff continue to provide personal message to each caller.
 - Message went out to all managers and staff and also alerts on web and Twitter
 - 12:48
 - With no solution in sight HOCS advised Leader, Portfolio Holder and Leader of Opposition
 - 17:00
 - No resolution and no closer to identifying the problem despite the involvement of WCC, BT, BDC and Vodafone

Telephony Issues – October 2012

- What was the problem?
 - At approximately 16:50 on Wednesday 17th October a fault occurred on the phone lines into the BDC Customer Service Centre.
 - Customers could hear the CSA but the CSA could not hear the customer.
 - The matter was reported to IT and the staff gave information to each caller to alert them to the problem and asking them to call back



Telephony Issues – October 2012

- Friday 19th October
 - 9:00
 - No resolution despite work until late the previous night
 - HOCS and IT manager start exploring options to enable the provision of limited service
 - As some direct dial lines are working at this time CSA's start giving out DD numbers to customers – who can still hear us at this time.
 - Further communications to customers, and updates to Managers, staff and key Members



Telephony Issues – October 2012

– Friday 19th October

• 9:47

- HOCS takes decision to instigate the Business Continuity Plan as there appears to be no sign of a resolution and at this stage the technical teams were no closer to identifying the fault
- Business Continuity Plan is for the system to be switched over to another CSC in the County to enable the taking of calls and provide a limited service.
- Request made to WCC to switch to RBC
- Staff mobilised to relocate



Telephony Issues – October 2012

– Monday 22nd October

- BDC CSA's working at RBC Town Hall.
- All calls for both RBC and BDC going through to 64252.
- Extra switchboards opened up to cope with demand.
- Calls taken by operator, establish Council required then transfer call to relevant CSA team.
- RBC calls dealt with as normal.
- BDC calls dealt with if possible, or call back details taken, or call transferred to back office phone line.
- All BDC Members advised.
- All RBC Members advised.



Telephony Issues – October 2012

– Friday 19th October

• 15:00

- Establish that the switchover won't work. BT agree to transfer lines.
- Update Managers and key Members that we will be offering a service from RBC from Monday morning latest.
- Advise RBC Leader, Portfolio Holder and Leader of Opposition that the BDC Business Continuity Plan has been instigated and provide information about how this will affect RBC customers.

• 16:17

- Lines transferred and we start taking calls for BDC at RBC, using BDC staff but access to only limited systems

Telephony Issues – October 2012

– Monday 22nd October....

- Extremely high demand due to BDC lines being down for 2 days
- Plans put in place to remove upfront Hub messages from system to reduce customer confusion and improve speed of answering
- Total of 1,078 calls handled for RBC and BDC on 64252 line. Compares to average of 766, total for both authorities (40% increase in call traffic).
- 354 calls abandoned
- Average wait time 77 seconds
- 3 calls waited between 10 and 20 minutes to be answered.
- Majority of abandoned calls between 30 seconds and 1 minute wait.
- Customer complaints – 1



Telephony Issues – October 2012

– Tuesday 23rd October

- Call volumes still high – 36% above average
- 1,046 calls handled
- 197 abandoned
- 60% of calls answered in less than 30 seconds
- Average speed of answering 44 seconds
- 2 calls waited between 10 and 20 minutes to be answered.
- Majority of abandoned calls between 30 seconds and 1 minute wait.
- Customer complaints – 0
- Still unable to identify fault



Telephony Issues – October 2012

– Thursday 25th October

- Benefits of a shared team starting to show in calls handling statistics
- Implemented changes to routing of calls to improve call handling and reduce transfers
- Call numbers stabilise from here on
- 740 calls handled
- 13 abandoned calls
- Average wait time 6 seconds
- 95% of calls answered in less than 30 seconds
- 2 calls waited between 2 and 3 minutes to be answered



Telephony Issues – October 2012

– Wednesday 24th October

- Number of calls returning to nearer normal
- 915 calls handled
- 112 abandoned
- Average wait time 29 seconds
- 69% of calls answered in less than 30 seconds
- 11 calls waited between 5 and 10 minutes to be answered.
- No further customer complaints
- Updates provided to all Members, managers/staff and press.
- Reviewed routing of calls to further improve call handling and reduce transfers
- 4pm – DD lines into BDC re-instated. CSC lines routing to Redditch Town Hall



Telephony Issues – October 2012

– Friday 26th October

- With fault not identified so no solution in sight HOCS agrees two part plan with IT Manager
- 1. Re-create contact centre service at Council House
- 2. Bring forward implementation of Shoretel Contact Centre solution (scheduled for early 2013)
- Call statistics stable
- No access to BDC systems so some calls being passed to services to deal with



Telephony Issues – October 2012

- Tuesday 30th October
 - Work carried out to enable switch back to Council House
 - All Members advised of the plan and expected timescales
- Wednesday 31st October
 - Calls switched to Council House at 12:21.
 - Near normal service provided
- Tuesday 6th November
 - Fault on original lines resolved and all calls switched back to CSC

Telephony Issues – October 2012

- What are we doing to avoid it happening again?
 - Implement simpler solution.
 - Already planned but this has proven another driver
 - New system will be part of Bromsgrove's own Shoretel system and although will link to WCC will not be reliant on their system.
 - Can't guarantee that nothing will ever go wrong – because technology does go wrong and the reality is we are all dependent on it.
 - But we will have greater control when things do go wrong.
 - Less reliant on external providers.
 - Even better business continuity.



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Telephony Issues – October 2012

- So... what was the problem and why was it so difficult to resolve?
 - Over complex and ageing solution.
 - Call Centre solution is WCC and links to our systems.
 - Fault could be in any number of places in the configuration of those links and was not readily apparent through all the testing.
 - Some pieces of equipment are also used to do multiple tasks, not just telephones, and tracking the problem required resource from Bromsgrove & Redditch ICT, British Telecom, County ICT team and their 3rd party telephone support team, and a company that specialise in Cisco Voice over IP (the type of telephone system used).
 - Having so many different people involved in the solution = very time consuming and difficult to fault find
 - Required multiple devices to be restarted and at the same time, a configuration change to one of these devices.

Telephony Issues – October 2012

Questions?



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Overview & Scrutiny Essential Living Fund 26th March 2013

David Taylor
Benefits Manager

Welfare Reform Act 2012

- Replaced Community Care Grants & Crisis Loans
- Non Ringfenced Grant to County Council (reduction in funding)
- Approval to provide through District Council
- Effective from 1st April 2013

Benefits of a Local Scheme Provision – Essential Living Fund

- Officers have local knowledge
- Access to local arrangements (local charities etc)
- Local decision making
- Flexible use of resources

Activity within Bromsgrove 2011/12

- Crisis Loans
 - 540 Successful applications
£31k
- Community Care Grants
 - 180 Successful applications
£83k

Funding for 2013/14 £101k + £18k for
administration of scheme

Activity within Bromsgrove

Items most commonly requested under Crisis Loans:

- Rent in advance – moving home (families security relevant) and leaving
- care.
- Lost or stolen giro
- Capital not realisable
- Reconnection of fuel supply
- Benefit spent
- Benefits disallowed or sanctioned (to remain with DWP as hardship awards)
- Disaster

Activity within Bromsgrove

Items most commonly requested under Community Care Grants:

- Beds and bedding 38%
- Clothing 14%
- Kitchen/dining utensils 13%
- Carpets/Curtains 8%
- Other 8%
- Cookers 8%
- Seating 5%
- Washing Machines 3%
- Fridges 2%
- Removal Expenses 1%

Overall Principles of Scheme

- Clear
- Responsive
- Minimise Cash where possible
- Target most vulnerable
- Work with partners

Essential Living Fund – Delivery

- Face to face delivery
- Benefits officers used to ensure that income can be maximised
- Only available to residents of Bromsgrove
- All other options for funding available to be considered
- Working with charities eg NewStarts

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 22ND APRIL 2013 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. Lammas (Chairman), J. S. Brogan, S. P. Shannon,
Mrs. C. J. Spencer and L. J. Turner

Observers: Councillor C. B. Taylor

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. S. Jordan, Mr. M. Kay, Mr. S. Wilkes,
Ms. D. Poole, Mrs. H. Mole, Mr. C. Santoriello-Smith, Ms. J. Bayley and
Ms. A. Scarce

115/12 **APOLOGIES**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors C. J. Bloore, R. A. Clarke, Dr. B. T. Cooper, Mrs R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce, Mrs J. M. L. A. Griffiths, R. J. Laight and P. M. McDonald.

116/12 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS**

Councillors J. S. Brogan and Mrs C. J. Spencer declared disclosable pecuniary interests, as members of the Artrix Board of Trustees, in respect of item 8 on the agenda; the proposal to review outreach provision at the Artrix Centre. Councillor P. Lammas also declared a disclosable pecuniary interest in this item in his capacity as a member of the Arts Development Holding Trust for the Artrix Centre.

The Board noted that as a result of these interests only 2 Members would be present during consideration of this item, which would have made the meeting inquorate. Consequently, Members agreed that the topic proposal concerning outreach provision at the Artrix Centre should be considered at the following meeting of the Board.

117/12 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 26th March 2013 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record.

118/12 **THE WORK OF WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES**

The Board received a presentation from the Head of Regulatory Services on the subject of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (Appendix A). The

Chairman explained that the presentation had been requested in order to provide Members with background information about the shared service in advance of the launch of a joint scrutiny review of this subject.

The following points were highlighted by Officers for Members' consideration:

- A shared Regulatory Service had been one of eleven options originally considered under the Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Programme (WETT). This shared service had been progressed because it had been considered viable and capable of achieving efficiency savings.
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services was the only regulatory service shared between different local authorities in the country. There was the potential that further Councils could be incorporated into the shared service in the long-term.
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services was responsible for managing a number of functions including food safety. In recent months service representatives had investigated the implications of the horse meat scandal for food provided to schools in Worcestershire, though only a single area of concern had been identified in the north of the county.
- When the shared service had first been launched joint working had been challenging because officers were familiar with different organisational cultures and operating methods. By using a central base in Worcester staff had been able to develop a single culture.
- Elected Members' engagement with the Worcestershire Regulatory Services team varied across the county, though senior Officers regularly briefed the Leader and Chief Executive of each local authority.
- Worcestershire Regulatory Services was based in Wyatt House in Worcester. However, surgeries were provided in each of the districts and could be accessed by customers where required.
- Bromsgrove District Council was the host authority for Worcestershire Regulatory Service. The Council received a fee from other local authorities in the partnership for hosting the service.

During the meeting Members also discussed the following points in detail:

- Members commented on the high frequency of nuisance complaints that had been received from the Aston Fields area of the district. A number of reasons were discussed as the potential causes for these complaints, including the location of industrial estates within the area, though Members were advised that complaints could be influenced by a variety of factors.
- A significant proportion of complaints about nuisance related to reports of noise. 80% of complaints about noise concerned domestic circumstances.
- Dog Wardens employed by the service worked throughout the county. The Dog Wardens were primarily employed to respond to complaints about barking dogs, though staff could provide advice about appropriate sources of support available to manage the behaviour of dogs.

- Stray dogs located by the Dog Wardens were often placed temporarily in local kennels until either the owner could be located or a new home could be found for the animal.
- Members commented that licensing arrangements at each local authority appeared to vary significantly. This was largely due to the fact that each local authority retained local decision making powers in relation to licensing matters and could determine the level of fees and charges for various licenses.
- Internet crimes, involving malpractice with regard to trading standards, increasingly featured in the work of the service. Officers utilised covert techniques to monitor the work of criminals and could take action to prosecute offenders.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that a copy of the presentation be circulated for the consideration of every member of the Board; and
- (b) that the report be noted.

119/12 **PRESENTATION ON THE TRANSFORMATION PROCESS**

The Board received a presentation from the Head of Business Transformation and the Transformation Manager on the subject of Systems Thinking (Appendix B).

During consideration of this item the following issues were discussed in detail:

- Service transformation was not a traditional top-down approach to changing services. Instead, the process focused on meeting the needs of the customer.
- Specialist support could be provided by the Business Transformation team to enable service transformation to proceed effectively.
- Service transformation also made use of the expertise of officers involved in delivering services. Staff were involved in capturing demand and trialling proposed changes to services.
- Recent examples of service transformation included changes to bulky waste collection that had been trialled in the district. As part of this trial rather than undertaking separate journeys collections were made by teams operating within the vicinity and customers were being provided with choice over the timing of appointments, which had already had a positive impact on customer satisfaction feedback.
- There had been instances where staff had held differing opinions about the benefits of proposed changes. The primary method for addressing these disagreements was to trial proposed changes, which enabled Officers to learn whether a different process would work effectively.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that regular updates and seminars, focusing on the transformation of particular services, be provided to Members; and
- (b) that the report be noted.

120/12 **QUARTERLY SUMMARY OF ENVIRONMENTAL ENFORCEMENT ACTION
TAKEN (1ST JANUARY TO 31ST MARCH 2013)**

The Board considered the Quarterly Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken for the period 1st January 2013 – 31st March 2013.

During consideration of this item the following issues were discussed in detail:

- Fly tipping continued to be the most time consuming crime type investigated by the Council. However, the Council's approach to investigating fly tipping represented best practice and had received praise from the Hereford and Worcester Environment Group.
- There had been one successful prosecution for fly tipping in the period and six other cases were in the process of being prepared for court.
- There continued to be a steady stream of work tackling fly posting in the district. Frequently fly posting occurred because companies were not aware of the rules on the matter. In this context the role of the Council was to educate companies about acceptable practices.
- Dog fouling was a persistent problem. In particular, there continued to be problems with dog fouling in popular locations such as parks as well as in particular residential areas.
- Targeted patrols were taking place in the district to discourage dog fouling. Fixed penalty notices could rarely be issued for dog fouling as dog owners were more likely to comply when they observed enforcement officers in the area.
- Dog walkers had been handed bags that could be used to dispose of dog faeces. Unfortunately, sometimes these bags were not then placed in bins but rather were left on pathways or hanging from trees which created a litter problem as well as having health and safety implications.
- Increasingly littering offences involved individuals dropping items out of their cars, particularly at traffic islands in Bromsgrove.
- Residents were entitled to report littering offences. However, in the event that offenders did not pay fines these residents needed to be prepared to attend court to testify and unfortunately frequently residents were not prepared to do so.
- There had been no cases involving the transport of waste during the period. However, spot checks were due to take place which could lead to an increase in reports on the subject.
- There had been three fixed penalty notices issued during the quarter. One of these penalty notices had not been paid and would be the subject of future court action.
- The Council did not have an enforcement policy for responding to offences committed by juveniles, though a fixed penalty notice could be issued to anybody aged 12 or more.

Members were advised that this would be the final time that the Board would receive a quarterly environmental enforcement report in this format. The report was due to be amended in order to focus on outcomes. There would be more information about the enforcement and investigation stages and a

breakdown of information by crime type and broken down into Ward areas within the district.

RESOLVED that the report on the Quarterly Summary of Environmental Enforcement Action Taken for the period 1st January 2013 – 31st March 2013 be noted.

121/12 **REPORT ON THE LIVING WAGE IN RELATION TO PROCUREMENT**

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented a report on the subject of payment of the living wage to staff employed by Council contractors.

The following key points were discussed during consideration of this item:

- Local authorities, like other organisations, had a statutory duty to pay at least the minimum wage to staff, though all staff employed by Bromsgrove District Council received at least the living wage as a minimum.
- There was no legal obligation for any organisation to pay the living wage to staff.
- The Council could request as part of the tendering process that companies pay staff the living wage for completing contracted work.
- There was also the potential for the Council to offer a dual tendering deal process, whereby one price could be quoted involving payment of the living wage and another price quoted where the living wage would not necessarily be paid.
- However, in both cases payments of the living wage would be difficult to monitor. Staff would need to give permission for their personal details to be shared with the Council; it was possible that not all staff would be willing to take this action.
- There was also a risk that a minority of companies would place pressure on staff to confirm that they were paid the living wage even if this was not the case.

The Board concurred that from a moral and ethical perspective it was supportive of paying of the living wage to staff employed by Council contractors and it suggested that this point should be formally endorsed by the whole Council. In respect of becoming accredited under the Living Wage Campaign, the Board was advised that the definition of contractors within *The Living Wage Guide for Employers* contained a number of subtle distinctions and nuances that could have further implications for the subject. Members therefore agreed that further information/clarification on this particular area should be obtained before the Board proposed any recommendations on the subject.

RESOLVED that the Board be provided with further information, including from a legal perspective, in respect of different contractual arrangements and the implications for payment of the living wage to contractors' staff.

122/12 **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL - OUTREACH PROVISION AT THE ARTRIX CENTRE**

In accordance with the decision noted under minute 116/12 Members agreed that this item should be deferred for consideration at the following meeting of the Board to be held on 17th June 2013.

123/12 **ACTION LIST**

The Board was advised that it had not been possible to obtain any updates on actions requested at the previous meeting. Officers would be requesting further information over the following week and explained that all feedback would be circulated for the consideration of members of the Board.

124/12 **YOUTH PROVISION TASK GROUP**

Members were informed that there had been a single meeting of the Task Group since the previous meeting of the Board. This meeting had been attended by Jackie Hooper, Operations Manager at the Basement Project, and John Blackhall, Chairman of the Bromsgrove Rugby and Football Club.

A further meeting of the Task Group was due to take place on Thursday 25th April 2013 when Members would interview the Council's Head of Leisure and Cultural Services, together with Debbie Roberts from EPIC and Paul Finnemore the Commissioning Manager for young people from Worcestershire County Council's Children's Services Department. Members were also due to consider statistics provided by Worcestershire County Council in relation to young people who were not in education, employment or training (NEETs).

The Task Group remained on track to complete their review by the 15th July 2013.

125/12 **AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP**

The Chairman of the Task Group advised Members that there had been two meetings of the Task Group since the last meeting of the Board.

The first of these meetings had taken place on 4th April 2013 and had been attended by two Worcestershire County Council Officers: David Balme, Transport Planning Officer and Steve Harrison, Transport Strategy and Policy Team Leader. This had been an instructive meeting due to the Officers' expertise.

The second meeting of the Task Group had taken place on 18th April. During this meeting Members had interviewed the Council's Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Portfolio Holder for Planning, the Core Strategy, Regulatory and Strategic Housing Services, Councillor C. B. Taylor. The extent to which air quality issues were taken into account during consideration of planning applications had been discussed in some detail.

The Task Group was keen to consider further information about the health implications of air quality issues, though information requested from Worcestershire PCT prior to the previous meeting of the Board had still not been provided. Members were also interested in the Air Quality Action Plan consultation, which had been launched on 15th April 2013, and were aiming to discuss this matter further with representatives of Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

The Task Group had struggled to organise meetings during the busy election period and had also encountered some difficulties securing information from relevant expert witnesses. To provide the Task Group with the time needed to complete the review effectively the Board agreed that the deadline for the exercise should be extended.

RESOLVED that the deadline for presentation of the Air Quality Task Group's final report to the Overview and Scrutiny Board should be extended to 16th September 2013.

126/12 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME 1ST MAY TO 31ST AUGUST 2013 (FOR INFORMATION)**

The Board considered the latest edition of the Cabinet Work Programme. Due to the fact that this would be the final meeting of the Board in the 2012/13 municipal year Members agreed that it would not be appropriate to identify additional items for the Board's Work Programme.

The meeting closed at 8.13 p.m.

Chairman

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Worcestershire Shared Regulatory Service

Steve Jordan

What is WRS?

**A shared service representing all
Councils, including the County, within
Worcestershire, covering Trading
Standards, Environmental Health and
Licensing functions**

Functions

- Air Quality
- Burial/Cremation of Persons Deceased at Public Expense
- Contaminated Land
- Consumer and Business Advice
- Dog Warden Service
- Drainage
- Environmental Permitting
- Exhumations
- Fair Trading (Pricing, Descriptions, Counterfeiting)
- Farmed Animal Health and Welfare/Disease Control
- Weights and Measures

- Filthy and Verminous Investigations
- Food Safety
- Food Standards including Animal Feed
- Gambling Act 2005 – Administration and Enforcement
- Hackney Carriage and Private Hire Vehicle Licensing
- Health and Safety at Work
- Health and Wellbeing/Health Promotion
- Infectious Diseases
- Land Drainage
- Licensing Act 2003 – Administration and Enforcement
- Licensing of Petroleum, Poisons and Explosives
- Licensing and Registration – Many different businesses

Background

- Strong and Prosperous Communities white paper
- Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier Programme (WETT)
- Key principles:
 - Delivery of service improvements and improved performance for all stakeholders,
 - Reduced pressure on the budget both overall and for each participating local authority,
 - Increased resilience to meet the demands placed on the service.
- Regulatory Reform (Hampton, LBRO, etc)
- Future public sector funding climate

Vision

'A fully integrated Regulatory Services function, more effectively focussed on businesses and consumers, with all partners operating within one Management Structure'

Business Model

- Single management structure
- Integrated teams delivering County and District services seamlessly
- Focused on key customer groups – businesses and consumers/ residents
- Service standardisation with local distinctiveness
- Dispersed workforce, locally based,
- Risk based and intelligence led
- Transformational service delivery through 'Systems Thinking'

Benefits

Business Case	Now
Improve delivery to customers	Noise – improved end to end times biggest demand over 50% of nuisance complaints 2,250/pa
Greater resilience	Larger pool of staff
Cost reduction through efficiencies	23% reduction in costs
Economies of scale	Air quality and contaminated land
Consistent approach in service delivery	Yes, where appropriate single policies
Reduce burdens on local businesses	Yes, reduces unnecessary inspections

Worcestershire Regulatory Services	
Business Case	Now
Standardise performance, quality, policy and processes	Standard performance across service for all partners, single processes in most cases and policy harmonisation where appropriate.
Business transformation improving self-service and reducing avoidable contact	New IT system, move to self help and Duty Officer

Worcestershire Regulatory Services	
<h2>Governance Arrangements</h2> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Head of Service reports to Joint Committee (Local Government Act 1972 s.101) • Delegation of policy and executive functions from partners to Joint Committee and Head of Shared Service • Service specifications detail partner delegations and operational arrangements • Special arrangements for Licensing Act 2003 functions (retain local Licensing Committees) • Partners retain determination of fees and charges 	

Financial Implications

Business Case	Now
£1.26m (17.25% like-for-like revenue saving (09/10)	13/14 Revenue Budget now £5.626m (23% saving)
£438k saving 2011/12, £1.26m saving 2012/13	Exceeded in both years
Capital investment £1.2m (net of grant) for ICT and transformation	£282 savings already returned
Return on investment in 4 th year	Achieved before end of year 2
Costs/savings sharing in proportion to partner current gross revenue budgets	No costs – all savings

Potential for further £355k savings in partner internal recharges/overheads (equivalent to 20%)	Up to individual partners. Not aware of level of savings partners have made as a result of us coming together
Risks if financial assumptions have been/are not realised	Financial risks mitigated

Bromsgrove is Host Authority

Bromsgrove provides key support:

- Human Resources
- Information Technology
- Finance
- Legal
- Payroll

Progress to Date

- 23% SAVING + extra £900k over 10 years in accommodation costs
- £1m returned to partners in underspends since 2010
- Multi functioning Teams
- 115 FTE, down from 154
- Transformation project delivering improvements
- Number of councils coming to us re advice
- Performance remains positive

Lessons Learnt

- Bringing everyone in under the same roof has been beneficial but challenging
- IT could have been implemented earlier – too much reliance on Systems Thinking
- Systems Thinking approach was right but had to be adapted
- Service no longer has a voice in individual councils
 - Out of sight - out of mind
 - Portfolio Holder regular meetings
 - Communications with wider Members
- Partners attitude to WRS particularly early on regarding budgets
- How critical the roll of WRS is to the local economy and Health and Wellbeing Agenda. WRS is a critical service

Performance

- Main stats – satisfaction rates, complaints and compliments,
- Financial performance
- Outcome measures
- Handling 25,000 service requests pa
 - Slight drop in nuisance complaints - poor summer
 - Some increases in demand ie planning up 20-30%
 - Licensing demand gone up

Next Steps

- IT Implementation
- Financial pressures
- Business Growth – other partners, generating income
- Governance review
- Service transformation continues

Thank You

Questions?



What is Systems Thinking?


Systems thinking is not about IT systems. It is an approach that supports the review of services as a whole (not functions)

Systems thinking is a very different approach to improving services, it challenges the assumptions we make about service design.

Using a method of 'study', systems thinking reveals how traditional assumptions are responsible for undermining service quality, driving up costs and causing low morale.

Systems thinking aims to create better service, at reduced cost with increased capacity and higher staff morale.

Systems thinking is the basis for all future service reviews and improvements to our services



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Systems Thinking – The Approach

Systems thinking is not a typical, top down approach to planning how a system or process should work.

It takes an outside-in approach (or customers view) to improving service; that is to change the work, you first need to understand 'how the work works' - change is based on knowledge.

It is very different to typical approaches for improving services. The systems thinking approach often reveals unexpected results.



Systems Thinking – changing the way we think

Thinking..... Management thinking and assumptions about the work ..



System ... drives the design of our processes and procedures ...

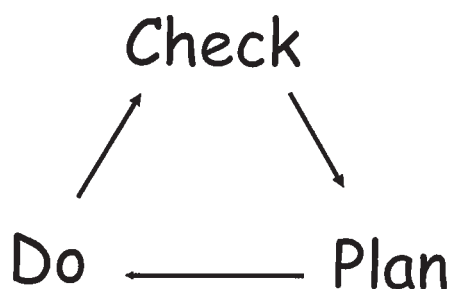


Performance.... which in turn affects performance



What is the Approach?

It is not possible to adequately convey here how systems thinking works. The only way to really understand its potential is to use it. It is useful to appreciate the basic concept and key phases for conducting a systems thinking review of a service. They are as follows:



Check – the ‘what’ & ‘why’

Is concerned with understanding the current service and its performance. It is crucial that any decisions about what to change are based on evidence and learning gained during 'Check'. Check involves 6 stages:

Purpose - Identifying purpose of the system from the customers perspective

Demand - Studying demand e.g. 'I need to claim benefit' or 'I need a home'. This helps us identify what matters to customers.

Capability - Measuring our ability to respond to what matters to customers

Flow - Identifying how the work is carried out and using information about what matters to customers to identify value work and waste (e.g. duplication, handoffs).

System Conditions - The factors responsible for the waste in the system. System conditions may be policy, procedure, IT system, training etc

Thinking - It is important to relate system conditions to the management thinking responsible for their introduction. This is key to unlearning old assumptions and to start looking at things differently.

Plan and Do

Plan – identify how we can change

This stage takes the learning from Check to identify a new set of operating principles and 'clean flow' designed to deliver what matters to customers. Measures are agreed based on what matters and experiments devised to prove the new way of working.

Do – implement the changes

This stage involves confirming that experiments done in the Plan phase do in fact support the work and processes underpinning the new service. In practice this means taking a small number of customers out of the current system, testing the new ways of working, solving any problems and adapting the new service along the way. As the new service evolves through experimentation so does understanding of capacity, roles and structures required to support the new way of working.



Next Steps - Options

So Members can learn more about systems thinking.

Some suggestions:

- **Practical Orientation Sessions** – day and half. Do some 'check'
- **Interventions – visit.** Look at how 'Plan' & 'Do' is implemented.
- **Portfolio Holders** – discuss with Head of Service about visiting interventions.
- **"Seminars"** – updates from Interventions / presentations from teams (2 or 3 a year?)
- Possibly utilise **Shared Services Board** to share learning with Councillors?



**REDDITCH BOROUGH COUNCIL AND
BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

SHARED SERVICES BOARD

15th April 2013 at 5.30pm

COMMITTEE ROOM 2, TOWN HALL, REDDITCH

Present: Councillors Bill Hartnett (Chair), Greg Chance, Carole Gandy and Debbie Taylor (Redditch Borough Council)

Mark Bullivant (substitute for Cllr Sherrey), Steve Colella and Michael Webb (Bromsgrove District Council).

Officers: Ruth Bamford, Kevin Dicks, Sue Hanley, Sue Horrobin, Helen Mole, Deb Poole, Guy Revans and Liz Tompkin

Notes: Michael Craggs

1. APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Roger Hollingworth (BDC) and Angie Heighway.

2. MINUTES

2.1 The minutes of the previous meeting of the Board held on 10th January 2013 were agreed as a correct record.

CONFIDENTIALITY

These notes are an open public record of proceedings of the Board.

[Meetings of the Board are not subject to statutory Access to Information requirements; but information relating to individual post holders and/or employee relations matters would nonetheless not be revealed to the press or public.]

PRESENTATIONS – TRANSFORMATION UPDATES

3.1 Environmental Services Intervention

Mr Revans and Mrs Horrobin gave an update on Environmental Services transformation regarding the following areas:

- Waste collection
- Street cleansing
- Landscape & Grounds Maintenance

Members heard that service transformation was being achieved under the new strategic purpose of “Keep my place safe and looking good”. Transformation under Waste Intervention started in 2012. It was expected that significant savings would be achieved.

The introduction of a new Environmental Services ‘ops’ centre in January 2013 had helped to improve customer service and had generated savings. The number of missed collections had reduced significantly in Bromsgrove following its introduction.

Officers were looking at working more closely with partners, including the county council, to successfully tackle any issues and to improve services for customers.

Tree management was reported as a very significant issue, especially as there was plenty of reactive demand in Redditch and because it was managed differently across the two councils. Officers were looking to plan more proactive work in high demand areas in future through transformation.

In terms of bulky collections, Members heard that an emphasis was being placed on making the service fit with that customers wanted. This would again involve working holistically with relevant partners to meet customer demand, potentially to include working closely with the third sector to meet this demand.

The Board thanked the Officers for the update.

3.2 Planning Services Intervention

Mrs Bamford referred the Board to the revised working principles that had been developed as part of the planning services intervention. These were all intended to help Officers move away from a targets driven approach to focusing instead on the specific needs of the customer. This included communicating more often with the customer during the application process to help guard against any confusion and miscommunication further down the line.

Members heard that transformation had helped Officers process applications more quickly and efficiently as administrative burdens had steadily been reduced. Some lessons had been learnt from the planning

team at Wolverhampton City Council who had recently been through their own service transformation.

Officers across both Redditch and Bromsgrove were also being invited to make their own suggestions to improve the process and to challenge the historic way of working. However, potential changes would need to be supported by fact and data before they were introduced.

Officers were firmly focused on reducing waste which was of no benefit to the customer. In particular, it was reported that approximately forty per cent of customer queries received were wasteful. Eliminating these queries would enable Officers to focus on areas of work that were genuinely helpful for the customer.

On behalf of the Board, the Chair thanked Mrs Bamford for her presentation.

4. PROGRESS REPORT

The Board received a progress report which provided an update on all elements of the Shared Services / Transformation work taking place across both Councils.

5. FUTURE MEETINGS FOR SHARED SERVICES BOARD

Group leaders were invited to encourage more of their Group members to attend future meetings of the Board to witness future presentations on service transformation. It was hoped that this would help to involve them more closely in the transformation process, as well as reducing the possibility of the any presentation being duplicated at other Council meetings.

It was agreed that any presentation/s would precede the consideration of specific matters for the Board at future meetings.

6. NEXT MEETING

Members noted that the next meeting of the Board would be held on **Thursday, 4th July 2013** in the **Conference Room, Bromsgrove District Council** commencing at **5.30 pm**, as previously.

The meeting commenced at 5.30 pm
and closed at 7.00 pm

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REPORT TITLE: The Green Deal

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Guy Revans
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	n/a
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	Non Key

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report sets out the preferred option for moving forwards our participation in the Green Deal and ECO (Energy Company Obligation) as the Council's main delivery mechanism for the previously agreed Home Energy Conservation Act (HECA) aims.
- 1.2 Across the County, two options have been explored. The first, the preferred option arising from a piece of consultancy work by Encraft (commissioned by Worcestershire County Council) was a Community Interest Company (CIC); this has been discounted as a suitable delivery partner could not be found.
- 1.3 The second option was looking at the Birmingham Energy Savers (BES) contract. Officers from Bromsgrove DC and Redditch BC investigated the BES/Carillion option and are recommending to Members that this option be pursued on the basis that it is preferable to procuring a county wide delivery partner such as British Gas or similar, which is the only other option available at this time.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Members agree to working with Carillion in partnership with Redditch Borough Council via the Birmingham Energy Savers procurement route and to formalise this arrangement by entering into a contract with Carillion
- 2.2 That Members grant delegated authority to the Head of Environmental Services and the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder, to negotiate the contract and to finalise the contract documents and any other associated legal documents.
- 2.3. That Members note that discussions are on-going between Carillion and the other Worcestershire authorities. In pursuing the negotiations for the contract officers will in the first instance be aiming to secure an agreement with Carillion that is County wide. In the event that this does not prove possible, that Members authorise officers to enter into a contract with Carillion on behalf of Bromsgrove and Redditch Councils.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 At this stage officers can advise on the financial implications as follows:-
- Carillion are offering to cover the audit costs of ensuring Key Performance Indicators (KPI's) established under the contract are achieved.
 - Carillion will make a payment towards staffing costs which can be utilised to fund a post to manage the contract; if a County Wide agreement is reached this will be maximised.
 - Carillion estimate that the inward investment value of the contract will be £18,000,000 for Bromsgrove over 8 years.
 - There may be scope for applying for EU funding (2014-2020) to help deliver or promote the Green Deal or offer top up finance packages (likely to require match funding though).
- 3.2. With regard to procurement, as Bromsgrove is already a signatory to the BES contract, there will be no need to go out to procurement on the contract with Carillion and the costs of any procurement exercise will be saved. Carillion will pay a finders fee to BES.
- 3.3 A revenue budget of £20K has been approved for the set up costs of Green Deal. Members are asked to note that there may be some fees involved for the drawing up of specifications for the contract. However, whilst detailed information on costings is not available at this stage, officers would expect any such fees to be covered by the existing budget of £20k.

Legal Implications

- 3.4 It is for Members to decide whether they wish to pursue the option of entering into a contract; under the rules governing the Green Deal the Council is not under any statutory obligation to contract with a supplier.
- 3.5 If Members agree to the recommendations in this report, the Council will be entering into a contract with Carillion. As referred to at 2.3, this will either be on the basis of all the County authorities joining together to enter into the contract, or on the basis of only Redditch and Bromsgrove contracting with Carillion.

The proposal is that the Council enters into an 8 year contract with a break clause at Year 3. This will need to be further addressed as part of the contract negotiations. In terms of duration of the contract, Officers are mindful that the contract will need to deliver maximum benefit to the authorities as well as ensuring confidence in the supply chain to allow for growth and investment.

- 3.6 The contract will impose a system of penalty payments to be made by Carillion to the authorities if certain KPI's are not met. Officers would aim to use any such payments received to invest back into the scheme.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.7 Since the autumn of 2012, the Council has been exploring how it might best interact with the Government's Green Deal programme, formally launched on 28th January 2013. While there is no statutory duty on the Council to participate, the likely benefits from economic development and reducing fuel poverty within the district represent strong incentives to ensure that the Green Deal and its associated Energy Company Obligation (ECO) are taken up as widely as possible and that the Council removes any barriers to take up across all tenures and communities.
- 3.8 The Council is fully engaged with tackling the key issues of fuel poverty, economic development and climate change; and has documented this in its 2013 Home Energy Conservation Act report (March 13) It specifically commits the Authority to undertake its obligations in relation to domestic home energy efficiency to tackle fuel security, combat fuel poverty, and contribute to mitigation of carbon emissions locally. The Council will need to set HECA targets once the delivery mechanism is known and final contract negotiations have been completed.
- 3.9 This proposal could continue to utilise an existing working relationship and use Act on Energy in some way e.g. for referring customers; but this may depend on costs, as these costs may be passed onto the customer.
- 3.10 The KPI's and targets for Bromsgrove and Redditch will have to be different to reflect the differing needs of the areas served by the two Authorities. The same principle will apply if a Worcestershire based Carillion offer is negotiated, and this will result in separate KPI's and targets for each individual Authority.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 Although the Green Deal and ECO will be available for all domestic and commercial business premises, the Council is specifically committed to improving home comfort and working with those who are currently or likely to be suffering from fuel poverty. These are cross tenure, community wide issues.
- 3.12 The Councils will commit to levering in as much money under ECO as possible, and this covers target groups under affordable warmth (Home Heating Cost Reduction Obligation (HHCRO); hard to treat cavities and solid walled properties (Carbon Emission Reduction Obligation CERO) and deprived and rural areas (Carbon Saving Community Obligation CSCO), although BDC does not have any areas in the top 15% most deprived areas in England and Wales.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Although many of the big utilities are still working to improve their green deal proposals; it is felt that the BES contract offers the Authority a safe and flexible method of delivering Green Deal and ECO. A further risk mitigation is provided by the inclusion of a break clause to allow for flexibility.
- 4.2 Despite developing an exclusive working arrangement with Carillion; there is opportunity for any supplier to market and undertake Green Deal work in the area. While the majority of these will be legitimate companies; there is a risk that because the Green Deal is new and complex, some less reputable people may get involved without understanding the full implications on financial payback etc. This may require the support of Trading Standards in the future.

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

HECA Report

<http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/cms/community-and-living/climate-change/heca-report.aspx>

7. KEY

n/a

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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CABINET

5th JUNE 2013

FINANCIAL RESERVES STATEMENT – 2012/13

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Roger Hollingsworth
Portfolio Holder Consulted	√
Relevant Head of Service	Teresa Kristunas
Wards Affected	All Wards
Ward Councillor Consulted	
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To advise members on the earmarked reserves and capital carry forward requests for the year ending 2012/13 and to seek members approval on the creation of new reserves where required to support future plans of the Authority.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That Cabinet recommend to Council:
- 2.2 approval of the establishment of the new reserves of £2,144K as detailed at Appendix 1.
- 2.3 approval of the movements of £220K reserves as included in Appendix 1 which reflects the approval required for January-March 2012.
- 2.3 approval of the addition of new reserves of £308k as included in Appendix 1. This reflects the approval required for January-March 2012.
- 2.4 approval of capital budgets to be carried forward of £1,607K to be utilised during 2013/14. Details included in Appendix 2
- 2.5 approval of additional capital expenditure of £87K detailed in Appendix 2

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The accounts for 2012/13 are in the process of being prepared and as part of the closedown process a review of reserves and provisions has been undertaken.

CABINET

5th JUNE 2013

- 3.2 A number of reserves have been utilised during January – March 2013 together with additional funds made available to existing reserves. The net position on the current reserves is shown in Appendix 1.
- 3.3 In discussion with Heads of Service and in considering the future plans of the Authority, a number of new reserves have been proposed, together with the release of funds currently set aside.
- 3.4 The new reserves that are proposed are included at Appendix 1.
- 3.5 If approval is granted to the proposed reserves as identified above, the revised position will be £2,144m to fund future plans of the Authority. The full schedule including the new reserves is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.6 A number of capital schemes which were due to be completed in 2012/13 are requested to be carried forward to allow the works to be completed during 2013/14; these are detailed in Appendix 2.
- 3.7 There are also 3 additional Capital approvals which are detailed in Appendix 2.

Legal Implications

- 3.8 Sections 32 and 43 of the Local Government Finance Act 1992 require billing and precepting authorities in England and Wales to have regard to the level of reserves needed for meeting estimated future expenditure when calculating the budget requirement.
- 3.9 Section 25 of the Local Government Act 2003 places a specific personal duty on the Chief Financial Officer to report on the adequacy of reserves and the robustness of the budget.

Service/Operational Implications

- 3.9 The Council currently sets aside specific amounts as reserves for future policy purposes or to cover contingencies. In addition the Council has specific provisions for liabilities or losses that result from past events.
- 3.10 In June 2009, Council approved a policy to ensure relevant approval was in place to create and release reserves to support and enhance the delivery of the priorities of the Council.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 The adequate provision of reserves will ensure the Council has appropriate funds in place to meet future demands of its customers.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The closedown of the accounts and the relevant accounting treatment of provisions and reserves is contained within the Financial Services Risk Register and monitored on a quarterly basis

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Statement of new Reserves 2012/13
Appendix 2 – Capital Carry Forward Requests

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Final Accounts working papers 2012/13

AUTHOR OF REPORT

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Appendix 1

Description	Movements in Reserves £000	Balance at 31 March 2013 £000	Request for budget carry forward £000	Projected balance 31 March 2013 (year end) £000
Support for changes to Benefit Rules	-33	69	41	110
Fire Risk Management System	0	4		4
Elections	0	17		17
Finance System Development	0	10	30	40
Freedom of the District - Mercian	0	5		5
New Burden Temporary Deferment Business Rate	0	3		3
Liveability Reserve	0	16		16
Local Public Service Agreement Reserve	0	2		2
Play Areas - Catshill / Pitches	0	12		12
Christmas Lights - Replacement Fund	0	6		6
Drinks Machines - Members area	0	1		1
Options Appraisal Dolphin Centre	0	0	36	36
Sanders park - Roof/Tree works	0	18	10	28
Olympics - TV screen	-6	0		0
Sports Development Grants	-4	28	30	58
Building Control Partnership Reserve	11	17		17
Local Plans Inquiry	-26	16		16
Town Centre Development	13	51		51
Business Start up grants	0	6		6
Town centre Market Stalls	0	4		4
Housing Initiatives	-24	167		167
Land Charges - transferred to litigation	0	0		0
Emergency Planning - Flood & W/Course mgmt	0	9		9
Youth Provision	0	85		85
Strategy for Increased Employment	0	26		26
Building Control - mobile working	0	0	7	7
Recycling Extension	0	74		74

Appendix 1

Description	Movements in Reserves £000	Balance at 31 March 2013 £000	Request for budget carry forward £000	Projected balance 31 March 2013 (year end) £000
Replacement Vehicles/Plant	0	289		289
Climate Change - Salix	2	4		4
Route Optimisation	-35	0		0
Specialist Fees for Land Drainage projects	-4	0		0
Civil Parking Enforcement setup costs	-25	49		49
Bowling Green refurbishments	0	2		2
Bin Replacement Scheme	0	12		12
Reg Services - Grant Reserves / Partner % Underspends	2	2		2
Reg Services IT Transformation Reserve	0	45		45
Litigation Reserve (incl Land Charges)	54	230		230
Shared Services	-131	293		293
Equalities	0	1		1
ICT refresh	0	153		153
LNP Frankley	0	0	4	4
Local Strategic Partnership	0	3		3
Health and Wellbeing	0	9		9
National Health Clinical Commissioning Group	-14	43		43
Q-Matic System (Customer Services)	0	10		10
Community Right to Challenge New Burdens	0	13		13
Apprenticeships	0	32		32
Potential Appeals	0	0	150	150
Balance	-220	1,836	308	2,144

Capital Scheme	Additional budget approvals £	Budget Carry Forwards £	Comment
Leisure & Culture			
Barnsley Hall new park '04/05 (LivPshp/BDC)		320,997	The delays in the Barnsley Hall project have led to increased costs because the Council has had to re-tender the contract works as the original process took place in 2009 and the quotations were no longer valid.
Barnsley Hall - Req of land/prov of play area 0506		7,000	Budget to be used for Barnsley Hall project above
Sports Facility- Braces Lane AMG		140,000	Project delayed due to retendering
Play area removals upgrades		9,106	Work has commenced budget required to complete project - orders raised in 13-14.
S106 Harvest/ Heath Close- Play area Enhancements		12,400	Originally expected 20% of the project costs to be incurred during 2012-13 unfortunately work didn't commence until after 31st March therefore remaining budget required in 2013-14. £14,752 was for Battlefield Brook but has now been approved for Barnsley Hall
Crown Close Open Space Enhancements		40,000	Infrastructure Work to take place in Crown Close during 13-14
Planning and Regeneration			
Town Centre Development - Project Management		3,740	Please carry forward to fund project management for 2013/14
Town Centre - Public Realm		19,000	Please carry forward to fund project management for 2013/14

Capital Scheme	Additional budget approvals £	Budget Carry Forwards £	Comment
Community Services			
	62,000		Approve 62k for blue light works as per schedule from planning approval financed by contributions and S106
Discr.HomeRep'rAssist/HsgRenewGrants		37,717	Request carry forward of balance to meet 2013/14 expenditure
Energy Efficiency Home Insulation Project	10,000	17,292	Grant of 40k received from County, request approval of 40k budget in 12/13 with a carry forward of £7,292 plus additional budget of £10K approval requested.
Grants to Princ Pref Partners affordable housing		23,000	Staged payments of grant, the whole 200k has been committed and the remained required to meet the councils obligations
Disabled facilities Grant		185,283	Request Carry forward of £185,283 to bring budget up to £500,000 with DFG grant.
Environmental Services			
N Cemetery -Phase 2 Expansion		79,000	Project delayed due to consultation with local residents regarding the use of both fields and design, money required in 2013-14
Vehicle replacement programme		562,000	Some vehicles were on order at the cross over of the financial year and have since been delivered, the rest of the budget is required for vehicle replacements in line with route optimisation results

Capital Scheme	Additional budget approvals £	Budget Carry Forwards £	Comment
Cemetery Toilets		-1,563	Budget carry forward was agreed at Council 17th April however a small amount of expenditure was incurred in 2012-13 clawback amount spent and reduce budget
Depot Security		46,343	Work has started on this project, including new windows and fencing the value of the work completed so far is 18.5k, the remaining budget is required to complete the project
Bromsgrove Monument - Armed Forces memorial		20,000	Work has commenced and needs to be complete by 29th June for armed forces day.
CPE (Civil Parking Enforcement)	15,000	4,000	Member approval to recognise the capital element of the introduction of CPE, when original report was approved it was unsure as to the capital / revenue split all financed by an earmarked reserve. CPE is due to go live 30th May approximately 75% of the capital expenditure was incurred during 2012-13, and the remaining 25% balance in April
Business Transformation			
Member ICT facilities RBC/BDC		-1,327	reduce amount already carried forward
XP Sunray Servers		2,702	
Sunray Devices		6,360	
ESX Services		16,063	
Regulatory services			

Capital Scheme	Additional budget approvals £	Budget Carry Forwards £	Comment
BDC share of Regulatory - WETT shared service		32,930	Project has commenced and budget required as BDC's contribution towards the 1m Reg services joint capital scheme
Resources			
Income management PCI compliance		25,000	
Total	87,000	1,607,042	

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