



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a MEETING of BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL to be held in the Council Chamber at The Council House, Burcot Lane, Bromsgrove at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday 19th November 2014, when the business referred to below will be brought under consideration:-

The formal business will be preceded by a prayer.

1. To receive apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.

3. Election of Vice Chairman of the Council

Following the resignation of Councillor R. J. Laight as Vice-Chairman of the Council, to elect an Vice-Chairman of the Council for the remainder of the Municipal Year.

4. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 24th September 2014 (Pages 1 - 16)

5. To receive any announcements from the Chairman, the Civic Head and/or Head of Paid Service

6. To receive any announcements from the Leader

7. Recommendations from the Cabinet (Pages 17 - 18)

To consider a recommendation from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 5th November 2014.

(Background information on the recommendation is included at the back of the Council Book).

8. **To receive the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 24th September 2014, 1st October 2014 and 5th November 2014** (Pages 19 - 32)

9. **West Mercia Police and Crime Panel**

The Council is asked to appoint a representative and substitute to the West Mercia Police and Crime Panel.

The Panel is a Joint Committee of all the local authorities in the West Mercia police force area. As such it is required to reflect the overall political balance of all the authorities in the area. Appointees should therefore be from the majority political group on the Council. They are not required to be office-holders.

The term of office on the Panel is 4 years but the given there will be local elections in May 2015 the Council is asked to appoint until the elections.

10. **Questions on Notice**

To deal with any questions on notice from Members of the Council, in the order in which they have been received.

11. **Motion (to follow if any)**

Background information on a recommendation from the Cabinet - Gateway Service For Young people - Provision of Homelessness Support_(Pages 33 - 36)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

WEDNESDAY, 24TH SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 7.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Chairman), R. J. Laight (Vice-Chairman), S. J. Baxter, C. J. Bloore, D. W. P. Booth, J. M. Boswell, M. A. Bullivant, M. T. Buxton, R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, B. T. Cooper, R. J. Deeming, R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce, P. A. Harrison, H. J. Jones, P. Lammas, B. Lewis, L. C. R. Mallett, C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald, C. R. Scurrrell, E. M. Shannon, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon, M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Spencer, C. J. Tidmarsh, L. J. Turner, M. J. A. Webb, P. J. Whittaker and C. J. K. Wilson

33\14 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors J. R. Boulter, S. J. Dudley, R. Hollingworth, E. J. Murray, J. A. Ruck and C. B. Taylor.

34\14 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

The following declarations of interest were made:

Item 10 – Community Governance Review – Clent and Hagley

Councillor M. A. Sherrey declared an other disclosable interest as a member of Clent Parish Council. Councillor Sherrey left the room during the consideration of the item.

Councillors S. R. Colella and K. A. Grant-Pearce each declared other disclosable interests as members of Hagley Parish Council. Councillors Colella and Grant-Pearce left the room during the consideration of the item.

Item 6 – Recommendation from the Cabinet held on 24th September 2014 on Allocation Policy for Grant Funding to Ward Members

Councillor C. R. Scurrrell declared an other disclosable interest as a member of Belbroughton Parish Council. Councillor Scurrrell left the room during the consideration of the item.

35\14 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Meeting of the Council held on 20th August 2014 were submitted.

With reference to Minute No. 32/14, Councillor L. C. R. Mallett referred to the amendment put forward by Councillor C. J. Bloore that the consultation should only include all 1700 people directly affected by the proposed options for change. Councillor Mallett noted that the statement made by the S.151 Officer that this was not possible had not been recorded in the minutes.

The Chairman indicated that the minutes would be amended as necessary.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved as a correct record, subject to the amendment to Minute No.32/14.

36\14 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN, THE CIVIC HEAD AND/OR HEAD OF PAID SERVICE**

The Chairman referred to a recent injury suffered by one of the Council's caretakers Mr S. Godwin which would mean he would be away from work for some time.

The Chairman indicated she would like to write to Mr Godwin on behalf of herself and all Members sending the Council's best wishes and Members were in agreement with this proposal.

37\14 **ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER**

The Leader announced that Councillor R. Hollingworth had now stood down from the Cabinet.

In consequence Councillor M. J. A. Webb was now Portfolio Holder for Finance, Revenue and Benefits and Economic Development and Councillor M. A. Bullivant was now Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services and Environmental Services.

The Leader referred to the recent official re-opening of the High Street which had been attended by Members of this Council and of Worcestershire County Council.

The Leader also referred to the recent VJ Day Ceremony at the Burma Star memorial which she had attended.

38\14 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 3RD SEPTEMBER 2014**

(i) **Homes Choice Plus Allocations Policy Review**

The recommendations from the Cabinet were proposed by Councillor D. W. P. Booth and seconded by Councillor M. A. Bullivant.

In proposing the recommendations Councillor Booth referred to the consultations which had taken place with stakeholders which had led to the proposed Policy. In addition Councillor Booth drew attention to the fact that the new policy would be reviewed further in twelve months time and that in the meantime officers would be working with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust to consider whether Choice Based Lettings was the most effective way of meeting the strategic purpose of “help me to find somewhere to live in my locality”.

During the debate some concern was expressed at the possibility that this Authority may be moving away from working with partners in the allocation of social housing provision. Whilst some Members welcomed the proposed review of Choice Based Letting Members queried the use of the “systems thinking” approach and the need to extend the Allocations Policy review for a further twelve months.

Councillor Booth responded to Members’ concerns and stressed that the Authority was not leaving the partnership but was looking to ensure over the next twelve months that the changes would lead to improvements in the current system. In the meantime work would be undertaken on Choice Based Lettings to understand if it could provide the most effective and sustainable way of meeting the Council’s strategic purpose.

Councillor C. J. Bloore proposed that the recommendations be voted on separately but on being put to the vote the Chairman declared this proposal to be lost.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Home Choice Plus Allocations Policy as contained in Appendix 1 to the report be approved;
- (b) that officers be requested to undertake a review of the Policy after a period of twelve months from the implementation date to establish whether it is the most effective way of meeting the Council’s strategic purpose “help me to find somewhere to live in my locality”; and
- (c) that the Council works closely with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust during the next twelve months to establish whether from a “systems thinking” perspective, Choice Based Lettings is the most effective way of meeting the strategic purpose.

(ii) **Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Agreement**

The recommendation from the Cabinet was proposed by Councillor M. A. Bullivant and seconded by Councillor R. L. Dent

In proposing the recommendations Councillor Bullivant referred to changes which were required as a result of review of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) Business Model and the consequent changes required to the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Agreement. Each of the participating Councils would need

to agree to the changes. Councillor Bullivant stated that any wider changes would be considered at a later date together with any recommendations arising from the WRS Joint Scrutiny Task Group.

Councillor L. C. R. Mallett referred to discussions which had taken place at the Overview and Scrutiny Board regarding the difficult issues facing WRS, mainly in respect of the financial situation. There was concern from Members relating to the service which WRS would be able to provide in the future and also the impact this could have on this Council as the Host Authority.

As an amendment to the recommendation It was proposed by Councillor Mallett and seconded by Councillor C. J. Bloore, that the matter be deferred until the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee had received the report of the WRS Joint Scrutiny Task Group and had the opportunity to reconsider the issues.

On being put to the vote the Chairman declared the amendment to be lost.

RESOLVED that the changes to the Worcestershire Shared Services Partnership Agreement as detailed in Appendix 1 to the report be approved.

(iii) **Financial Monitoring Report 2014/2015 - Quarter 1**

The recommendation from the Cabinet was proposed by Councillor M. J. A. Webb and seconded by Councillor M. A. Bullivant.

Following a query from Councillor S. P. Shannon, Councillor Webb undertook to provide further information on the source of the Section 106 funding.

On a requisition under Council procedure Rule 17.5 the following details of voting on the recommendation from Cabinet were recorded:

For the recommendation: Councillors S. J. Baxter, C. J. Bloore, D. W. P. Booth, J. M. Boswell, M. A. Bullivant, M. T. Buxton, R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, B. T. Cooper, R. J. Deeming, R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce, P. A. Harrison, H. J. Jones R. J. Laight, P. Lammas, B. Lewis, L. C. R. Mallett, C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald, C. R. Scurrall, E. M. Shannon, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon, M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Spencer, C. J. Tidmarsh, L. J. Turner, M. J. A. Webb, P. J. Whittaker and C. J. K. Wilson (31)

Against the recommendation: (0)

Abstentions: (0)

RESOLVED that the Capital Programme 2014/2015 in respect of the Public Realm within the High Street be increased by £20,000, to be funded from Section 106 funds received in relation to land at Sherwood Road, Bromsgrove.

39\14

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET MEETING HELD ON 24TH SEPTEMBER 2014

(i) **Audit Findings Report 2013/2014**

The recommendations from the Cabinet were proposed by Councillor M. J. A. Webb and seconded by Councillor M. A. Bullivant.

In proposing the recommendations Councillor Webb drew attention to the fact that an “unqualified opinion” had been received from the external auditors both for the accounts themselves and in respect of the Value for Money judgement.

Councillor Webb referred to a small number of recommendations which the Section 151 Officer and the Management Team were working to address. In particular whilst officers had been able to deliver savings in 2013/2014 to maintain balances and to meet future budget pressures, it was important that there was clear reporting of savings and good financial monitoring.

Councillor Webb also thanked officers in the finance department for their work on the external audit.

Arising from consideration of the Audit Findings report Members raised a number of issues during the debate including the following:

- the importance of consideration by Members of a full Business Case in respect of large capital schemes prior to a commitment being made – in particular reference was made to the Council House/ Parkside project;
- the need for some areas of the Council’s Constitution to be updated;
- the need for the interim audit report on weaknesses in IT controls to be fully addressed;
- the lack of accuracy in forecasting expenditure which had resulted in a significant underspend and which also occurred in previous years;
- the need to report performance measures to committees .

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Audit Findings Report 2013/2014 be noted; and
- (b) that the draft letter of representation as included in the Audit findings Report be approved.

(ii) **Statement of Accounts 2013/2014**

The recommendations from the Cabinet were proposed by Councillor M. J. A. Webb and seconded by Councillor M. A. Bullivant.

In proposing the recommendations Councillor Webb referred to the underspend of approximately £600,000 which had enabled working balances to be increased to £3,700,000 and stated this was due to officers scrutinising expenditure very closely and working to increase income levels.

Councillor Webb drew attention to two minor adjustments to the narrative required on page 271 of the Council agenda within note 3 and to an amendment at page 211 of the Council agenda expanding the Earmarked Reserves, within note 3. Details had been circulated to all Members of the Council.

Members queried the underspend of £600,000 and expressed concern that if expenditure forecasts were incorrect this could lead to decisions on budgets being based on inaccurate information. In addition Council Tax increases had been agreed over the past few years which may not have been required in view of the savings made.

Councillor Mallett referred to the accounts process and suggested that they could be shared with Councillors earlier than September to enable appropriate scrutiny. Councillor Mallett also referred to the levels of Heads of Service salary costs.

The following amendment was proposed by Councillor Mallett and seconded by Councillor C. J. Bloore

That the Council notes the unbudgeted surplus in the accounts over the past two years . The Council agrees to freeze Council Tax at its current rate rather than increase it for 2015/2016 as proposed within the Medium Term Financial Plan and to fund this from underspends of monies realised through previous Council Tax rises accrued within general balances.

In responding to the amendment Councillor Webb stated that the savings had been achieved without a reduction in front line services and that to freeze Council Tax at current levels would have an on-going impact on the Council Tax Base.

On a requisition under Council Procedure Rule 17.5 the details of voting on the amendment were recorded as follows:

For the amendment: Councillors S. J. Baxter, C. J. Bloore, M. T. Buxton, S. R. Colella, B. Lewis, L. C. R. Mallett, C.M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald, E. M. Shannon, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon, L. J. Turner and C. J. K. Wilson (13)

Against the amendment: Councillors D. W. P. Booth, J. M. Boswell, M. A. Bullivant, R. A. Clarke, B. T. Cooper, R. J. Deeming, R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce, P. A. Harrison, H. J. Jones, R. J. Laight, P. Lammass, C. R. Scurrall, M. A. Sherrey, C. J. Spencer, C. J. Tidmarsh, M. J. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker (18)

Abstentions: (0)

The Chairman declared the amendment to be lost.

It was

RESOLVED that the Statement of Accounts 2013/2014 be approved subject to the minor adjustments referred to at the meeting:

- (a) the two adjustments referred to on page 271 of the Council agenda within note 3; and
- (b) the amendment on page 211 of the Council agenda expanding the Earmarked Reserves , within note 3.

(iii) **Allocation Policy for Grant Funding to Ward Members**

(Councillor C. R. Scurrall left the room during the consideration of this item)

The recommendations from the Cabinet were proposed by Councillor M. J. A. Webb and seconded by Councillor M. A. Bullivant.

In proposing the recommendations Councillor Webb referred to the previous decision of Council on this matter and the proposal to distribute the sum of £45,000 to Ward Members to utilise within their wards in accordance with the proposed ward budget scheme. The sum of £1,115 would be distributed equally to all Members and not only to areas with Parish Councils. Councillor Webb drew attention to the comprehensive report and accompanying appendices.

Councillor S. J. Baxter expressed concern at the original decision not to grant the sum of £45,000 to Parish Councils to mitigate the impact on Parish Councils of the changes to Council Tax Support. At the time that the decision was taken there had been a lack of supporting papers and a possible lack of awareness of the original purpose of the grant. Councillor Baxter stated that only a small number of District Councils had chosen not to pass the funding direct to Parish Councils in line with the Government's intention.

A number of Members expressed similar concerns to Councillor Baxter and felt that the decision undermined Parish Councils and would be detrimental to the relationship between the District Council and the Parish Councils.

On a requisition under Council Procedure Rule 17.5 the details of voting on the recommendations were recorded as follows:

For the recommendations: Councillors C. J. Bloore, D. W. P. Booth, J. M. Boswell, M. A. Bullivant, M. T. Buxton, B. T. Cooper, R. L. Dent, P. A. Harrison, R. J. Laight, P. Lammass, L. C. R. Mallett, C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald, E. M. Shannon, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon, C. J. Tidmarsh, M. J. A. Webb and C. J. K. Wilson (19)

Against the recommendations: Councillors R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, K. A. Grant-Pearce, B. Lewis, L. J. Turner and P. J. Whittaker (6)

Abstentions: Councillors S. J. Baxter, R. J. Deeming, M. A. Sherrey and C. J. Spencer (4)

RESOLVED:

- (a) that Members note the decision of 26th February 2014 to allocate the sum of £45,000 equally to ward Councillors to spend within their wards and within the context of the more detailed report confirm this and their agreement to the introduction of the Bromsgrove District Ward Members Fund Policy detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, as amended to remove any reference to consultation by the Executive Director of Finance and Resources with the Portfolio Holder for Finance; and
- (b) that delegation be given to the Executive Director of Finance and Resources to approve requests and make the formal payments in relation to the allocation of funds.

40\14

MINUTES OF THE MEETINGS OF THE CABINET HELD ON 20TH AUGUST 2014 AND 3RD SEPTEMBER 2014

The minutes of the meetings of the cabinet held on 20th August 2014 and 3rd September 2014 were received for information.

20th August 2014

Further to Minute No. 22/14 Councillor C. J. Bloore requested information on the number of responses to the Council Tax Support Scheme consultation received to date.

Councillor M. A. Sherrey responded that the latest information she had received was that there were in excess of 100 responses. The consultation period would close in the first week of October.

3rd September 2014

Further to Minute No. 30/14 Members commented on a number of issues including:

- Overall Capital Projects underspend;

- Revenue underspend at the end of Quarter 1;
- Car Parking income levels – written response offered;
- Savings made in Community Transport due to renegotiation of the contract and whether the savings could be allocated to increasing the availability of the service – written response offered about savings achieved;
- Parks and Green Space – only ten per cent of Capital Budget spent;
- Planning and Development Control overspend;
- Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services - why was there expenditure of £82,000 on professional Legal Advice and Services?;
- Human Resources and Transformation – why a zero budget was shown for 2014/15

Portfolio Holders undertook to provide the information requested in writing where appropriate.

41\14

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT PLAN 2011-2030 OBJECTIVE ASSESSMENT OF HOUSING NEED

Councillor R. J. Deeming presented a report on a proposed response to the queries raised by the Bromsgrove District Plan Planning Inspector in relation to the objective assessment of housing need figure being proposed within the Plan. Whilst the Inspector had been provided with a range of housing numbers which could be considered suitable, the Inspector had confirmed that the Council need to be more explicit on what it considered its objective assessment of housing need figure to be.

Councillor Deeming drew Members' attention to the proposed letter of response to the Planning Inspector at Appendix 1 to the report, which contained a revised figure of 6648 dwellings for the period 2011-2030. The letter also contained further information and justification for this revised figure.

Councillor Deeming made reference to a minor change within the letter so that the second sentence of paragraph 12 would read as follows:

“BDC does however remain unclear how market signals affect the HMA housing need figures, and we remain concerned that without similar assessments all authorities housing needs could be questioned, with potential unknown consequences.”

Councillor L. C. R. Mallett referred to the difficulties and delays which had arisen in relation to the Bromsgrove District Plan and stated that the Labour Group had no confidence in the Plan which was felt to be not “fit for purpose”.

Councillor S. R. Colella spoke about the importance of the Bromsgrove District Plan for the future of the Bromsgrove District and the many difficult issues which the Authority was facing including the possible need to meet part of the development needs of Redditch Borough Council and Birmingham City Council.

An amendment was proposed by Councillor P. M. McDonald and seconded by Councillor Mallett that the letter to be sent to the Planning Inspector be extended to include reference to the Council's concerns over the issues of road infrastructure, affordable housing and a Hot Food Takeaways Policy.

On being put to the vote the Chairman declared the amendment to be lost.

It was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that subject to the inclusion of the amended wording to paragraph 12 referred to above, the Bromsgrove District Plan objective assessment of housing need letter (Appendix 1 to the report) be endorsed for submission to the Planning Inspectorate;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Service/Director and the Strategic Planning Manager, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to prepare and submit the necessary documents to support the examination of the Local Plan; and
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Service/Director and the Strategic Planning Manager, following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning, to agree any minor changes to the Plan where appropriate during the examination.

42\14 **NEW HOMES BONUS - UPDATE**

The Chairman stated that an written update on the New Homes Bonus and the progress of the Working Group had been circulated to Members and to the public present from Councillor M. J. A. Webb as Portfolio Holder for Finance

A number of questions were raised by Members. Councillor Webb responded that it was not possible to answer these at present as preferred options had not yet been developed. It was aimed to propose a scheme which would address the concerns raised later in the year.

43\14 **COMMUNITY GOVERNANCE REVIEW - CLENT AND HAGLEY**

(Councillors S. R. Colella, K. A. Grant-Pearce and M. A. Sherrey left the room during the consideration of this item.)

Members considered a report on a petition received from Hagley Parish Council requesting a Community Governance Review which proposed boundary changes to Clent and Hagley Parish Council Areas. In order to trigger the statutory timetable and process for consultation, Council were requested to consider and approve the Terms of Reference for the Review.

It was proposed by Councillor M. J. A. Webb and seconded by Councillor M. A. Bullivant and

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the petition from Hagley Parish Council formally requesting a Community Governance review proposing changes to the boundaries of Clent Parish Council and Hagley Parish Council be received and noted;
- (b) that the Terms of Reference for the Clent and Hagley Community Governance Review as contained in Appendix A to the report be approved;
- (c) that the proposed consultation process and statutory timetable commence forthwith;
- (d) that authority be delegated to the Electoral Matters Committee to deal with all stages of the Review up to and including the making of the Re-organisation Order; and
- (e) that the sum of £4,500 be released from balances to cover the cost of the consultation.

44\14

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question submitted by Councillor S. P. Shannon

“With reference to the Cabinet meeting that took place earlier today (24/09/14) Agenda item 4 page 16 amongst the service successes and achievements and the suggestion that the former Fire Station and County Council offices be marketed for retail purposes. With so many reports and surveys suggesting that the UK has oversupply of retail premises combined with many High Streets and shopping centres failing. That this Council recognise the popularity of internet sales, click and collect and other alternatives to traditional shopping. Has the Leader considered the possibility that further retail capacity will no longer be required in Bromsgrove, and that the town centre space might be put to better use by something that there is huge demand for in Bromsgrove such as affordable housing?”

Councillor R. L. Dent responded that the administration was committed to bringing businesses back to the High Street.

Question submitted by Councillor R. J. Shannon

“In the light of the news that the former Focus DIY store has now been taken by a new retailer to the town centre, does the Portfolio Holder share the same concern as the Labour Group and the residents of Bromsgrove, that Sainsbury’s are no longer planning on building a supermarket on the Birmingham Road site. Especially given the fact that Sainsbury’s are about to open a new store on the nearby Stourbridge Road, their original planning application is reaching its expiry date and taking into account they said they have no plans to do so in the near future?”

Councillor Dent responded “that the Council had written confirmation from Sainsbury’s that they are committed to developing the site for the site. They do require a “clean site” with no tenants before it can be considered by their Board for construction and these sites are built into their construction plans

well in advance. There is a lease issue with the Co-op and by renting the former Focus building, Sainsbury's are just ensuring that they get some income from the site by renting to "What Store." The small store is irrelevant as they are a separate trading company under the Sainsbury's banner and having one does not preclude the other".

Question submitted by Councillor P. M. McDonald

"Does the Portfolio Holder responsible agree with me that Regulatory Services with the continual cutbacks will in future be unable to prosecute and bring to justice restaurant owners such as the one in Rubery for serving substitutes such as beef for lamb or even worse restaurants from serving horse meat as a substitution?"

Councillor M. A. Bullivant responded and thanked Councillor McDonald for highlighting the excellent work undertaken by WRS Trading Standards team "which is therefore within the legal jurisdiction of the County Council rather than the District Council. The reductions so far made to Trading standards activities have focussed on advisory and inspection work rather than the kind of enforcement activity referred to which is more intelligence lead. Members should be aware that the decisions to instigate prosecutions are taken by the local teams rather than by WRS itself. The Legal Team in Bromsgrove is contracted to deal with WRS trading standards cases and will be working with the trading standards team to streamline their processes and will continue to support the trading standards team with their formal actions including food fraud cases.

This Council will have made a small reduction in its contribution to WRS 2013/14 to 2016/17 however these savings are based on efficiencies through transformation work".

Question submitted by Councillor C. J. Bloore

"Will the Portfolio Holder for Town Centre Redevelopment confirm her plans for the DDS&S and car park site and when she expects there to be any progress in resolving the current eyesore, does she believe that the questions over funding for the Stourbridge Road improvements are a barrier to any developer coming forward in the absence of Sainsbury's?"

Councillor Dent responded "that the DDS&S Club is in private ownership. Future development on the Stourbridge Road site would be considered by Worcestershire County Council Highways who would take into account any increase or decrease in traffic movements before recommending improvements to the transport system. This would then need to form part of negotiations with the developer".

Question submitted by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett

"Does the Portfolio Holder agree with the Opposition that the previous Council Leader was wrong to pledge in the local press that work would start within a year on the High Street before the 2007 local elections, when in reality all that

happened over the next seven years was the demolition of the market hall and the chopping down of the trees , meanwhile many shops were forced to close, and if she doesn't agree, how does she account for this seven year broken promise?"

Councillor Dent responded that she was disappointed that Councillor Mallett was looking back rather than to the future.

Question submitted by Councillor C. M. McDonald

Despite assurances that action and contract signings were to take place on the Cinema/Food retailer site (and consequent "releases" of artists drawings etc. to the press) and the Recreation Road site no visible progress has been seen on the site. Please will the Portfolio Holder give me a full and frank update on where each of these negotiations are at and the steps she has taken as Portfolio Holder to conclude best value for this Council since taking on her new role?

Councillor Dent responded "that the Recreation Road site which is made up of land owned by this Council and other landowners was marketed for Extra Care or Care Village use. Progress with the preferred bidder has been extremely positive and this Council is expecting to receive a planning application in respect of the site very soon. The details of any negotiation or contract is confidential.

Members will be aware that the Cabinet previously gave approval in April 2014 for Opus to develop the Council owned site at Hanover Street car park. The Council has recently been contacted by Opus to advise that they are no longer able to deliver the scheme as originally agreed. Despite this setback the Council remains committed to developing the site in line with the Area Action Plan and officers are in the process of considering the options for the site going forward.

As a result of comments they have received, officers believe there is still a high level of interest on the part of potential tenants of the site".

Question received from Councillor M. T. Buxton

"Does the Portfolio Holder share our concerns that despite the postponement to the opening of the High Street for a month, that when it did open in August the works were still not complete, even as recently as Friday there remain bollards, works and snagging unfinished in the High Street, and does she consider works at the Worcester Road section to now be satisfactorily completed?"

Councillor Dent responded that whilst the District Council carried out the design work for the High Street, the designs were passed to Worcestershire County Council as Highways Authority. This Council asked for a completion date and was given 18th August and therefore went ahead with the re-opening of the High Street on the Bank Holiday weekend which was 23rd August. Minor works continue around the lighting of street café areas and heritage

buildings and events would be held on Saturdays to encourage people into the town centre.

45\14

MOTION - ACCOMMODATION OF STAFF AT PARKSIDE

Members considered the following motion submitted by Councillor S. J. Baxter:

“ We call for the following to be put before this Council:

- The full Bromsgrove and Redditch accommodation plan post the move to Parkside, including which services will be located where;
- An impact assessment of the proposed remoteness of Council staff on the level of service that our residents would have, compared to those living in Redditch and other hosting authorities, including accessibility of staff and documents;
- An impact assessment on changes in budgets resulting from changes in hosting arrangements;
- An overview of the project plan with timelines, risk assessment and facilities management for the new site.

We also call for a halt on all further movement of staff until the above is approved by Council.”

The motion was moved by Councillor Baxter and seconded by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett.

In proposing the motion Councillor Baxter referred to the move of the Planning development management and enforcement teams to Redditch, albeit with two planning officers being located in Bromsgrove . Councillor Baxter stated that this highlighted a concern that the service for residents would decline as staff and services were relocated away from Bromsgrove and that Shared services would mean that Bromsgrove residents would be sharing the cost but not an benefit from equal service levels.

Councillor Baxter referred to the expenditure of £3.2m incurred in respect of the office accommodation at Parkside and queried whether this would be fit for purpose. Councillor Baxter was concerned that members had not seen full details of the project or of the potential impact of the changes. The motion was requesting that no further moves take place until Members had the opportunity to consider the full picture.

Councillor Mallett referred to the lack of a full business case in respect of the Parkside project which had been highlighted in the Audit Report, and to concern that only 30-40 “hot desks” for District Council officers would be available within the building.

Members raised concerns over the decision to move to Parkside, the cost effectiveness of the changes and the impact they may have on residents.

Having been put to the vote the Chairman declared the motion to be lost.

46\14

MOTION - SOCIAL RENTED HOUSING IN BROMSGROVE

Members considered the following motion submitted by Councillor S. P. Shannon:

- (1) That the Chief Executive and Group Leaders of Bromsgrove District Council write to the MP for Bromsgrove Sajid Javid MP laying out the case for a social rent level of 60% of local market rent as “affordable” for current and potential Bromsgrove tenants, and requesting his support for this and lobbying of the Minister for Communities and Local Government to ensure the Affordable Housing Strategy favours a Bromsgrove Social Rented Programme by working in partnership with its social housing providers.
- (2) To support the work of the SHOUT campaign and take a lead in affirming the positive value and purpose of social rented provision in Bromsgrove.

The motion was moved by Councillor Shannon and seconded by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett.

In proposing the motion Councillor Shannon referred to the cross party Social Housing Under Threat (SHOUT) campaign which was aiming to address the lack of affordable social housing. The approach of the Homes and Community Agency to supporting social rent provision only in very limited circumstances meant many in Bromsgrove had little chance of renting a good quality home, particularly in view of the impact locally of the “Right to Buy” and “Right to Acquire” schemes.

Councillor Mallett stated that the lack of social housing for rent in Bromsgrove was well recognised and that it was appropriate to request the support of the MP for Bromsgrove in seeking to achieve a social rent level of 60% of local market rents.

Councillor D. W. P. Booth stated that whilst all could appreciate the sentiments behind the motion, he felt it was a simplistic approach to what was a complex problem. The motion addressed the symptoms only and there was a need to look at the whole picture in relation to affordable housing, renting and the housing market. The review of the Housing Allocations Policy as part of transformation would provide a better way of addressing the issues.

Having been put to the vote the Chairman declared the motion to be lost.

The meeting closed at 10.35 p.m.

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET

RECOMMENDATION TO THE COUNCIL

5TH NOVEMBER 2014

1. **GATEWAY SERVICE FOR YOUNG PEOPLE – PROVISION OF HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT**

The Cabinet has considered a report on the proposed use of funding of £11,200 received from Worcestershire County Council, on a one year basis at present, to be used for the purposes of funding, at District level, a service for young people who approach the Authority with housing needs.

The report proposed that the funding be used by this Council in conjunction with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust and St Basils to set up a Gateway Service for 16 – 23 year olds to provide crisis and emergency support and to help to prevent homelessness.

It is therefore RECOMMENDED:

That this Council accepts the sum of £11,200 from Worcestershire County Council and that this funding be utilised to meet part of the cost of the provision of a Gateway Service for 16-23 year olds as set out in the report.

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 24TH SEPTEMBER 2014 AT 5.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors: M. A. Sherrey (Leader), D. W. P. Booth, M. A. Bullivant, R. L. Dent and M. J. A. Webb

Observers: Councillors C. J. Bloore, S. R. Colella, B. Lewis, L. C. R. Mallett and C. R. Scurrall

Invitees: Ms Z. Thomas (Grant Thornton)

Officers: Mr K. Dicks, Ms S. Hanley, Ms J. Pickering, Mrs S. Sellers, Ms S. Morgan and Ms R. Cole

31/14 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor C. B. Taylor.

32/14 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

33/14 **AUDIT FINDINGS REPORT 2013/14**

The Cabinet considered the Audit Findings Report 2013/2014 together with the draft letter of representation. The Leader welcomed Ms Z. Thomas from Grant Thornton to the meeting.

Ms Thomas recognised that the accounts were well prepared and working papers were appropriate. There had been very few amendments and officers were thanked for their co-operation which had ensured a smooth process.

In relation to Value for Money the report reflected that the Council had proper arrangements in place for securing financial resilience and for challenging how it secures economy, efficiency and effectiveness.

It was noted that there were a number of recommendations proposed by Grant Thornton which had been accepted by officers. These were included in the Appendix to the Audit report and an Action Plan was being developed by officers to deliver the improvements required. The high priority recommendations related to:

- regular updates to be given on the ledger implementation;

- a review of the 2013/14 figure to have a better understanding of the recurring savings;
- accelerating the on-going work around reporting of measures to Members.

RECOMMENDED

- (a) that the Audit Findings report 2013/14 be noted; and
- (b) that the draft letter of representation , as included in the Audit Findings report be approved.

34/14 **STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS 2013/14**

Consideration was given to the report on the Statement of Accounts for 2013/2014.

Officers were thanked for their work in producing the accounts.

It was noted that there were three minor adjustments to the accounts which did not impact on the final figures.

RECOMMENDED that the Statement of Accounts 2013/14 be approved subject to the following minor adjustments:

- (a) the two adjustments on page 271 (of the Council agenda) within note 3; and
- (b) the amendment at page 211 (of the Council agenda) expanding the Earmarked Reserves, within note 3.

35/14 **ALLOCATION POLICY FOR GRANT FUNDING TO WARD MEMBERS**

The Cabinet considered a report proposing a policy to distribute funds to Ward Members to utilise within a Ward budget scheme.

Members were reminded of the background to the proposal which was approved at the Council meeting on 26th February 2014. The scheme enabled the allocation of the £45,000 received by the Council as part of the Government settlement for 2014/2015 in relation to the impact on Parish Councils from the Council Tax Support Scheme to be allocated across the District through Ward Members.

Members noted the comprehensive report including the additional legal and risk management implications. It was noted that any proposals for expenditure would be required to meet the criteria contained within the appendix to the report.

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that Members note the decision of 26th February 2014 to allocate the sum of £45,000 equally to ward Councillors to spend within their wards and within the context of this more detailed report confirm this and their agreement to the introduction of the Bromsgrove District Ward Members' Fund Policy detailed in Appendix 1 to the report, as amended

Agenda Item 8

Cabinet
24th September 2014

- to remove any reference to consultation by the Executive Director of Finance and Resources with the Portfolio Holder for Finance; and
- (b) that delegation be given to the Executive Director of Finance and Resources to approve requests and make the formal payments in relation to the allocation of funds.

The meeting closed at 5.30 p.m.

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 1ST OCTOBER 2014 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. A. Sherrey (Leader), C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader),
M. A. Bullivant and M. J. A. Webb

Observers: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett and R. J. Shannon

Officers: Ms S. Hanley, Ms J. Pickering and Ms R. Cole

36/14 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors D. W. P. Booth and R. L. Dent.

37/14 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

38/14 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd September 2014 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd September 2014 be approved as a correct record.

39/14 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 18th August 2014 and 15th September 2014 were submitted.

Councillor M. J. A. Webb stated that as Portfolio Holder for Finance he was willing to attend meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board when appropriate at the invitation of the Board.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 18th August 2014 and 15th September 2014 be noted.

40/14

BUDGET POSITION AND EXPENDITURE - PRESENTATION

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources gave a presentation on the proposed Budget Process 2015/16 - 2017/18, in particular the process and timetable which would enable effective scrutiny of the budget.

A number of issues were highlighted for Members to be aware of including:

- likely further reduction in the Grant Settlement from Government;
- changes to the welfare system i.e. Essential Living Fund, Universal Credit;
- further cuts likely in Worcestershire County Council funding;
- impact on the public sector of the national economy;
- New Homes Bonus - options being considered;
- Parish Councils funding;
- 1% pay award assumed
- Potential 2% Council Tax increase assumed for the present

The Executive Director, Finance and Resources reported that additional more detailed information on the Council's Strategic Purposes and the costs across departments that sat behind them would be coming forward for Members to consider. Where there were additional pressures on budgets more detailed information would be available for Members. Where services were being re-designed the impact needed to be clear.

The importance of improving financial monitoring and forecasting was recognised including identifying whether savings were recurring or "one-off".

The revised budget processes were welcomed by Members.

It was

RESOLVED that the presentation be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.30 p.m.

Chairman

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

WEDNESDAY, 5TH NOVEMBER 2014 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. A. Sherrey (Leader), C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader),
M. A. Bullivant, R. L. Dent and M. J. A. Webb

Observers: Councillors H. J. Jones, E. J. Murray and L. C. R. Mallett

Officers: Mr. K. Dicks, Ms. S. Hanley, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. J. Willis, Ms.
A. De Warr, Mrs. S. Sellers, Mr. D. Allen, Mr. I. Roberts and Ms. R. Cole.

41/14 **APOLOGIES**

An apology for absence was received from Councillor D. W. P. Booth.

42/14 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

43/14 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1st October 2014 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 1st October 2014 be approved as a correct record.

44/14 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 13th October 2014 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 14th October 2014 be noted.

45/14 **WORCESTERSHIRE SHARED SERVICES JOINT COMMITTEE**

The minutes of the Worcestershire Shared Services Committee held on 2nd October 2014 were submitted.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that Recommendation 11 of the of the Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services Scrutiny Task Group be approved as recommended by the

Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee in Minute No. 16/14;
and

- (b) that the remainder of the minutes be noted.

46/14

**DODFORD, HAGLEY AND BEOLEY CONSERVATION AREA
APPRAISALS AND MANAGEMENT PLANS**

The Cabinet considered a report on the consultation which had been undertaken in respect of draft Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans in respect of Dodford, Hagley and Beoley. It was reported that in respect of Dodford and Beoley boundary extensions had also been included within the consultation process.

Members felt that the report and accompanying detailed documents were clear and well presented and when in place would be a helpful tool to protect and enhance these areas.

It was noted that responses to the consultations had revealed broad support for all three of the Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans. It was suggested that revisions to boundaries of both Dodford and Beoley had produced sufficient comment to warrant a further review of the proposed boundaries followed by a further consultation to consider the outcome.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Hagley Conservation Area Appraisal and Management Plan be approved and its contents be noted as a material consideration for planning purposes; and
- (b) that further reviews be undertaken of the boundaries of the Dodford and Beoley Conservation Areas and that should the reviews suggest further alterations to the boundaries of Dodford or Beoley, then further public consultation be carried out.

47/14

**DISPOSAL OF COUNCIL OWNED LAND - AINTREE CLOSE/LINGFIELD
WALK CATSHILL**

The Cabinet considered a report on the proposed transfer of Council-owned land at Lingfield Walk/Aintree Close, Catshill, which was currently leased to a local Scouts Group, to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust. It was reported that BDHT would intend to develop a proposal for the erection of 14 one bedroom flats using this land and other adjacent land in the Trust's ownership.

It was noted that in exchange for the land at Lingfield Walk/Aintree Close it was proposed that BDHT would transfer to this Council an alternative local site at Woodrow Lane, Catshill and before transfer would fund the cost of a new Scout Hut to be constructed on the land, which this Council would then lease to the Scout Group.

There was detailed discussion on the proposal and Members noted that it was the intention that the new facility, which had been welcomed by the Scouts both locally and regionally, would be available to other local groups and

organisations within the Community. It was also noted that officers felt that best value was being achieved in respect of the proposal.

It was recognised that if successful, the proposal would enable BDHT to deliver additional affordable housing to meet locally identified priorities and would provide a new building to meet the needs of the Scouts.

It was noted that the proposal had direct links to the Council's Strategic purposes:

- Help me to find somewhere to live in my locality;
- Provide good things for me to see, do and visit;
- Help me to run a successful business

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the transfer of land at Lingfield Walk/Aintree Close to Bromsgrove District Housing Trust in exchange for land at Woodrow Lane together with a new Scout Hut building to be constructed on the site by Bromsgrove District Housing Trust be approved;
- (b) that delegated authority be given to the Executive Director, Finance and Corporate Resources and the Head of Legal, Equality and Democratic Services, to undertake all necessary financial and legal steps to implement the land exchange, terminate the existing lease with the Scouts and enter into a new lease for the new Scout Hut.

48/14

GATEWAY SERVICES FOR YOUNG PEOPLE - PROVISION OF HOMELESSNESS SUPPORT

Members considered a report on the receipt of £11,200 from Worcestershire County Council to be used for the purposes of funding, at District level, a service for young people who approach the Authority with housing needs. It was noted that the funding was on a one year basis at present subject to further review.

It was reported that officers had worked with the County Council, Bromsgrove District Housing Trust and St Basils to develop a proposed Gateway Service for young people which would provide crisis and emergency support to 16 - 23 year olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.

The proposal involved supplementing the County Council funding with funding from this Council (£3,000 to be met from existing budgets) and St Basils (£6,000) to meet the cost of a Gateway officer for one year at this stage who would operate within the BDHT Housing Options Team and work closely with Children's Services and other referring agencies.

Members welcomed the proposal and the partnership working, which it was felt would make the best use of the funding available and provide an opportunity to prevent homelessness and improve housing options for young people.

RECOMMENDED that this Council accepts the sum of £11,200 from Worcestershire County Council and that this funding be utilised to meet part of the cost of the provision of a Gateway Service for 16 – 23 year olds as set out in the report.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that this Council supports the provision of a Gateway Service with the allocation of funding from existing budgets of up to £3,000; and
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to finalise negotiations with St Basils in respect of the establishment of the Gateway Service and to enter into any related agreements.

49/14

**COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME - DRAFT REGULATIONS
CONSIDERED FOR FURTHER CONSULTATION**

The Cabinet considered a report which gave details of the outcome of the recent public consultation on possible changes to the Local Council Tax Support Scheme and requested Members to consider any subsequent changes to the Scheme.

Officers and Members referred briefly to the background to this matter which was set out fully within the report and the need to address the potential funding gap for this Council of approximately £45,000 for 2015/16. It was noted that Worcestershire County Council had indicated their intention, if necessary, to again “claw back” from this Council any shortfall to cover their funding gap through reductions in funding for the Essential Living Fund and other services as they had done in the previous year.

Members were reminded that Local Council Tax Schemes are required to protect pensionable age claimants and to incentivise work for working age claimants.

Details were given of the preliminary public consultation which had been undertaken between 1st September and 10th October 2014. This had included statutory consultation with major preceptors and other stakeholders and a full public consultation setting out possible options for change and requesting views on the various options.

The public consultation had included an online survey open to all residents and a direct mailshot to 6,352 households. Checks had been made to ensure that the proportion of Local Council Tax Claimants within the sample was representative of the District as a whole. It was noted that 491 responses had been received from members of the public.

Officers also drew attention to responses received from Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Housing Trust and the Chair of Bromsgrove District Housing Trust's Tenants Panel.

The full results of the public consultation as included within Appendix 1 of the report were noted.

Members attention was also drawn to the recent Supreme Court Judgement given on 29th October 2014 which considered the manner and nature of statutory consultation regarding changes to Council Tax Support Schemes. Full details had been included in the supplementary report to Cabinet. It was reported that as a result of the judgement, the statutory consultation with interested parties referred to in section 3.42 of the report, would now include a mailshot to all current working age Council Tax Support Scheme claimants.

In addition, it was proposed that the consultation include possible alternative options for the Council to absorb the shortfall in its budgets, such as raising Council Tax, reducing Council services and using the compensatory savings to fund Council Tax Support or a combination of the two options.

Cabinet welcomed the receipt of the Supreme Court judgement which had helped to clarify a complex legal situation and would enable this Council to amend details of the proposed statutory consultation process in respect of the Draft Scheme accordingly.

Members then considered the options for change to the Council Tax Support Scheme as set out in Appendix 3 to the report and recognised the potential impact of changes on those working age residents who are on a low income. It was noted that officers would be working to use a range of options available to provide transitional support including the setting up of a small Hardship Fund.

Members also noted the tight timetable for consideration of the Scheme which had to be finalised and published by 31st January 2015. Due to the work required to prepare the regulations and guidance, the Scheme was required to be agreed in early January 2015.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the outcome of the initial statutory consultation on options for changes to the Local Council Tax Scheme be noted;
- (b) that the current Scheme be amended as follows:
 - (i) entitlement to Council Tax Support be capped at 80% of Council Tax liability so that all working age claimants will pay a minimum of 20% towards their Council Tax liability;
 - (ii) the provision of second adult rebate be removed; and
 - (iii) non-dependents' income be taken into account
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support to carry out the next phase of consultation on the Draft Scheme;
- (d) that authority be delegated to the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support to develop a Hardship Fund Policy to provide transitional support for liable persons assessed to be in financial hardship as a result of the changes to Local Tax Support; and

- (e) that in relation to uprating, it be noted that this will apply regardless of any other changes made under (b) above, and that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support to incorporate the necessary changes to bring uprating into effect into the Scheme.

(In view of the response of the Worcestershire County Council which was included as an Appendix to the report Councillor C. B. Taylor requested that it be noted that he was also a Member of that Authority.)

50/14

FEES AND CHARGES 2015/2016

The Cabinet considered a report on proposed Fees and Charges in respect of a variety of Council Services for 2015/16. It was noted that in general the overall increase was 3% although this did vary between services and some charges such as for Licensing were set at a national level. It was noted that it was proposed that some charges, such as those for Car Parks, remained at the current level.

The Portfolio Holder, Councillor M. J. A. Webb drew attention to the current proposal to increase the Garden Waste Collection Service to £38 per annum. As part of the previous Medium Term Financial Plan it had been agreed to increase the cost to £45 per annum as from March 2015. Councillor Webb referred to charges made by neighbouring Authorities for a similar service which were significantly higher in some cases.

It was reported that officers had subsequently given further consideration to the significant number of additional customers who had taken up the service with the current level of 19,700 increasing by 2,400 from previous years, together with an appropriate fee level to be met by customers and therefore the proposed fee had been revised to £38 per annum. It was noted that this would result in a shortfall of estimated income projected in the current financial year of £7,000 which could be met from existing budgets within Environmental Services. The full year effect of the reduction in 2015/16 was estimated at £63,000 and this would need to be addressed as part of the savings to be delivered during the budget process for 2015/16.

The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources referred to the proposal within the report that the increases in fees and charges be implemented from 1st January 2015. On further reflection officers felt it was more appropriate and more beneficial to the Community as a whole for the implementation date to be 1st April 2015.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the fees and charges as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be approved and be implemented from 1st April 2015;

- (b) that the shortfall in income for 2014/15 of £7,000 as a result of the reduction in the Garden Waste Collection charge, be met from existing budgets within Environmental Services; and
- (c) that officers be requested to address any resulting shortfall in income from the Garden Waste Collection service for 2015/16 – 2017/18, estimated at £63,000 per annum, when considering the levels of savings to be made as part of the budget process.

51/14

MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2015/16 - 2017/18

Members considered a report containing the current summary budget position for 2015/16 – 2017/18 which was at present showing a shortfall of £676,000 for 2015/16. The report also contained details of the costs associated with the Council's strategic purposes.

The Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources informed Members that information on costs associated with each of the Council's strategic purposes together with costs for enabling services had been included in the appendices to the report. Officers would be using this type of information to suggest alternative ways of delivering savings.

It was reported that this was part of the continuing process of Transformation and would enable both the Cabinet and the Overview and Scrutiny Board to look at the costs associated with meeting a strategic purpose across a number of Council Services. The relevant measures would be brought to Members so that these could inform the value of the expenditure against the demand for the service by the community. It was intended to focus on the purpose of services to the community and to realise savings whilst protecting those services that create value for residents.

The Cabinet were requested to determine any areas which they wished to consider in more detail over the forthcoming months, and to raise these with the Chief Executive or the Executive Directors in the first instance .

Members appreciated that this was a more transparent and effective approach to examining costs and determining the value provided by services.

RESOLVED that the costs associated with delivery of strategic purposes be noted and that officers be requested to work on the Medium Term Financial Plan to realise savings and additional income to meet the projected shortfall.

The meeting closed at 7.00 p.m.

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

CABINET**5th November 2014****GATEWAY SERVICE FOR 16-23 YEARS OLDS**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis
Wards Affected	ALL
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1 Worcestershire County Council is in the process of reviewing Housing Related Support in the face of substantial funding reductions. As part of the changes to Housing Related Support a decision has been made to fund a young person's service at a District level for a one year period subject to further review. These new funding arrangements are expected to begin in January 2015.
- 1.1 The County Council have therefore proposed to provide each Local Authority with £11,200 from its Future Lives budget to provide an enhanced service at District level to 16 – 23 years olds who approach with housing needs.
- 1.2 Officers have worked with the County Council, bdht and St. Basils to develop a proposed Gateway Service for Young People which will provide crisis and emergency support to 16 – 23 years olds who are homeless or at risk of homelessness.
- 1.3 The Gateway officer will assess a young person's housing and support needs in conjunction with the housing options team at bdht. Any opportunities to prevent homelessness or provide housing options for the young person will be explored. The young person will also be supported to develop their skills, confidence and other opportunities in order to make a successful transition into adulthood.
- 1.4 The proposal will be funded jointly by Worcestershire County Council, Bromsgrove District Council and St Basils. This will provide service continuity as St Basils currently provide support for young people with housing needs in Bromsgrove.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

CABINET**5th November 2014**

2.1 The Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that;

- 1) Bromsgrove District Council accepts £11,200 from Worcestershire County Council and officers utilise this funding to provide the Gateway Service for 16-23 year olds.
- 2) Bromsgrove District Council supports the Gateway Service with up to £3,000 from existing budgets.
- 3) That authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to finalise negotiations with St Basils for the Gateway Service to be established and enter into any related agreements.

3. **KEY ISSUES**

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The £3,000 required for Bromsgrove District Council's contribution has been identified within existing budgets.
- 3.2 The costs for providing the Gateway service are £20,200 to be funded in the following way:

Worcestershire County Council	£11,200
Bromsgrove District Council	£ 3,000
St Basils	<u>£ 6,000</u>
Total	£20,200

Legal Implications

- 3.3 This service will assist the Council in meeting its statutory duties of the Housing Act 1996, and Homelessness Act 2002.
- 3.4 It is proposed that a Service Level Agreement will be drawn up to cover the contributions and responsibilities of the parties.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.5 A similar service is currently delivered by St Basils funded through the Governments Homeless Transition Fund which is due to terminate at the end January 2015.
- 3.6 The proposed Gateway service will commence in January 2015 and will be delivered by the current Homeless Transition Fund officer.
- 3.7 The officer will be co-located at the Young Persons Supported Accommodation on New Road and bdht.

CABINET

5th November 2014

- 3.8 The Gateway Officer will operate with the bdht Housing Options Team and undertake housing and support needs assessments in partnership with the Housing Options Team, Childrens Services and other referring agencies.
- 3.9 The Officer will assist young people to improve their life skills and develop positive family and other support networks. They will assist the young person to meet their housing needs either through negotiating with their families so that they can return home where appropriate, or where this is not possible secure alternative settled accommodation.
- 3.10 The Officer will also work to meet the Governments plan contained in the publication, Vision to End Rough Sleeping - No Second Night Out.
- 3.11 Officers propose not to put this out to tender as it is felt this will be a continuation of a current service provided through the Governments Homeless Transition Fund which has produced high quality and quantity outcomes and the Council will benefit from joint funding from St Basils.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.12 This grant will benefit the Council by offering young people more options to prevent their homelessness and where possible to enable them to remain in their own homes. The Gateway officer will encourage them to be more independent and take responsibility for their housing situation.
- 3.13 The grant will also benefit the larger community as opportunities to prevent homelessness will be maximised.
- 3.14 The Gateway Service will take into account any equalities and diversity needs of the individual in order to provide personalised support and housing options.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 If the recommended service is not approved there is a risk that more young people who are threatened with homelessness or who are in housing need will have limited alternative options. There is the risk that they may have to make a homeless approach and this could consequently lead to the following risks:
- Inability by the Council to meet the statutory duty to provide temporary accommodation.
 - Increased B&B costs.
 - Increased Rough Sleeping in the District

CABINET

5th November 2014

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

7. KEY

Not applicable

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Derek Allen

E Mail: Derek.allen@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel: 01527 881278