



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY 16TH JUNE 2014
AT 6.00 P.M.

COMMITTEE ROOM, THE COUNCIL HOUSE, BURCOT LANE, BROMSGROVE

MEMBERS: Councillors C. J. Bloore, J. S. Brogan, R. A. Clarke, S. R. Colella, B. T. Cooper, H. J. Jones, R. J. Laight, P. Lammas, L. C. R. Mallett, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon, C. J. Spencer and C. J. Tidmarsh

AGENDA

1. Election of Chairman
2. Election of Vice Chairman
3. Apologies for Absence
4. Declarations of Interest and Whipping Arrangements
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.
5. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 14th April 2014 (Pages 1 - 6)
6. Summary of Results of Staff Survey - Presentation from Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development
7. Making Experiences Count Quarter 4 Report (Pages 7 - 20)
8. Write Off of Debts Quarter 4 Report (Pages 21 - 26)
9. Overview & Scrutiny Board Annual Report 2013/14 (Pages 27 - 52)

10. Leisure Provision Task Group - Verbal Update
11. Joint Integrated Waste Scrutiny Task Group - Verbal Update
12. Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group - Verbal Update
13. WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee - Update
14. Cabinet Work Programme 1st July to 31st October 2014 (Pages 53 - 60)
15. Action List (Pages 61 - 62)
16. Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme (Pages 63 - 66)
17. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting.

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

5th June 2014



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BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 14TH APRIL 2014 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors P. Lammas (Chairman), R. J. Laight (Vice-Chairman), C. J. Bloore, R. L. Dent, K. A. Grant-Pearce, J. M. L. A. Griffiths (Present from Minute No. 108/13 to Minute No. 117/13), H. J. Jones, L. C. R. Mallett, R. J. Shannon, S. P. Shannon (Present from Minute No. 117/13), C. J. Spencer (Present from Minute No. 108/13 to Minute No. 117/13), C. J. Tidmarsh and L. J. Turner

Invitees: Councillors M. Sherrey and M. Webb

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. A. Scarce, Ms. J. Bayley and Ms. R. McAndrews

108/13 APOLOGIES

Members were advised that Councillor S. P. Shannon would be arriving at the meeting slightly late.

The Chairman welcomed Councillor R. J. Shannon to the Board and Members discussed arrangements for delivering updates on the work of the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC), following the departure of Councillor B. T. Cooper from the Board. Officers reported that the meeting of the Committee that had been due to take place in March 2014 had been cancelled. Councillor Cooper had agreed to provide a written update on the outcomes of the April meeting of HOSC. Members were advised that it was likely that the Council's appointment to HOSC would be considered in the new municipal year as it was best practice to appoint a member of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board to HOSC.

109/13 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

Councillors J. M. L. A. Griffiths and C. J. Spencer declared Disclosable Pecuniary Interests as members of the Bromsgrove Arts Centre Operating Trust in respect of Item No. 6. Councillor R. J. Shannon declared an other Disclosable Interest in respect of Item No. 6. due to his personal friendship with a member of staff employed by the Artrix. As such Councillors Griffiths, Shannon and Spencer withdrew from the meeting and took no part in its consideration and voting thereon.

110/13 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 24th March 2014 were submitted.

Members noted that Councillor S. R. Colella had been present at the meeting and should have been listed amongst the Councillors observing proceedings.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved.

111/13 **CCTV CODE OF PRACTICE AND IMPACT OF FUTURE FINANCE CUTS**

The CCTV and Telecare Manager presented a briefing paper on the subject of the new CCTV Code of Practice and the impact of future financial cuts on the service. She advised Members that The CCTV Code of Practice had been updated in accordance with legal requirements detailed in The Protection of Freedom Act. In line with the new code an annual report, detailing achievements in the previous years and aspirations for future years, would now need to be prepared. Every three years the Council would also need to review the CCTV system to ensure that operating arrangements remained valid. Consultation with Members would take place as part of this review process.

Members were also provided with an overview of the Council's Lifeline service and the Future Lives scheme. As part of the budget reductions approved by Worcestershire County Council (WCC) funding would no longer be provided by the county Council to tenants who did not have access to a dispersed unit. This did not impact on the Council's existing lifeline customers but would have implications for Bromsgrove District Housing Trust's (BDHT's) tenants. BDHT had contacted all the tenants who would be affected by this change to funding arrangements and a separate arrangements would be made by the Council to offer an alternative service.

Following presentation of the report a number of issues were raised by Members for further discussion.

- Current arrangements for sharing CCTV pictures with the Police at Hindlip Hall and future co-operation following the Council's relocation to Parkside.
- The differences between incidents and reviews. Members were advised that incidents were any report or visual activity, including issues reported by the police or a retail unit, which required the operator to take action. Reviews were a subset of these incidents which specifically related to criminal cases.
- The need for CCTV equipment to be reviewed to ensure that the quality of pictures was useful. Officers explained that whilst cameras had been replaced in Bromsgrove and Rubery in many places equipment purchased in 1998 had been retained as it remained of sufficient quality.
- The Council's maintenance contract and the requirement for contractors to undertake checks of the equipment.

- The fact that CCTV cameras were pre-programmed to focus on specific locations at specific times and the potential for certain incidents to not be recorded as a consequence.
- Restrictions preventing Councils from providing CCTV cameras to private companies on a commercial basis.
- Scenarios where health and morals would require action from CCTV operators, which could include observing street fights or other behaviour endangering a person's life.
- The need for CCTV to avoid discriminating on a number of grounds in respect of the Human Rights Act 1998. Members suggested that sexual orientation should be added to the list of issues that had already been recorded in this section of the code of practice.
- Restrictions on CCTV audio recordings.
- Compliance with data protection rules and the fact that the Council had received a single complaint from a resident since the system had been introduced.
- The use of privacy zones for CCTV cameras located in residential areas.
- The benefits of a dispersed unit which had greater links to a variety of systems that could be useful for customers with multiple needs.
- The support that would be available to BDHT tenants who could not afford to pay for the lifeline service that would be available from the Council.
- The action that was being taken to minimise the risks of some vulnerable customers failing to receive support if they felt they could not utilise the Council's lifeline service.
- The potential financial costs to the Council of taking on more lifeline customers. Officers confirmed that this was likely to be minimal.

RESOLVED that the report be noted.

112/13 **LEISURE PROVISION TASK GROUP - MEMBERSHIP**

Officers explained that following the previous meeting of the Board, when Members had agreed that membership of the Leisure Provision Task Group should be restricted to 7, contact had been made with every Member who had expressed an interest in participating in the review. However, none of these Members had indicated that they would be willing to stand down from the review.

In this context, to ensure that membership was determined in a fair manner, the Board agreed that membership should be determined on a first come first served basis. Officers had kept a record of the dates and time when Members had asked to participate in the review and were therefore able to confirm that Councillors R. L. Dent and S. R. Colella had been the last to ask to participate in this review.

RESOLVED that the following Members should participate in this review in addition to Councillor C. J. Spencer, as the Task Group Chairman; Councillors J. M. L. A. Griffiths, H. J. Jones, L. C. R. Mallett, E. Shannon, S. P. Shannon and C. R. Scurrall.

113/13 **FURTHER RESPONSE FROM CABINET - AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP REPORT**

(Prior to the start of this item there was a ten minute break in the meeting proceedings from 6.35 – 6.45 p.m. This interval occurred due to technical problems with ICT equipment that was scheduled to be used for the delivery of a presentation under Item No. 5 on the agenda).

Officers explained that the Air Quality Task Group's response to the Cabinet's conclusions in relation to the group's initial findings had been considered by the Cabinet at a meeting on 2nd April. The response to the Task Group's proposals had been recorded in the minutes of the meeting, (which would be circulated for Members' consideration following the meeting of the Board). There had been few changes made to the Cabinet's original response.

114/13 **JOINT WRS SCRUTINY TASK GROUP**

The Chairman of the WRS Joint Scrutiny Task Group, Councillor R. J. Laight, advised Members that only one meeting of the group had been held since the last Board meeting. This had involved a number of the members of the Joint Committee who had been invited to attend to respond to pre-prepared questions. Those who were unable to attend had provided written responses to those questions.

The group's recommendations were beginning to be formulated and would be discussed at the following meeting due to be held on 30th April. The draft final report would then be worked on. The group remained on schedule to complete their work by June for presentation at each Overview and Scrutiny Committee in the county.

115/13 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME 1ST MAY TO 31ST AUGUST 2014**

The Board considered the Cabinet Work Programme for the period 1st May to 31st August 2014.

During consideration of this item questions were raised concerning the inclusion of key decisions on the Work Programme and Members commented that only one of the items had been recorded as a key decision for the period. Members were advised that, as requested at a previous meeting of the Board, the inclusion of information which identified items as key decisions on the Work Programme had been raised with the Officer responsible for producing the document, though it was agreed that a further discussion should take place.

The focus of the subjects scheduled on the Cabinet's Work Programme was also briefly debated. Members commented that it was not always clear from the title of these items what the Cabinet would be invited to consider. In this context the provision of a basic summary of each item was considered useful as this would help to provide Members with clarification. A specific request was also made for further information about the focus of the report concerning

the Review of Policy for the Allocation of Rural Affordable Housing developed under "Exception Site" policy.

116/13 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

Members were advised that due to the fact the April meeting was the last scheduled meeting in the municipal year the Board's Work Programme was currently short. Additional items would therefore be added to the Work Programme at the meeting to be held on 16th June 2014.

117/13 **SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF THE STAFF SURVEY**

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources circulated a copy of a presentation that had been produced summarising the results of the staff survey. She explained that the survey had been completed by 40% of staff. Responses had included 800 comments from individual members of staff. Due to the scale of these responses it had taken time to analyse the feedback that had been received.

Some of the feedback that had been received had been positive. However, there had also been some responses that had caused concern. For example, only 45% of staff had indicated that they took part in regular team meetings and 50% had indicated that they did not receive feedback from their managers regarding their performance.

Members discussed the content of the presentation and highlighted the following points:

- The difficulty for Members to scrutinise the effectiveness of the Steering Group's response to the staff survey results without first having an opportunity to consider the responses that had been received from staff.
- The fact that the Corporate Management Team (CMT) had also not analysed all of the responses received from staff because this feedback had been treated as confidential. Additional information would be presented for the consideration of CMT at the end of April, though this information would have the same level of detail as that which was contained within the presentation to the Board.
- The potential to share general feedback received from staff, trends within departments and in relation to sickness absence rates without breaching staff confidentiality.
- Concerns that one to ones and team meetings were not taking place as regularly as they should be.
- The frequency of the staff surveys.
- The potential for Members to consider a copy of the survey template to enable the Board to assess the feedback provided by staff in context.
- The length of time it had taken to assess the feedback received from staff and how this compared to other organisations where staff surveys were circulated.
- The fact that completion of the survey was not compulsory.

RESOLVED that

- (a) a representative of the Steering Group be asked to attend the Board meeting to be held on either 16th June or 14th July 2014 to present more detailed information about the responses received to the staff survey; and
- (b) a copy of the survey template be provided for Members' consideration at that meeting.

118/13 **ARTRIX OUTREACH PROVISION TASK GROUP DRAFT FINAL REPORT**

The Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor S. P. Shannon, presented the Artrix Outreach Provision Task Group's final report.

He advised the Board that the group had held a total of 8 meetings and interviewed a number of Officers and representatives of the Artrix and its operating trust. The Chairman also highlighted each of the group's 9 recommendations in turn and briefly described the evidence basis for these recommendations, as detailed in the report.

The Task Group had wanted to highlight the following areas:

- The group had been pleasantly surprised at the number and a wide variety of outreach activities which the Artrix provided throughout both District and other parts of the County.
- The professionalism of the staff at the Artrix and continued efforts to seek out funding for activities.
- The partnership work between the Council's Arts and Events team and the Artrix Centre in order to ensure that the work met the needs of the residents of the District.

The group was keen to ensure that these activities continued and were made available to those residents within the District that needed them the most. Many of the recommendations were therefore based around promotion of the outreach work to both residents and Councillors.

In conclusion to this item the Chairman thanked all of the Officers and representatives of the Artrix who had provided evidence to the group during the review. In particular, he thanked Amanda Scarce, Democratic Services Officer, for her hard work and for the support that she had provided to the group.

RESOLVED that the Artrix Outreach Provision Task Group Report and Recommendations be submitted to Cabinet for approval.

The meeting closed at 7.25 p.m.

Chairman

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: 16th June 2014

MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT - QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Mike Webb
Portfolio Holder Consulted	√
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda de Warr – Head of Customer Access and Financial Services
Wards Affected	All Wards
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

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

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

2.1 Note the contents of the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 This report details the customer feedback received by the authority during the 4th quarter of 2013/14, including Local Government Ombudsman complaints and the outcomes of customer complaints.

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

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

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

Service/Operational Implications

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

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

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

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

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - **Quarterly Customer Feedback Report Quarter 4
2013/14**

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Lynn Jones
E Mail: lynn.jones@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: (01527) 64252 extension 3851



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

**Making Experiences Count
Quarterly Customer Service Report**

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

1 January 2014 – 31 March 2014



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

1. Introduction

This report details the customer feedback received by Bromsgrove District Council during the period from 1 January 2014 to 31 March 2014.

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

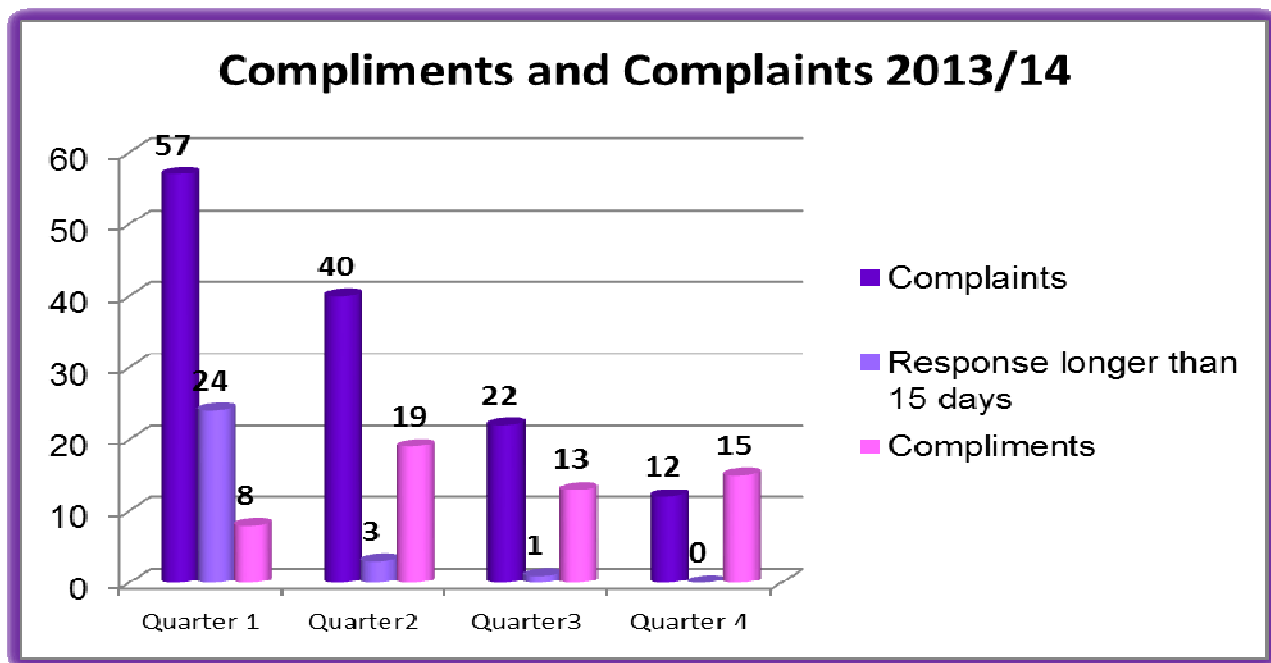
2. Customer Feedback Analysis

12 complaints were received during this quarter because we did not meet the customer's expectations, or failed to meet our own standards, or the customer was unhappy with an outcome. Details of all complaints received can be found at the end of this report in Appendix 1.

All complaints received (100%) were answered in 15 working days or less.

We also received 15 compliments.

This chart shows number of complaints and compliments for 2013 -14.



Complaint figures have significantly reduced each quarter of this financial year. The total figures for last year compared with 2013/14 are as follows

	Total compliments	Total complaints	Dealt with in target time
2013/14	71	131	103 (78%)
2012/13	124	151	95 (63%)

There has been a very marked decrease in complaints about waste collections this year. This is due in part to the way the Business Support team within Environmental Services is working. They have set up a dedicated call centre and are able to deal with customer queries before they escalate to become complaints. Our Refuse Crews have also introduced new processes to make the new collection service work and it seems that customers are appreciating this.

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Over the last quarter we have been trialling a system thinking driven process to handle complaints differently. This has involved Managers in Environmental Services talking directly to the customer in an attempt to resolve the problem.. The results have shown us that we can resolve the majority of complaints more quickly by taking a personal approach. It also gives us a greater understanding of what the real problems are. Managers are using this information to improve their systems and services and this has had a knock on effect of reducing the number of repeat calls for complaints.

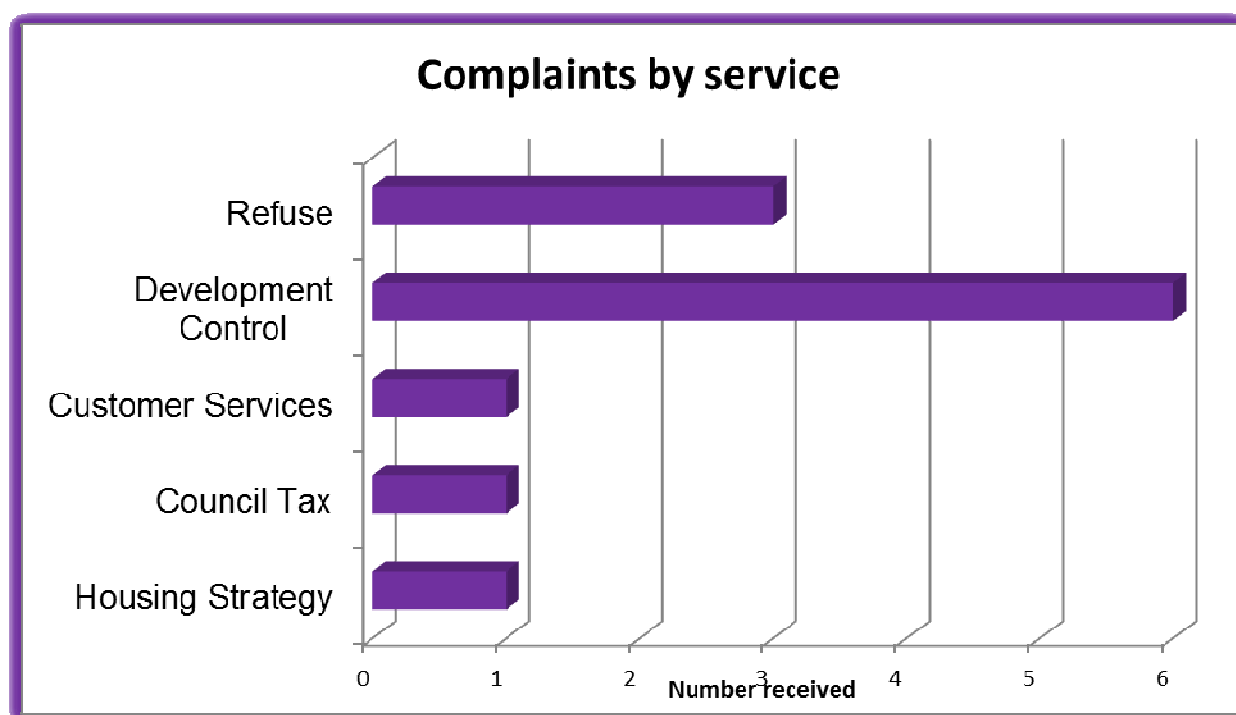
We have now rolled out this new way of handling complaints to all departments across the Council and will continue to monitor and develop the process.

The common themes in the complaints received this quarter were:

- Delays
- Lack of response to some customer's calls and queries.
- Incorrect details on website

Number of complaints by service (detailed)

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



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

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

- Our website will be monitored more frequently to ensure that information is correct and timely
- Council Tax letters to be monitored for correct information
- Delivery process for new bins to be reviewed.

Number of complaints escalated to Head of Customer Services or to Stage 2

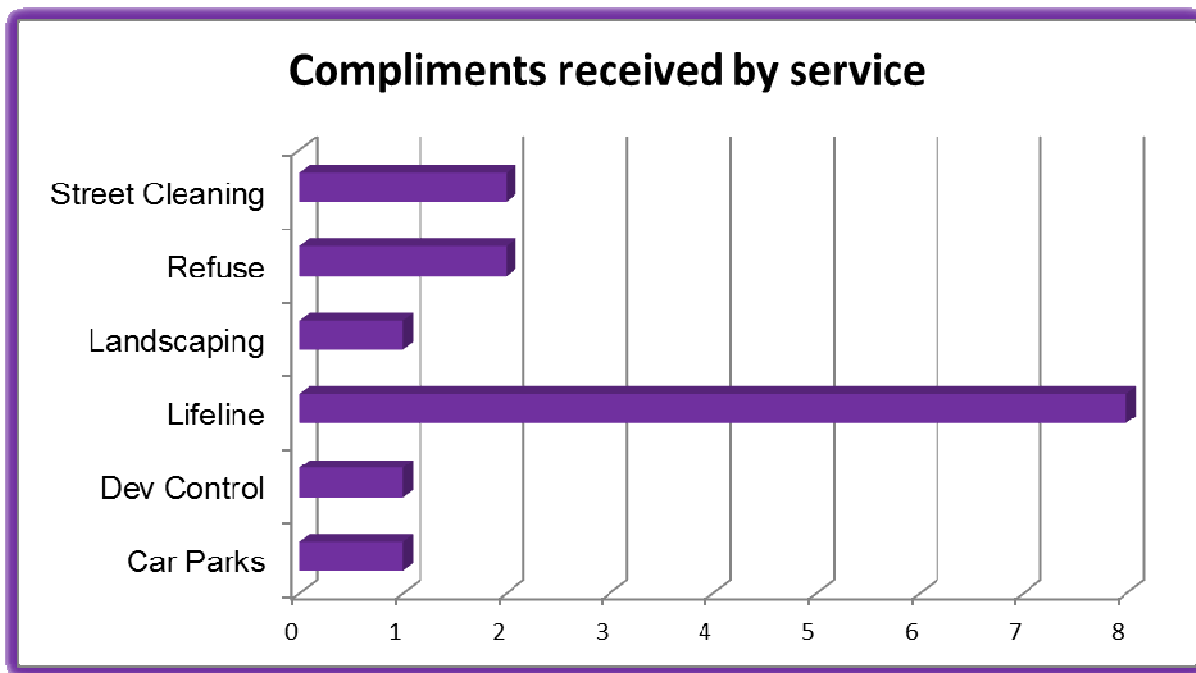
There were no complaints escalated to the Head of Customer Services for further investigation.

Time taken to respond to complaints

We aim to respond to customer complaints within 15 working days and **100 %** of complaints received during this quarter were dealt with within that time frame.

Happy Customers!

From the **15** compliments received we can see that customers appreciate the range of services the Council provides, especially when we deal with their requests in a timely and professional manner.



Here are all of the compliments we have received this quarter.

Team	Compliment Detail
Car Parks	I would like to take the opportunity to thank your kind operatives who opened the car park up last night for my wife who had unfortunately lost her car keys and had to return home to fetch the spare set but on her return the gates were locked, on reading the notice board there was an out of office number of which your kind operatives arrived promptly and deal with the issue in a professional manner
Development Control	The information you so readily provided is really useful and has saved me a lot of time and bother today. This is really very helpful to me. Thank you again for your prompt action.
Landscaping	Got home from work today and the trees have been cut back. It looks brilliant, plenty of trees left to grow well away from the fence. Thank you so very much for your help and for the job being done so quickly.....fantastic
Lifeline	Customer was very grateful for our help and recommends our service to everyone
Lifeline	Customer called to thank us for our help
Lifeline	Customer wanted to thank Lifeline for their prompt assistance in calling ambulance following incident.

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Lifeline	Customer wanted to thank Lifeline for their prompt assistance in calling ambulance following incident.
Lifeline	Customer contacted us on return from hospital. She wanted to thank us for the help we gave her and said that she didn't think she would be here if it wasn't for our service
Lifeline	Customer wanted to thank Lifeline for all their help
Lifeline	Customer thought our service was fantastic and could not praise us enough.
Refuse	Two of our refuse collectors helped Cllr Tidmarsh reinstate a fence panel after a storm whilst on their rounds. He wishes the two young men to receive public acknowledgement.
Refuse	Just a week ago I rang the council to request that my bins be taken to the roadside on delivery day as I am becoming increasingly disabled. I was dealt with courteously and assured the service would start next week. Today as we were driving out of our road at about 10.45 this morning we saw the refuse team. We stopped to ask if they had been told of my request. Before I had a chance to finish my sentence, the bin collector said, "Number 22? It's all sorted." He said this with warmth and a big smile and shook my hand wishing us a good day. Certainly made our day! And, yes, on our return we saw that the bin had been collected, emptied and returned. So, please thank the collection team and the organisation behind this.
Street Cleaning	Customer was very pleased with the work carried out by the cleansing crews dealing with her road
Street Cleaning	We so very grateful for you in organising the Staff to help last Friday morning at the Churchyard and I would be so grateful Graham, if you could personally thank the Staff concerned who helped with this project for their help and work on the day, which was so much appreciated.

3. Local Government Ombudsman Complaints

There were no complaints referred from the Ombudsman this quarter.

4. Customer Service Centre Information

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

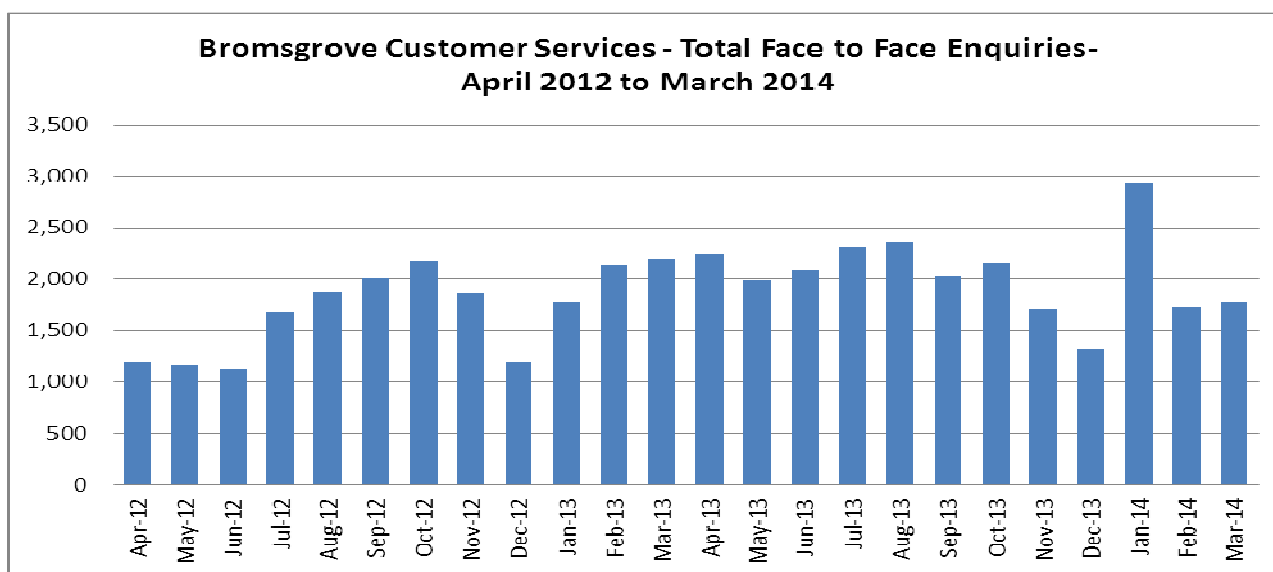
The operational purpose of the Customer Services team is **'Help me get the support I need with my issue or problem'**. Most customer demand is now passed to expert teams and the customer service staff act as a filter to ensure that the customer gets to see or speak to the right expert. We use this information to help us understand the demand on all Council services.

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

Face to face demand at the Customer Service Centre

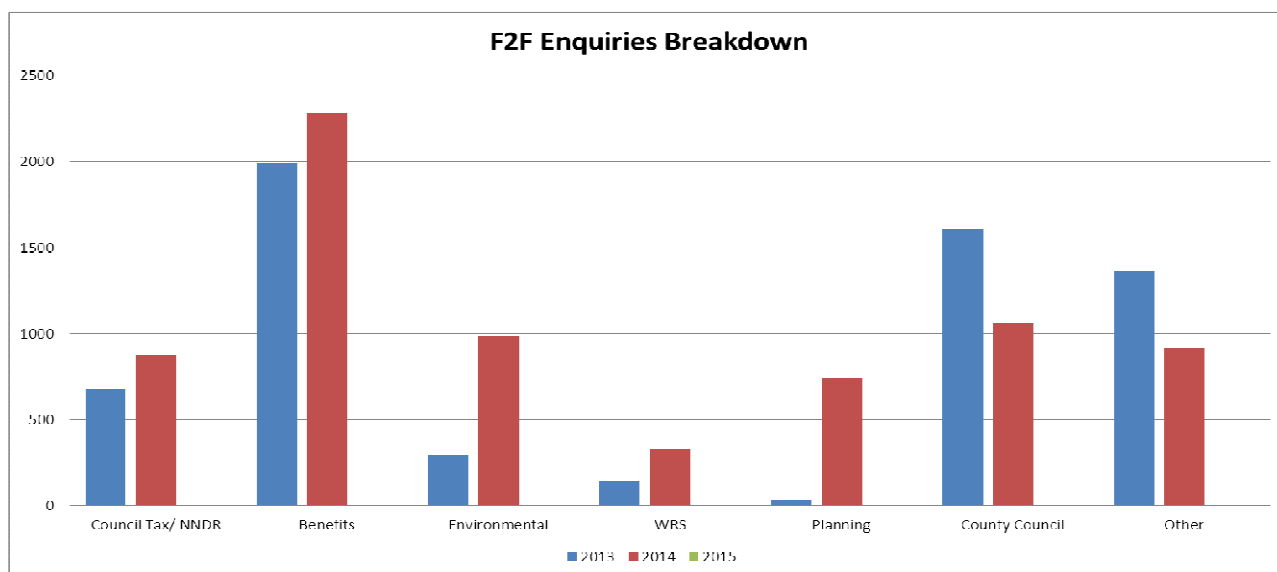
The following chart shows the total face to face enquiries being dealt with at the customer service centre on a month by month basis since April 2012 to March 14. It informs of patterns that occur and the data is then used to plan for busy times and to check the reasons for the peak, this may identify waste in systems which can then be addressed.

The peak in January includes visitors to a 1 day planning event held at the Council house, Garden waste enquiries and the payment system was unavailable for 6 days which increased the number of face to face enquiries.



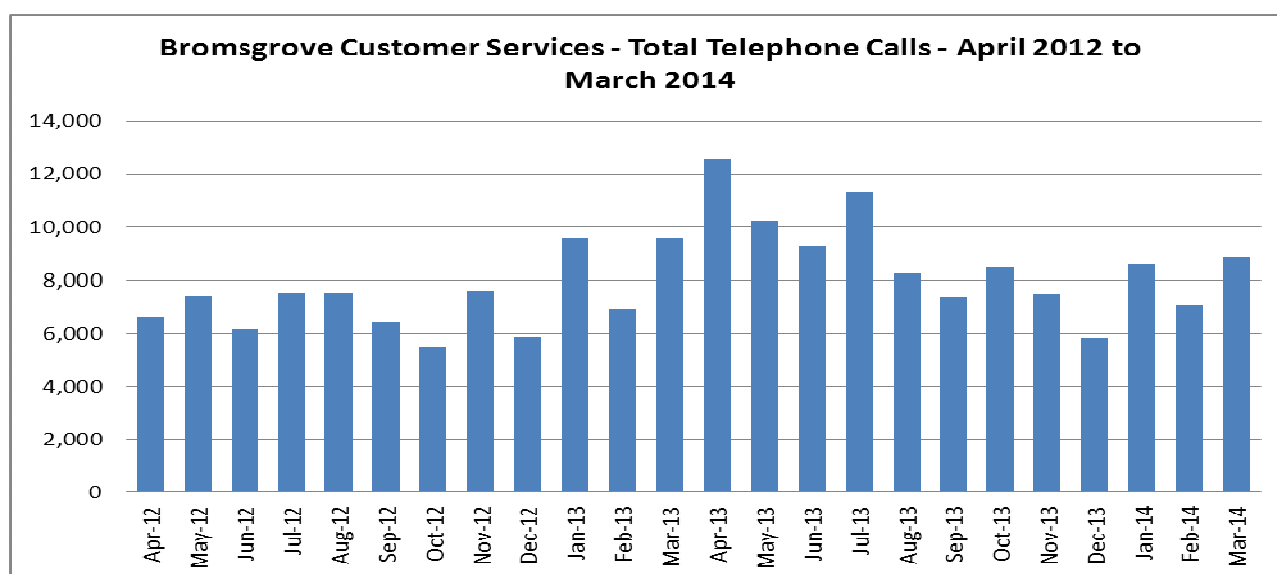
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The following chart shows the breakdown of face to face customer enquiries received during Qtr 4 2014 compared with the same period last year.



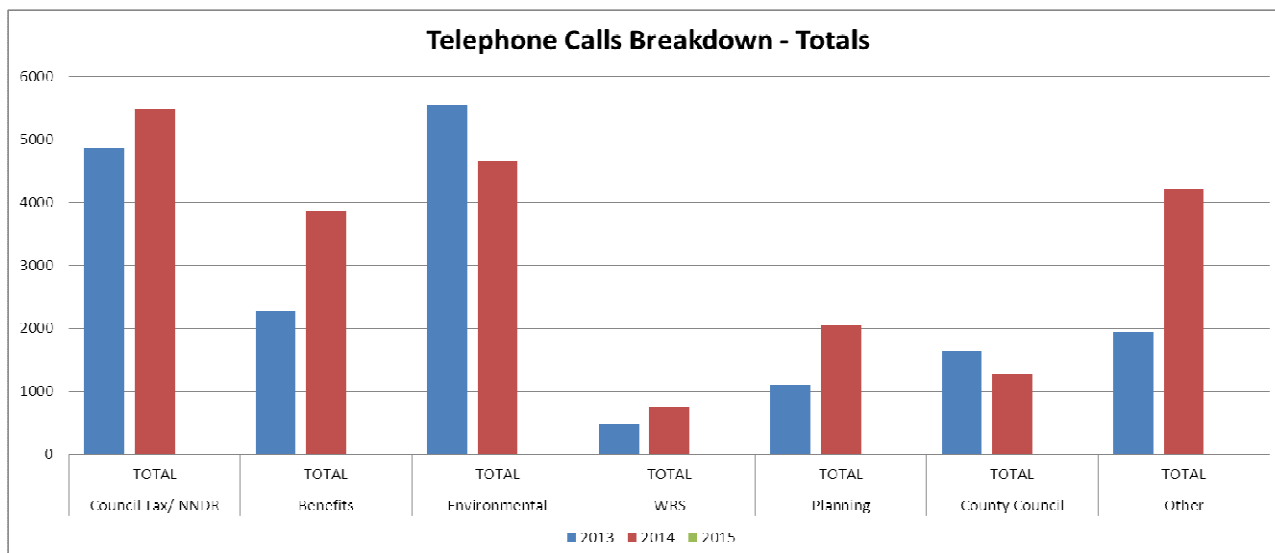
Telephone demand received

The following chart shows the total telephone calls recorded on the customer service systems from April 2012 until the end of March 2014.



The following chart shows the breakdown of calls received via the switchboard and customer contact centre phone lines by department during the quarter. (Calls made to direct dial lines are not recorded and therefore not included.) The 2012 data does not include switchboard calls which accounts for the significant difference when comparing years.

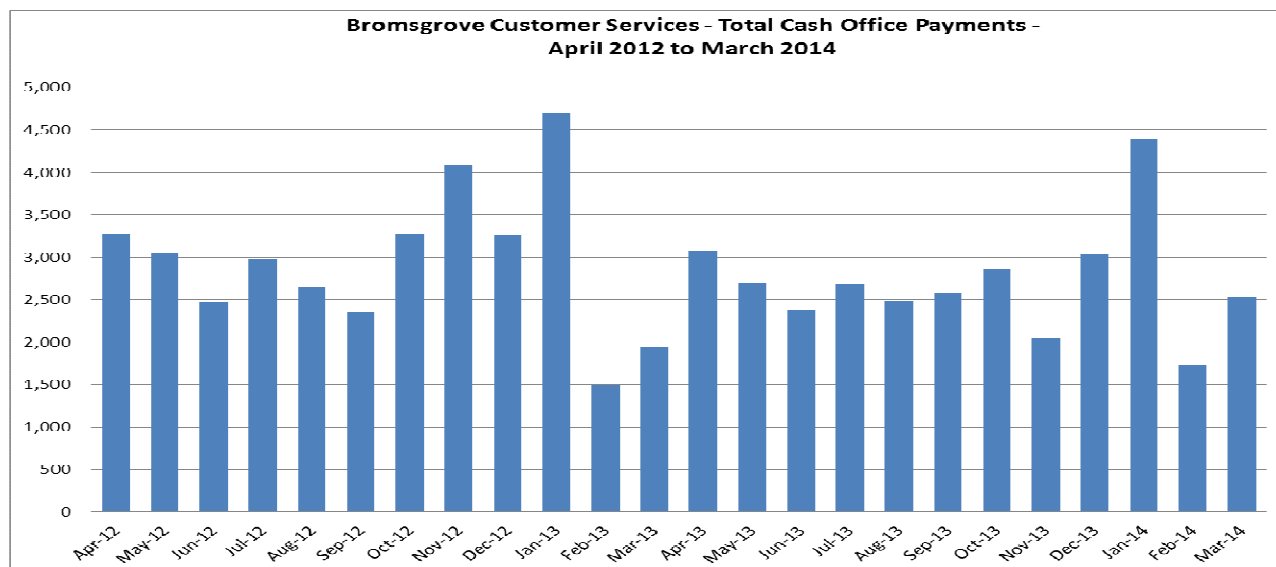
The number of "other" reflects the number of calls due to the payment system unavailable for a week in January 2014. Staff Finder was not available; which made it difficult for the operator to identify which service the call should be logged, this is now available.



Payments

The following chart shows a month by month comparison of payments received by the cash office and customer services staff during the period April 2012 – March 2014.

On 26th February 2014 an upgrade to the payments system was installed including cash receipting, on line and telephone payments. This has improved resilience of the systems. As we expected there have been some teething problems which has affected the payments data we are able to provide this quarter.



Lynn Jones
 Customer Services Manager
 May 2014

Bromsgrove Complaint Details Q4 2013/14

Complaint details	Days taken to respond	Action taken	Outcome update from Head of Service
Customer Services			
Customer unhappy about the music that was played when she was put on hold as it interfered with her hearing aid and she had to hang up and didn't get the information she wanted.	3 days	Apology given.	Customer was contacted to confirm she had the information she needed.
Development Control			
Customer unhappy with the length of time a planning application was taking. It was submitted over 7 weeks ago and had still not been accepted. It would not therefore be decided within the statutory period.	3 days	Apology given to customer. We acknowledged that the process is slow at present due to a new system and staffing problems.	We are aiming to improve the system.
Customer wishes to complain about the lack of progress in registering a planning application which he submitted via the Planning Portal.	14 days	There are currently delays in dealing with applications due to the new ways of working and the lack of staff. Apologies given for this.	Improvements being made to the system.
Customer concerned about planning application in terms of loss of his light, privacy and overlooking his home.	8	Letter sent to customer explaining that we have followed procedures and that the application does not exceed planning regulations.	No further action
Customer unhappy about planning committee process with regard to planning application.	14	Explanation given to the customer explaining the process and that Members make the decisions	No further action
Customer unhappy that as she feels that no consideration given to residents regarding a planning application for a property in the next road.	15	Letter sent to explain the process for consultation and to invite the customer to speak to the Head of Planning if she had any further queries.	No further action
Customer unhappy that the use of the old market area in Bromsgrove being used as a site for storing equipment relating to Town Centre	2 days	No action will be taken as high street improvements are progressing in a timely manner and it would not be expedient to enforce	Officers involved from town centre team advised that this sort of

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redevelopment works and asks why they have not applied for planning permission..			matter requires planning permission.
Housing Strategy			
Customer unhappy because he is currently in a shared ownership with BDC on a 70/30 ratio, and he felt that he could now purchase the remaining 70% but has been told that he could have done this earlier. He feels that this has disadvantaged him because now he feels that he has to pay due to the fluctuations in the property price, and now will have to pay more than if he would have purchased it earlier.	15 days	Discussed the issue with the customer and advised of the policy regarding the purchase of the remaining share which had confused the customer when he first purchased 10 years ago.	No further action
Council Tax			
Customer is acting as executor for his deceased mother and had completed and returned a Council Tax credit balance refund form. The form has not been received and he is concerned about the inefficiency of the department.	1 day	Apology given to customer.	Letters will be reviewed to ensure that they do not contain misleading information
Refuse			
Customer unhappy that the collection details were wrong on our website leading her to put her bin out on the wrong day and it not being collected	15 days	Apology given to customer and bin collected.	Website corrected and will be monitored.
Customer has paid for her garden waste service last month and has contacted us on 5 occasions to ask for the wheelie bin to be delivered. She is a new customer. She has been promised the bin but it has never arrived. She is really fed up with having to chasing it.	14 days	Apology given to the customer as this request had not been put on the delivery list	Delivery process for new garden waste bins to be reviewed

Agenda Item 7

<p>Customer unhappy that her bin was missed and when she challenged them they just shrugged their shoulders. When she returned home they had emptied the bin, but she is unhappy at their attitude</p>	<p>14 days</p>	<p>Crew spoken to but they say they weren't laughing at customer. Apology given to customer</p>	<p>Crew were advised to be careful of their manner when dealing with customers</p>
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Overview & Scrutiny Board

16th June 2014

QUARTERLY MONITORING OF WRITE OFFS

1ST JANUARY 2014 – 31ST MARCH 2014

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Hollingworth
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Amanda de Warr, Head of Customer Access and Financial Support
Wards Affected	All

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report summarises the write off of debts during the final quarter of 2013/14 along with the profile and level of outstanding debt.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

That subject to any comments, the Overview & Scrutiny Board note the contents of the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1. The current Write Off Policy requires officers to report to members the actual level of write offs and the profile of outstanding debt.

- 3.2. The current bad debts provisions are as follows:

	£
Council Tax	139,268
NDR (court costs only)	19,488
Sundry Debtors	<u>43,987</u>
Total	202,743

Financial Implications

- 3.3 Details of written off debts during the period for Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates, and Sundry Debts, including a break down of the number of debtors, and Overpaid Housing Benefit are attached at Appendix 1. A total of £117,036 of unrecoverable debt was written off during this quarter.
- 3.4 A total of £437,491 of unrecoverable debt was written off during 2013/14, broken down as follows:

Council Tax	-	£102,366
NDR	-	£242,010
Sundry Debtors	-	£13,867
HB Overpayment	-	£52,243

Overview & Scrutiny Board16th June 2014

- 3.5 The provision is adequate in respect of Council Tax and Sundry Debts.
- 3.6 As previously reported, due to changes to the distribution arrangements for business rates from the 1st April 2013 the local authority was required to make different arrangements for the way in which it accounts for bad debt provision in relation to Non Domestic Rates. The amount shown in 3.2 accounted for costs only and the financial implications could not be fully understood until the end of the fiscal year. However, the actual bad debt provision for NDR (at March 2013) was £561,921.
- 3.7 An age profile of the outstanding sundry debts at the end of each quarter is attached at Appendix 2.
- 3.8 An analysis of Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates arrears as at 31st March 2014 is attached at Appendix 3.

Legal Implications

- 3.9 There are no legal implications.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.10 No direct implications.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 No direct implications.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 No specific risks identified.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Write offs 1st January 2014 – 31st March 2014

Appendix 2- Aged Debt Profile for Sundry Debts Arrears as at 31st March 2014

Appendix 3 - Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates Arrears Analysis as at 31st March 2014

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers to this report.

AUTHORS OF REPORT

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Overview & Scrutiny Board

16th June 2014

Appendix 1

Write Offs of Council Tax and Non-Domestic Rates 1st January 2014 - 31st March 2014

Council Tax	Amount (£)	Number of Accounts
Gone away	16,367.41	26
Deceased no funds in estate	1,829.91	12
Bankruptcy	1,659.07	2
Statue Barred	4,551.70	1
Uneconomical to pursue	1,494.53	8
Costs written off	1,949.97	39
Auto Balance Write Off (archived)	-1,199.79	810
Total	26,652.80	898

NDR	Amount (£)	Number of Accounts
Gone away	13,599.20	51
Company dissolved	46,569.20	26
Bankruptcy	2,172.28	2
Liquidation	6,073.72	7
In Administration	292.62	3
Ceased Trading – no assets	411.08	1
Statue Barred	2,266.30	2
Uneconomical to pursue	929.32	6
Small Balance	10.90	21
Other	2,813.35	1
Costs written off	4,988.00	60
Write Back	-1,089.38	37
Total	79,036.59	217

Write Offs of Sundry Debtors - 1st January 2014 to 31st March 2014

Sundry Debts	Amount (£)	Number of Invoices
No further Action due to value	200	3
Auto write off under £5.00	8	5
Advised Write Off	1543	23
Gone Away	720	4
Total	2,471	35

Overview & Scrutiny Board

16th June 2014

Write off of Overpaid Housing Benefit – 1st January 2014 to 31st March 2014

Housing Benefit Write Offs	Amount	No. of cases
Reason		
Debt Relief Order	£1,055.86	1
Uneconomical to recover	£229.09	3
Cannot trace	£6,765.94	7
Old debt-recovery options ex	£824.95	1
TOTAL	£8,875.84	12

Overview & Scrutiny Board

16th June 2014

Appendix 2

Aged Debt profile for Sundry Debts as at 31st March 2014

Age	As at 31 st March 2014	As at 31 st March 2013
1 – 30 days	453,561	273,084
31 - 60 days	10,869	179,752
61 – 90 days	72,963	28,488
90 days +	131,020	173,636
Total	668,414	654,960

Overview & Scrutiny Board16th June 2014**Appendix 3****Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates Arrears Analysis as at 31st March 2014****Council Tax**

Year	Total £	Annual debit £
1999/00	6,893	25,836,407
2000/01	14,957	26,419,700
2001/02	24,491	29,487,929
2002/03	35,751	35,962,692
2003/04	32,637	40,922,548
2004/05	35,245	41,770,011
2005/06	70,996	44,059,868
2006/07	90,556	46,683,333
2007/08	84,466	49,061,780
2008/09	89,704	51,592,006
2009/10	96,728	53,577,097
2010/11	158,699	55,298,276
2011/12	201,786	55,399,069
2012/13	314,928	55,882,474
2013/14	753,656	56,565,040

Non Domestic Rates Arrears

Year	Total £	Annual Debit £
2000/01	-1,442	17,415,978
2001/02	1,104	17,232,868
2002/03	1,018	17,175,162
2003/04	211	17,345,890
2004/05	-331	17,854,642
2005/06	5,633	18,803,202
2006/07	4,262	19,823,744
2007/08	3,044	20,822,010
2008/09	24,012	23,586,234
2009/10	58,073	23,829,603
2010/11	37,415	23,233,864
2011/12	60,678	25,205,206
2012/13	181,451	26,984,821
2013/14	435,537	27,558,863



Overview and Scrutiny **Annual Report**

2013 - 2014



Bromsgrove
District Council

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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY ANNUAL REPORT 2013-14

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FOREWORD FROM THE CHAIRMAN

Many claim the work of the Overview and Scrutiny Board is one of the District Council's most important functions. Its role is that of a "critical friend" and its decisions can have a vital impact on the safety, prosperity and well being of the whole Bromsgrove community. Holding the Council's decision makers to account is also one of its prime functions.

The last 12 months have seen the Board examining a wide range of activities – car parking, flooding, CCTV and air quality are some of the topics scrutinised.

In November the newly formed North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership outlined its terms of reference to members and the likely impact of budget cuts might have on its work.

Bromsgrove's ambitious regeneration and improvement scheme is a major undertaking at a time when many high streets are declining. In September the Board were updated on the work's progress and a call for a review of car parking was put on hold until the work is completed.

A report in February by the North Worcestershire Water Management team was topical and interesting and it agreed to invite the representative back next year for a further update on the work being undertaken.

Air Quality in the District was the subject of a Task Group as was Youth Provision (which extended to 18 meetings). Both were felt to have been worthwhile and produced some interesting data.

A look at the work of Worcestershire Regulatory Services was hosted by Bromsgrove and included representatives from all authorities in the County. Its report will be published in the new municipal year.

Finally, my thanks go to fellow Board Members for their help and support as well as to Democratic Services Officers for their advice and hard work throughout the year.

**Councillor Peter Lammas
Chairman**

INTRODUCTION

We are pleased to present the Overview and Scrutiny Annual Report which outlines our work during 2013-14 and provides general information on the overview and scrutiny processes at Bromsgrove District Council.

Overview and Scrutiny is a key part of the democratic decision making process in local councils, where elected councillors outside of the Cabinet can contribute to shaping council policy, community well being and accountability. This is done by reviewing council services and policies, community issues and key decisions and making recommendations for improvement.

The four key principles of Overview and Scrutiny are:

- Provides a 'critical friend' challenge to executive policy makers and decision-makers.
- Enables the voice and concerns of the public to be heard.
- Is carried out by 'independent minded members' who lead and own the scrutiny role.
- Drives improvement in public services

The Members of the Board consider these principles when selecting topics to investigate whether it is holding the executive to account, reviewing policies, policy development or scrutiny of external bodies.

MEMBERSHIP (The Board is made up of 13 Members)



Cllr. Peter Lammas - Chairman



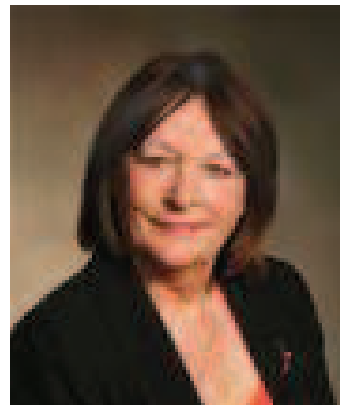
Cllr. Rod Laight (Vice Chairman)



Cllr. Chris Bloore



**Cllr Brian Cooper
(17th June 2013 to 4th April 2014)**

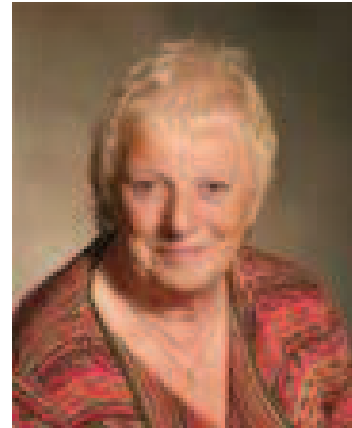


Cllr Rita Dent

Agenda Item 9



Cllr. Keith Grant- Pearce



Cllr. June Griffiths



Cllr. Helen Jones



Cllr. Luke Mallett

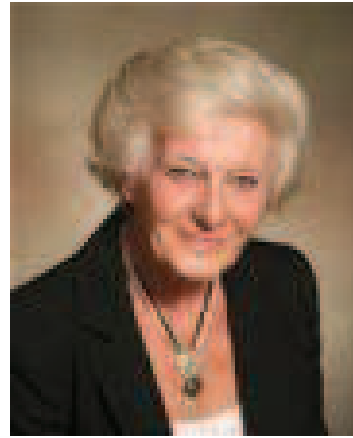


Cllr Rory Shannon
(from 4th April 2014)

Agenda Item 9



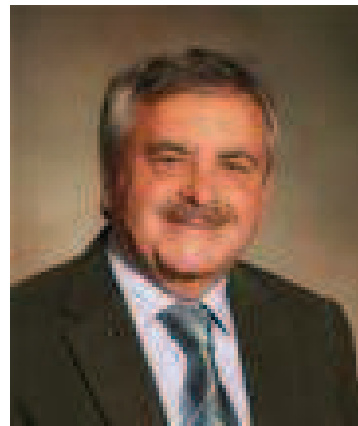
Cllr. Sean Shannon



Cllr. Caroline Spencer



Cllr. John Tidmarsh



Cllr. Les Turner

THE ROLE OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Overview and Scrutiny is a key part of the Council's political structure and it plays a vital role in improving the services that people of the District use, whether a resident, employed here or just visiting. It does not just look at the way the Council does things, it can look at anything which affects the lives of people within the District and it allows citizens to have a greater say in Council matters.

Overview and Scrutiny allows Councillors to review and scrutinise decisions, look at existing practices and make recommendations to help ensure the residents of Bromsgrove District receive excellent services. The aim is to ensure overview and scrutiny adds value to the Council's decision-making process and makes a positive contribution towards policy development.

The detailed terms of reference and procedure rules for the Overview and Scrutiny Board can be found at Part 3 (Part C) and Part 8 of the Council Constitution. The Council Constitution can be accessed by using the following link.

<http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/cms/council-and-democracy/councillors-and-committees/decision-making/council-constitution.aspx>

Number of Meetings

The Overview and Scrutiny Board met on a monthly basis during 2013-14 and there were a total of 9 meetings throughout the year. The meeting arranged for 17th June 2013 was cancelled.

THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY PROCESS

Topic Proposals

Any Councillor, member of the public or officer can submit an overview and scrutiny proposal. The Board will then make a decision whether or not the suggested topic will be included on the work programme. In making that decision, the Board considers points such as:

- Reasons given and supporting evidence as to why the subject needs to be considered
- Links to Council strategic purposes
- Possible key outcomes that the proposer anticipates could be achieved.

Other relevant points that are taken into account are whether it is of key interest to the public, if it is a poorly performing service, an area of concern identified by internal or external audit, a review that could render significant savings or value for money.

Approach to Investigations

Overview and Scrutiny investigations can take a variety of different approaches. The Board can decide to undertake a “short, sharp inquiry” through meetings of the Board or by setting up a Task Group, which meets outside of the formal committee process and which may involve other non-Executive Members of the Council.

Task Groups can be more flexible in their timing and approach to an investigation and can take a longer or shorter time, depending on the issue. Task Groups are often able to consider an issue in more detail and take the investigation outside of the formal committee process to look at what is happening on the ground, by undertake research and interviewing key stakeholders in a more informal setting.

Receiving Evidence

Overview and Scrutiny investigations receive evidence from which their conclusions and recommendations may be drawn. Evidence may be received during a formal Board meeting, in writing to Members of the Board or during a Task Group investigation. Evidence may include written reports from Council officers, written testimonials from interested parties, background papers, oral evidence from witnesses and site visits to look at particular places and events on the ground.

Overview and Scrutiny Inquiries and Recommendations

At the end of an investigation, conclusions are drawn up and recommendations made to the Cabinet and any other relevant local decision makers. The conclusions and recommendations, together with the relevant evidence, may be presented in a report or sometimes just recorded in the minutes of the Board meeting. Reports and recommendations are agreed by the Board before referral to Cabinet for consideration.

Recommendations may also be made to the full Council (policy and budgetary decisions) or to external agencies where the council does not have the power to act.

Executive Response

Overview and Scrutiny reports and recommendations are referred to Cabinet to make executive decisions in respect of each Overview and Scrutiny recommendation and to provide an Executive Response to the Board. The Cabinet is asked to agree, reject or amend each recommendation and to provide an indicative implementation date by which time the agreed recommendations are to be carried out.

The relevant Portfolio Holder is expected to attend the Board Meeting to present the Cabinet Response and answer any questions. If a recommendation is made to any other agency they may also be asked to provide an executive decision and response.

Tracking the Outcomes of Recommendations

Ultimately Overview and Scrutiny is about making a difference. The Overview and Scrutiny Board tracks all recommendations made to and agreed by Cabinet through Quarterly Recommendation Tracker reports. In depth investigations and Task Groups are usually reviewed 12 months after their report has been considered by the Cabinet. The purpose of this is to check if the agreed recommendations have been implemented and to see what outcomes have been achieved.

Short, Sharp Inquiries

A “short sharp inquiry” is carried out through a mix of both formal Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings and informal meetings involving all Members of the Board and chaired by the Overview and Scrutiny Board Chairman. This type of inquiry can be used for the investigation of a topic already on the Board’s work programme or a topic on the Forward Plan which the Board felt warranted a more in depth investigation being carried out. However, it can also be used to consider matters of local concern, that have not been scheduled on either the work programme or Forward Plan but which Members feel would merit inclusion and further investigation.

Task Groups

If it is felt that a more in depth and detailed inquiry is required, the Overview and Scrutiny Board can appoint Task Groups which are separate from the Board and can include Members who are not Members of the Board (Members of the Cabinet cannot join a task group) to consider issues outside of the formal committee process or to allow an in depth overview and scrutiny investigation. It is best practice for the Chairman of a Task Group to be a member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Task Groups carry out investigations and report back to the Board with their findings and recommendations. Task Groups can use a variety of methods to gather evidence and can invite relevant officers, representatives from external organisations and members of the public who have an interest and would like to put their views forward to act as witnesses.

BOARD INVESTIGATIONS 2013-14

In addition to the regular standing items on the Board's agenda (detailed under the section Future Work of the Overview and Scrutiny Board), it also requested and received reports and commented on the following areas:

- **Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Partnerships – Introduction to the Work of the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership**
Following the merge of the Redditch Borough, Wyre Forest District and Bromsgrove District Council's Community Safety Partnership to form the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership and as part of its statutory role, the Board received an update at its meeting on 18th November 2013 which included details of the terms of reference and operating protocols. The main areas of discussion at that meeting were around anticipated reductions in budgets and the impact of those on community safety projects.

- **Town Centre Regeneration and Public Realm Improvements**
At the meeting held on 15th July under the Cabinet Work Programme item Members requested an update of the current position in respect of this. A presentation was subsequently received at the meeting held on 16th September which covered the strategic framework, which had multiple projects each contributing to at least one of the four key strategic aims; a revitalised and attractive town centre, a thriving and diverse economy, new multi-agency public service facilities and an improved transport infrastructure. Further regular updates were requested following this presentation.

- **Car Parking Review**
Car Parking has been a topic which the Board has considered in some detail over recent years and at the September 2013 meeting a topic proposal in respect of Car Parking Charges was considered following its submission by Mr Charles Bateman on behalf of the Older Peoples' Forum. Members were informed that a review of car parking was in fact being carried out and it was agreed that the topic proposal would not be considered until the outcome of that review had been received by the Board. At the December meeting the Board had the opportunity to consider that report in conjunction with a presentation from the Environmental Services Manager. The Board concluded that due to the on-going redevelopment of the Town Centre, on which they had recently received a detailed presentation, it was too early to make any decisions in respect of car parking charges and therefore agreed to take no further action at the present time in respect of the topic proposal.

➤ **Budget Scrutiny**

The Board received an informal budget briefing on 2nd December (to which all Councillors were invited) followed by a formal discussion and presentation at its meeting held on 20th January. The areas covered at that meeting included further savings which needed to be made, the impact of budgetary savings on the delivery of frontline services and borrowing costs in respect of the move to Parkside. A further report was received at the meeting on 24th February in respect of the Medium Term Financial Plan 2014/15 – 2016/17. Further detailed discussions took place and concerns were raised that the Board had not been provided with sufficient time throughout the year to scrutinise the Council's budget effectively. It was confirmed that the budget setting process had been re-assessed at a corporate level and that budgetary matters would be addressed at an much earlier date in future.

➤ **Shared Services Savings**

Following the informal budget briefing on 2nd December Members requested a report in respect of the savings which had been made from the sharing of services with neighbouring local authorities. Members raised a number of points following this presentation including some services which had not yet been shared (below senior manager level) and the opportunity for the Council to explore the sharing of these with other local authorities, which could lead to additional one off costs at a later date. Service transformation, although not included within the report, was also discussed including the costs of some of this work and the savings achieved.

➤ **North Worcestershire Water Management**

At its October meeting, Members were given an opportunity to put forward any suitable topics for future consideration by the Board. It was suggested that an update on the preventative work carried out in respect of flooding in the District would be pertinent in view of the approach of the winter months. A detailed presentation was received at the February meeting which included information on specific projects within the District and the role that North Worcestershire Water Management played in other areas for example providing advice in respect of planning applications and details of the external partners who they worked closely with. Following the presentation Members requested a further update in approximately 12 months time in order to receive a progress report in respect of the implementation of the next round of planned works in the District.

➤ **CCTV Code of Practice and Impact of County Council Cuts**

Back in December 2012 and following the completion of a topic proposal, the Board received a presentation in respect of the CCTV Shared Service and the role of the CCTV Team. Members were informed at that meeting that the Code of Practice would be revised following new legislation and it was requested that the Board be given an opportunity for its comments on this to be fed into the final document. The Board received this document at its April

meeting together with a briefing note in respect of the impact of Worcestershire County Council (WCC) budget cuts on the service. Members raised a number of points in respect of the Code of Practice which would be given consideration in the final document. Members were provided with an over view of the Council's Lifeline service and the Future Lives Scheme and of the removal of funding by WCC and how this was being addressed. Concerns were raised in respect of those vulnerable residents who would potentially no longer receive this important and vital service. The Board were informed that the CCTV and Lifeline team were working closely with Bromsgrove District Housing Trust to ensure that all tenants who needed to were still able to access the service.

➤ **Results of the Staff Survey**

At its October meeting, Members were given an opportunity to put forward any suitable topics for future consideration by the Board. It was suggested that as a staff survey had recently been completed a summary of the feedback from this would be useful. A presentation was received at the April meeting which whilst provided some of the background information around the results together with actions which would be put in place to resolve some issues that had arisen from the survey. Members discussed this in detail and concluded that whilst the presentation was useful it did not provide the detail which they felt was needed to understand how staff were feeling and the problems which they faced. It was therefore agreed that a further more detailed presentation/report would be received early in the new municipal year.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUPS 2013-14

Air Quality Task Group

Membership: Councillors Sean Shannon (Chairman), James Brogan, Margaret Buxton, Steve Colella, Brian Cooper, Pete Lammas, Peter McDonald, Luke Mallett, Chris Scurrrell and Les Turner.

Deadline: The review was completed in September 2013.

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

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

The Task Group held a total of 13 meetings and interviewed numerous internal and external witnesses. It also considered written evidence from a number of sources and considered information provided by Parish Councils and residents. A total of **12 recommendations** were approved at the Board meeting held on 16th September and went on to be considered by the Cabinet at its meeting on 2nd October 2013. A written response was received by the Board at its meeting on 18th November when Members expressed their disappointment at this response and it was agreed that the Task Group Members, who had the expertise required to assess the subject matter, reconvene and consider the Cabinet response in more detail. A further response was prepared by the Task Group and given consideration by the Cabinet at its meeting on 2nd April 2014.

Following this Cabinet finally approved 6 of the 12 recommendations and some elements of one other. These will now be implemented and monitored through the Overview and Scrutiny Board, with the task group report as a whole being reviewed in 12 months time.

Youth Provision Task Group

Membership: Councillors June Griffiths (Chairman), Sue Baxter, James Brogan, Rod Laight, Pete Lammas and Caroline Spencer

Deadline: The review was completed in July 2013.



The Board received a presentation on the work of the Local Strategic Partnership at its meeting held on 22nd October 2012. Following that presentation the Board agreed at its following meeting to set up a Task Group which would investigate the youth provision within the District. The key objectives of the Task Group were to consider current arrangements for providing services for young people, to analyse opportunities to participate in youth activities, to scrutinise accessibility of current services provided by the Council and to identify any gaps within the services provided. Members believed that as young people were a significant proportion of the local population an effective review of the subject would potentially enable them to address the needs of young people living in the District and in the long term have a positive impact on their future prospects.

The Task Group held a total of 18 meetings, which included 6 site visits and interviews with numerous internal and external witnesses. The Task Group also considered written evidence from a number of sources and considered information provided by Ward Councillors and Parish Councils. A total of **10 recommendations** were approved by the Board at its meeting held on 15th July, which were later considered by Cabinet at its meeting on 4th September. A written response from Cabinet was considered at the Board meeting on 14th October when Members were informed that all recommendations had been approved by them.

The Task Group will be reviewed in 12 months time and any outstanding recommendations will be included in the Board's quarterly recommendation tracker to ensure that any outstanding recommendations continue to be monitored.

Artrix Outreach Provision Task Group

Membership: Councillors Sean Shannon (Chairman), Richard Deeming, Stuart Dudley, Peter McDonald, Luke Mallett, Elaine Shannon, Chris Scurrrell and Peter Whittaker.

Deadline: The review was completed in April 2014.



A topic proposal which was completed by Councillor Peter McDonald was submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 15th July 2013. The proposal was keen to ensure that the Outreach Provision was successful and marketed in such a way as to reach those in the community that needed it most and may be excluded. It was also important to ensure that as the Council made a considerable contribution to the funding of the Artrix that it received value for money. Councillor Sean Shannon was also appointed as Chairman at that meeting. At the Board meeting held on 16th September both the Membership and Terms of Reference were agreed with a timescale of completion of the work within 6 months of the first meeting.

The first meeting took place on 13th November and a further 8 meetings took place with evidence being considered from a number of internal and external witnesses. The Task Group also considered written evidence and was provided with detailed information from the Education and Outreach Co-ordinator at the Artrix Centre. A total of **10 recommendations** were considered by the Board at its meeting on 14th April and will go before the Cabinet meeting to be held on 4th June for final consideration and hopefully approval.

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TASK GROUP 12 MONTH REVIEWS

Planning Policy Task Group

Background

An Overview and Scrutiny Topic Proposal Form into the planning process was submitted to the Board meeting held on 13th June 2011 with the request that it be included within the Work Programme of the Board for the coming year. After discussion it was agreed that it would be necessary to break the process down into specific areas of planning and to concentrate on the areas of most concern to both Members and residents in the first instance. It was further agreed that initially, a Board Investigation would be carried out in to Planning Enforcement. An initial, informal meeting of the Board took place in July 2011 to discuss this area. Following a request from full Council, it was later agreed that a Task Group would be established to scrutinise matters relating to planning policy concerns. At the Board meeting held on 21st November it was agreed that Planning Enforcement would be included within the scope of the Planning Policy Task Group

Key Findings and Recommendations

The Task Group's final report, which included **12 recommendations**, was presented to Cabinet on 4th April 2012 and Cabinet provided an interim response which was received at the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 23rd April 2012. Cabinet had agreed 8 of the recommendations but had asked that the Overview and Scrutiny Board looked again at elements of the remaining 4 recommendations and provided Cabinet with a response before giving them further consideration at its meeting on 4th July 2012. Cabinet's final response was received at the Board meeting held on 10th September 2012, with all recommendations being accepted.

12 Month Review

The Board received an update from the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the Portfolio Holder at the meeting held on 18th November 2013. It was noted that work was on going in respect of 6 recommendations, 5 had been completed and processes put in place to ensure that these continued to happen (in respect of suggested training for example) and 1 recommendation remained outstanding, which would be considered, if necessary when the enforcement process was considered under the transformation programme. The outstanding recommendations continue to be monitored through the Quarterly Recommendation Tracker process.

JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY INVESTIGATIONS

Joint Worcestershire Regulatory Services Scrutiny Task Group

Bromsgrove District Council representatives: Councillors Rod Laight (lead) and Pete Lammas (substitute).

Deadline: The review is due to be completed in June 2014.

The Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group was established in 2013 to review the shared Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS). Elected Members from each of the Councils in Worcestershire have been appointed to the review which is being hosted and chaired by the Council as the host authority for the shared service.

The key objectives of the review were for the group: to review the final business case for the shared service; to compare previous service levels at individual local authorities with current service levels in the shared service; to assess the performance of the services compared to previous performance levels; to investigate levels of customer satisfaction; and to review the governance arrangements for the shared service.

The group has gathered a large amount of evidence about WRS since their first meeting in September 2013 including performance data and customer feedback, in the form of compliments and complaints about the service. Members have interviewed a number of expert witnesses including representatives of the WRS Management Board, representatives of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee, staff employed in WRS including the Head of Regulatory Services and the Chief Executive, Section 151 Officer and Legal Services Manager from the host authority. The group has also visited Wyatt House in Worcester, the base for WRS, and attended meetings of the Joint Committee to observe the decision making process.

During the review Members have become increasingly concerned about the potential implications of the budget cuts proposed by partners for the future of shared regulatory services. It is likely that financial considerations will therefore feature significantly in the group's final report.

Integrated Waste Collection and Disposal Service Joint Scrutiny

An approach has recently been made by Worcestershire County Council to all Councils within the County in respect of a joint scrutiny exercise looking at an Integrated Waste Collection and Disposal Service. Under the joint protocol set up

Agenda Item 9

and agreed by all authorities, it would fall to Worcestershire County Council to host the joint scrutiny exercise. The terms of reference have recently been circulated to all Overview and Scrutiny Committees and a decision is currently awaited to see whether this group will go ahead.

FUTURE WORK OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Topics already included on the Board's work programme for 2014-15 are as follows:

- Continued Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder

The following are standard items which are considered at regular intervals by the Overview and Scrutiny Board and will again be scheduled into the work programme for 2014-15:

- Cabinet Leader's Work Programme
- Quarterly Finance Monitoring Report
- Write Off of Debts Report
- Making Experiences Count Quarterly Report (*this was following a recommendation from the Planning Policy Task Group*)
- Sickness and Absence Health Monitoring Report
- Worcestershire County Council Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (*the Council's representative on this Committee must be a Member of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and provide the Board with regular updates on the work being carried out.*)

The following standard items are prepared by the supporting officer and considered by the Board regularly:

- Work Programme
- Action List
- Recommendation Tracker
- Task Groups (*the Board reviews Task Groups 12 months after the recommendations have been considered by the Cabinet*)

FURTHER INFORMATION

Overview and Scrutiny Board Meetings

Overview and Scrutiny Board meetings are open to the public. To find out more visit our website at www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny or telephone 01527 881288 and ask to speak to the Democratic Services Officer.

Public Involvement

If you would like to have your say on issues being considered by Overview and Scrutiny or to suggest a topic for consideration you can email scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk or complete the form on the Council's website www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny

Giving Evidence

Members of the public or organisations with a special interest or knowledge about a particular topic being considered by Overview and Scrutiny can put forward evidence to a committee or appear as a witness to give evidence for an investigation. If you think you or your organisation might be able to participate in an issue currently under review, please contact us.

If you have a personal issue with a council service you may find it more useful to contact your local ward councillor who can help you decide the best way to take it forward.

Contact Overview and Scrutiny

If you would like to find out more about any aspect of the Overview and Scrutiny Board then you can email scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk or telephone 01527 881288 and ask to speak to the Committee Services Officer.

Further information can also be found on the Council's website. Please go to www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/scrutiny

**Overview and Scrutiny
Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Bromsgrove District Council
The Council House
Burcot Lane
Bromsgrove B60 1AA**

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**This report can be provided in
large print, braille, on audio CD or tape,
or on computer disc.**

"Need help with English?" Contact Worcestershire HUB, Bromsgrove 01527 881288

'Potrzebujesz pomocy z angielskim?' Skontaktuj się z Worcestershire HUB, Bromsgrove, tel.: 01527 881288

"İngilizce için yardıma ihtiyacınız var mı?" 01527 881288 numarayı arayıp Worcestershire HUB, Bromsgrove ile irtibata geçin

"ইংরাজির জন্য সাহায্য চাই ?" 01527 881288 নম্বরে উস্টাশায়ার হাব [HUB] ব্রমসগ্রভ [Bromsgrove]-এ টেলিফোন করুন

"ਅੰਗਰੇਜ਼ੀ ਵਿਚ ਮਦਦ ਚਾਹੁੰਦੇ ਹੋ?" ਫੁਰਸੈਸਟਰਸ਼ਾਇਰ ਹੱਬ [HUB] ਨੂੰ ਬਰੋਮਸਗ੍ਰੋ [Bromsgrove] ਵਿਖੇ 01527 881288 'ਤੇ ਟੈਲੀਫੋਨ ਕਰੋ

"انگریزی میں مدد چاہتے ہیں؟" ورسیسٹر شائر ہب [HUB]، برومزگرو [Bromsgrove] میں 01527 881288 پر رابطہ کریں



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

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

Telephone: (01527) 881288, Fax: (01527) 881414, DX: 17279 Bromsgrove

e-mail: scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk

CABINET LEADER'S

WORK PROGRAMME

1 JULY 2014 TO 31 OCTOBER 2014

(published as at 1 June 2014)

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

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

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

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

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

Key Decisions are those executive decisions which are likely to:

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

Key Decisions will include:

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

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

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

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

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

CABINET MEMBERSHIP

Councillor M. A. Sherrey	Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Community Services, Partnerships and Governance
Councillor C. B. Taylor	Deputy Leader of the Council and Portfolio Holder for Planning Services
Councillor M. J. A. Webb	Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services, Economic Development and Emergency Planning
Councillor D. W. P. Booth	Portfolio Holder for Enabling (excluding Finance and Governance)
Councillor R. L. Dent	Portfolio Holder for the Town Centre, Regulatory Services and Housing
Councillor M. A. Bullivant	Portfolio Holder for Environmental Services
Councillor R. Hollingworth	Portfolio Holder for Finance, Revenues and Benefits

Decision Including Whether it is a Key Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Dolphin Centre Replacement Business Case Key Decision	Cabinet <i>(with possible recommendation to Council)</i>	2 July 2014	Report of the Head of Leisure and Culture <i>(report may be confidential in part)</i>	John Godwin 01527 881742 Councillor M. Webb
Mobile Homes Act 2013 – New Policy relating to Licensing Fees	Cabinet <i>(with possible recommendation to Council)</i>	2 July 2014	Report of the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R. Dent
Ward Councillors Spending Policy (possible item)	Cabinet (possible recommendation to Council)	2 July 2014	Report of the Executive Director Finance and Resources)	Jayne Pickering Executive Director of Finance and Resources 01527 881400 Councillor R. Hollingworth
Homelessness Grant Policy and Funding 2014/15	Cabinet	2 July 2014	Report of the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R Dent
Review of Market Policy, Traders' Terms and Conditions and new Market Stalls	Cabinet	2 July 2014	Report of the Town Centre Regeneration Programme Manager	Richard Savory 01527 881281 Councillor R. Dent

Decision Including Whether it is a Key Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Financial Outturn 2013/14	Cabinet	2 July 2014	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources)	Sam Morgan Financial Services Manager 01527 587008 Councillor R. Hollingworth
Council Tax Support Scheme	Cabinet	2 July 2014	Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda De Warr 01527 881241 Councillor M. Webb
Earmarked Reserves	Cabinet <i>(may be recommendation to Council)</i>	2 July 2014	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources)	Sam Morgan Financial Services Manager 01527 587008 Councillor R. Hollingworth
Disposal of Council-Owned Land, Aintree Close, Catshill	Cabinet (may be some confidential parts to the report)	2 July 2014	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R. Dent

Decision Including Whether it is a Key Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
Playing Pitch Strategy	Cabinet	3 September 2014	Report of the Head of Leisure and Culture	Karl Stokes Parks and Green Spaces Services Manager 01527 64252 ext 3377 Councillor M. Webb
Dodford, Hagley and Beoley Conservation Area Appraisals and Management Plans - Adoption	Cabinet	3 September 2014	Report of the Head of Planning and Regeneration	Mike Dunphy Strategic Planning Manager 01527 881325 Councillor K. Taylor
Debt Recovery Policy	Cabinet (possible recommendation to Council)	1 October 2014	Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda De Warr 01527 881241 Councillor R. Hollingworth
Town Centre Public Realm Phase 2	Cabinet	1 October 2014	Report of the Town Centre Regeneration Programme Manager	Richard Savory 01527 881281 Councillor R. Dent
Outcome of the Marketing Exercise for the Birmingham Road/Stourbridge Road Car Park	Cabinet (may be some confidential parts to the report)	1 October 2014	Report of the Town Centre Regeneration Programme Manager	Richard Savory 01527 881281 Councillor R. Dent

Decision Including Whether it is a Key Decision	Decision Taker including Details of Exempt Information (if any)	Date of Decision	Documents submitted to Decision Maker / Background Papers List	Contact for Comments
New Policies in relation to the Town Centre, including Street Café Areas, Street Collections and premises Licences	Cabinet (possible recommendations to Council)	5 November 2014	Town Centre Regeneration Programme Manager	Richard Savory 01527 881281 Councillor R. Dent
Housing Allocations Policy Review Update	Cabinet	5 November 2014	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R. Dent
Local Lettings	Cabinet	5 November 2014	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R. Dent

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- 1 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 14th April 2014

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
Item 4 – CCTV Code of Practice and Impact of Future Finance Cuts	Members considered a briefing paper presented by the CCTV and Telecare Manager	The addition of Sexual Orientation be added to the list of issues in respect of the draft Code of Practice.	CCTV and Telecare Manager	As soon as possible. Email request sent to CCTV and Telecare Manager 27/05/14	
Item 8 – Air Quality Task Group final response from Cabinet	Members were provided with a verbal update in respect of the second response from Cabinet to the recommendations arising from this report.	Members to be provided with a copy of the written responses from Cabinet.	Democratic Services Officers	As soon as possible.	Information emailed to Members 15/04/14
Item 10 – Cabinet Work Programme	Members considered the Cabinet Work Programme for the period 1 st May to 31 st August 2014.	(a) Key decision items to be marked clearly on the Work Programme. (b) The inclusion of a short narrative to be considered in respect of each item in order for the Board to be able to make a more considered decision as to whether its input would be appropriate.	Democratic Services Manager	As soon as possible. Verbal request made to Democratic Services Manager 15/04/14	

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

WORK PROGRAMME

2014-15

RECOMMENDATION:

That the Board considers and agrees the work programme and updates it accordingly.

ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Date of Meeting	Subject	Additional Information
16th June 2014	Summary of Results of Staff Survey - Presentation	Requested following meeting on 14/10/13
	Draft Overview and Scrutiny Board Annual Report 2013/14	
	Making Experiences Count Quarter 4 Report	
	WRS Joint Scrutiny Exercise – Verbal update	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
14th July 2014	Cabinet Response to the Artrix Outreach Provision Task Group Report	
	Leisure Provision Task Group – Verbal Update	
	Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
15th September 2014	Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Partnerships – Update North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership	
	Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group – Draft Final Report	
	Summary of Playing Pitch Strategy	Requested following meeting on 16/09/13

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Date of Meeting	Subject	Additional Information
	Leisure Provision Task Group – Verbal Update	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
13th October 2014	Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
17th November 2014	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
15th December 2014	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
19th January 2015	Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
16th February 2015	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
16th March 2015	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
13th April 2015	Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	

Date of Meeting	Subject	Additional Information
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	

Reports to be Received by the Board Quarterly – dates to be confirmed

Finance Monitoring
 Write Off of Debts
 Sickness Absence Performance

Reports to be Received by the Board Annually

Making Experiences Count (June meeting)
 Summary of Environmental Enforcement (July meeting)

Scrutiny of Crime & Disorder Partnership

The Board must hold at least one meeting at which it considers the scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Partnership. It is suggested that this year it will be discussed at the meeting to be held on 15th September 2014.

Topics to be considered (as recommended by Task Groups)

The following topics were suggested by Task Group for further investigation. It is up to the Board to decide whether they wish these to be considered within its current Work Programme.

1. Provision of services available to disaffected young people and those not in education, employment or training within the District.
2. Review into CO2 emissions in the District.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TASK GROUP/INQUIRY 12 MONTH REVIEWS 2014-15

Task Group	Date of Review
Youth Provision Task Group	September 2014
Air Quality Task Group	March 2015
Artrix Outreach Provision Task Group	July 2015

When considering topics for investigations Members may wish to take into account the Council's Strategic Purposes as detailed below:

Our Strategic Purposes for Bromsgrove

- Help me to live my life independently*
- Help me to be financially independent*
- Keep my place safe & looking good*
- Help me find somewhere to live in my locality*
- Provide good things for me to see, do & visit*
- Help me run a successful business*

Support services enable us to deliver our purposes

Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

For more information view the Council Plan at:
<http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk/cms/council-and-democracy/council-plan.aspx>