



## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

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

**MONDAY 14TH JULY 2014**  
**AT 6.00 P.M.**

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

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

### **AGENDA**

1. Apologies for Absence
2. 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.
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 16th June 2014 (Pages 1 - 10)
4. WRS Joint Scrutiny Task Group - Final Report (Pages 11 - 70)
5. Artrix Outreach Provision Task Group Final Report - Cabinet Response (Pages 71 - 74)
6. To Review the Task Group Guidelines & Scoping Documents (Pages 75 - 86)
7. Quarterly Recommendation Tracker (Pages 87 - 100)
8. Joint Integrated Waste Services Scrutiny Task Group - Update (Pages 101 - 104)

9. Leisure Provision Task Group - Verbal Update
10. WCC Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee - Update
11. Cabinet Work Programme (Pages 105 - 112)
12. Action List (Pages 113 - 116)
13. Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme (Pages 117 - 120)
14. 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

3rd July 2014



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# Agenda Item 3

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

MONDAY, 16TH JUNE 2014 AT 6.00 P.M.

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

Invitees: Councillors D. Booth and M. Webb

Officers: Mrs. S. Hanley, Ms. J. Pickering, Ms. D. Poole, Jones, Ms. J. Bayley and Ms. A. Scarce

#### 1/14 ELECTION OF CHAIRMAN

A nomination for Chairman was received in respect of Councillor L. C. R. Mallett.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor L. C. R. Mallett be elected as Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.

#### 2/14 ELECTION OF VICE CHAIRMAN

A nomination for Vice Chairman was received in respect of Councillor H. J. Jones.

**RESOLVED** that Councillor H. J. Jones be elected as Vice Chairman for the ensuing municipal year.

#### 3/14 APOLOGIES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors J. S. Brogan, R. J. Shannon and C. J. Spencer.

Councillor K. A. Grant-Pearce confirmed he was attending as a substitute for Councillor Spencer, Councillor J. M. L. A. Griffiths confirmed she was attending as a substitute for Councillor Brogan and Councillor P. MacDonald confirmed he was attending as a substitute for Councillor Shannon.

#### 4/14 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

Councillor R. A. Clarke declared an other disclosable interest as the District Commissioner for Bromsgrove District Scout Association in respect of Item

No. 14. In particular, this interest related to an item listed on the Cabinet Work Programme for the disposal of Council-owned Land, Aintree Close, Catshill.

Members agreed that a general declaration of an other disclosable interest in respect of Item No. 10 should be made for every member of the Board as it was acknowledged that all Members (or their families) would use the leisure facilities provided by the Council at some point.

## 5/14 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 14th April 2014 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes be approved.

## 6/14 SUMMARY OF RESULTS OF STAFF SURVEY

The Head of Business Transformation and Organisational Development delivered a presentation which summarised the results of the staff survey conducted in August 2013 (Appendix 1).

Following this presentation a number of points were raised by Members:

- The level of responses that had been received from staff, which represented a third of the employees from both Bromsgrove District Council and Redditch Borough Council.
- The potential to design and promote future versions of the survey in ways that would encourage a larger proportion of staff to respond in future years. Officers confirmed that the survey had been made available both electronically and in paper form for staff to complete.
- The value of assessing responses at a departmental level and the challenges this would present to the Staff Survey Working Group due to the fact that staff were not required to indicate which department they worked in when completing the survey.
- Some of the feedback that had been received in completed surveys, particularly the qualitative data, had been treated as confidential. This was because in some cases the comments submitted by staff could have enabled observers to identify the respondent or a specific team.
- The potential for senior Officers to make themselves available for staff to access across numerous working sites. Members were advised that senior Officers would not focus on one action exclusively but rather would seek to engage with staff face-to-face using a range of methods in order to meet the differing needs across both Councils.
- The Working Group's Action Plan, which was in the process of being developed would be utilised to monitor progress in implementing actions taken in response to the feedback, particularly the top ten recommendations.
- The benefits of face to face communications between staff arising from "No Email" days.
- How the feedback that had been received compared to the responses to previous versions of the staff survey. Members suggested that in future a

record should be kept of the responses received in order to ensure that progress with addressing staff concerns could be monitored.

- The importance of 1:2:1 meetings for staff and the need for these to be held regularly. However, it was noted that there needed to be some flexibility across the organisation regarding the frequency of these meetings due to the varying work patterns and demands on staff employed in different services.
- The fact that some staff struggled with change and the challenges this presented at a corporate level during the course of service transformation.
- The failure of some ICT systems and the financial implications that this presented for the Council.

Concerns were expressed in respect of the 14.75% of respondents who had indicated that they had been subject to bullying and harassment while at work. Officers confirmed that there was a policy for managing reports relating to bullying and harassment and this was applied by managers when cases were reported directly by members of staff. Improved training of managers would further enable them to respond to reports of bullying and harassment in a sensitive manner. There were also support groups, such as Phone a Friend, which could provide advice to staff. Members concurred that it was important to demonstrate to all staff that the Council would not tolerate bullying and harassment and it was suggested that this could be highlighted within the top ten recommendations.

The Board also discussed the proposal for the staff finder and phone lists to be updated in order to improve internal communications. Members noted that unfortunately they were not able to access the intranet, where the staff finder facility was located, using their Council IT equipment. However, the Board recognised that it was important to provide all elected Members with access to staff contact details as this could help Members to manage issues raised at both Committee meetings and by residents in a constructive manner.

**RECOMMENDED** that

1. a statement should be added to the top ten recommendations arising from the staff survey which demonstrates that the Council has a zero tolerance approach to bullying and harassment among staff;
2. the contact details for staff, as detailed in the staff finder on the Council's intranet, should be made available for the consideration of elected Members; and

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

7/14

## **MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT QUARTER 4 REPORT**

The Customer Services Manager presented the Making Experiences Count report covering the fourth quarter of 2013/14. During the presentation of this report the following matters were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- There had been 12 complaints during the period which had been resolved within 15 working days or less. There had also been 15 compliments received during this period.
- The reduction in complaints had occurred following changes to services. In particular, the reduction in complaints about Environmental Services had followed the introduction of a bespoke contact service for the department.
- Changes to the Council's system for reporting complaints and compliments had been trialled during the period. This trial had been successful and had therefore been implemented across the authority, though would continue to be monitored.
- Problems had been experienced with both the payments system and the staff finder facility which had been resolved by the beginning of the new financial year.
- There had been an increase in the number of face to face customer enquiries regarding planning matters that had been received during the period which had occurred following a one day planning event.

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

- The current presentation of the front cover to the report and potential stylistic changes that could be made to future versions.
- The differences between customer queries and complaints.
- The focus on telephone conversations rather than written correspondence as a means for managers to respond to complaints received from customers.
- The potential for secret shoppers to be used to assess the services that were being provided to the customer.

Members expressed some concerns about the increase in the number of complaints that had been received during the period in respect of planning matters. In particular, there were concerns about the delays to resolving planning applications that appeared to be causing these complaints and the reasons for these delays. To assess this issue further it was agreed that Officers should be invited to present further information on the subject at the following meeting of the Board.

**RESOLVED** that

- (a) the Head of Planning and Regeneration and the relevant Portfolio Holder be invited to attend the following meeting to explain the reasons for the recent increase in complaints about the Council's planning process; and
- (b) the report be noted.

8/14

## **WRITE OFF OF DEBTS QUARTER 4 REPORT**

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources presented the Write off of Debts report for the fourth quarter of 2013/14.

Once the report had been presented the following issues were discussed:



- The figures that had been provided in the breakdown of unrecoverable debt which had been written off during 2013/14 and the need to ensure that the calculations included in the report were accurate.
- The level of funds due from sundry debtors.
- Legal restrictions limiting the potential to provide further information about individuals indebted to the Council.
- Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates arrears owing since 1999/2000. Officers confirmed that the Council continued to collect outstanding arrears for each of the years following and including 1999/2000.
- The need for payment to be made in order for customers to receive a green waste collection service. Officers confirmed that there was minimal risk for customers to receive this service without payment as a central database, which was updated regularly, was used to monitor whether customers should receive this service.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

9/14

## **OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD ANNUAL REPORT 2013/14**

The content of the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Annual Report 2013/14 was considered. Officers explained that the report would be presented for the consideration of Council at its July meeting.

On behalf of the Board the Chairman thanked Councillor P. Lammas for his hard work when chairing the board the previous year.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

10/14

## **LEISURE PROVISION TASK GROUP**

The Board considered a written report that had been prepared by the Chairman of the Leisure Provision Task Group, Councillor C. J. Spencer, for Members' consideration in her absence. This report outlined the group's findings during a recent meeting when they had pre-scrutinised the business case report for the Dolphin Centre.

The following matters were highlighted during the Board's consideration of this report:

- Members had invited the Task Group to pre-scrutinise the business case on behalf of the Overview and Scrutiny Board at their previous meeting in April 2014.
- In the business case Officers were suggesting that the new centre would operate at a surplus compared to the current deficit at the Dolphin Centre.
- It was anticipated that membership of the gym would increase from 1,050 to 1,700 which would be commensurate with membership figures at other Council run leisure centres.
- Changes would be made to the swimming pool facilities. Whilst the size of the main pool would remain 25m x 6m the smaller children's pool would

have a moveable floor and the seating around the main pool for gala events would be reduced.

- The Task Group had felt strongly that there needed to be sufficient provision of services and facilities to meet the needs of customers with various disabilities. This included suitable parking provision to enable customers with disabilities and, in some cases, their carers, to alight from their vehicles safely.
- Parking provision at the venue had been discussed and it had been acknowledged that there would be a need to charge for parking at the site. Members had been keen to ensure that sufficient space was provided for minibuses and coaches in the car park.

The Task Group had had some concerns that if a Sports Hall was not included in the plans there would be limited choice of such facilities available for local leisure groups to use in the district. In addition, concerns were raised that following an increase in hire charges for use of the Sports Hall at the Ryland Centre many sports groups would be deterred from meeting in the district in future if a sports hall was not included in the plans for the new leisure centre. Members were advised that Sports England had concluded that there was sufficient Sports Hall provision in the area and that this did not therefore need to form part of the council's plans. Whilst a decision remained to be taken on the final range of facilities that would be available at the centre the Board was informed that there was also an option available for the Council to refer customers to an adjoining facility and the ability to "purchase" block bookings at this sports hall by the Council and sub let that space.

The prudential borrowing arrangements proposed for the centre had caused Members of the Task Group some concern as it was being suggested this be set at the maximum figure permitted of £9.5 million. The questions that had been raised by some Councillors at Council meetings regarding the capital project costs had also been considered. For these reasons the group felt that the Audit Board should investigate the figures further and the process that had been followed to ensure that the budget proposals were appropriate.

The process that had been followed to identify local leisure needs was briefly discussed. The Board was advised that a significant part of this assessment had been based on feedback received from customers to a leisure provision survey that had been distributed around the district in 2010. This survey had found that many people only visited Bromsgrove when they attended the Dolphin Centre. In most cases customers were only prepared to travel 5 – 10 miles to access leisure facilities and for this reason some residents living in some parts of the district might be more inclined to use leisure facilities managed by a neighbouring local authority.

The range of customers who utilised facilities at the Dolphin Centre were also briefly considered by the Board. The Board was advised that in terms of the customers, the level of usage of the facilities and the age range of members at the Dolphin Centre was one of the busiest leisure venues in the district. One attraction of the Dolphin Centre to potential customers was that the facilities were available to use on a "pay and play" basis and housed both wet and dry activities under one roof. However, Members were concerned that if there

was a reduction in the facilities currently available at the Centre, or no additional facilities added as an incentive to visit the new Dolphin Centre, then the new Centre may not be able to maintain the current level of popularity and loose customers to other facilities throughout both Worcestershire and surrounding areas. It was important therefore to ensure that there was scope for additional facilities to be added at a later stage.

The current condition of the Dolphin Centre was discussed by the Board. Members were advised that the building was safe for both staff and customers to use, however, the design of the centre was not ideal. Whilst a refurbishment of the venue had been completed relatively recently the works that had been undertaken had been largely cosmetic. The Centre continued to be inspected on a regular basis. Officers had assessed the potential to further refurbish the Dolphin Centre to improve the leisure service offer in the district for customers. Based on the data available they had concluded that it would be more expensive to undertake these works than to build a new leisure centre.

In the long-term it was anticipated that a café would open in the new leisure centre. However, it was likely that when the venue initially opened this space would be filled with vending machines. Members were advised that an attempt would be made to secure healthy food options and to make the café area an attractive in order that the leisure venue would become both a social and a sporting hub in the local area.

Members noted that consideration of the business case formed part of a wider review of leisure service provision in the district by the Task Group. The group was aiming to visit other leisure venues in order to observe arrangements in place in other parts of the country.

**RECOMMENDED** that

1. financial concerns around the increased membership that will be needed to ensure good annual revenue should be addressed through an Audit Board investigation of the figures; and
2. the Overview and Scrutiny Board should be involved in scrutinising more detailed plans to ensure that they address the needs of customers with disabilities.
3. Cabinet note the Board's disappointment that the Sports Hall has not been included within the plan for the new Dolphin Centre;
4. Cabinet note the Board's concern that insufficient facilities have been planned for the centre, especially for young people (i.e. no climbing wall as has been installed in other leisure centres).

**RESOLVED** that a copy of the business case be circulated for the consideration by Members of the Overview and Scrutiny Board and substitute Members present at the meeting.

11/14

## **JOINT INTEGRATED WASTE SCRUTINY TASK GROUP**

Councillor R. J. Laight, the Council's representative on the Joint Integrated Waste Scrutiny Task Group, provided an update on the progress of the review. He explained that the first meeting of the group had not yet taken place as it had proved difficult to identify a suitable date when a majority of Members would be available. This meeting would now take place on 1st July. In the interim period Councillor Laight had developed some concerns about the review which included the following:

- Only one other district Council, Worcester City, had agreed to participate in the review with Worcestershire County Council. Councillor Laight therefore questioned the extent to which the review could legitimately and effectively assess the implications of a joint waste collection and disposal service for district Councils.
- Connected to this were concerns that many of the district Councils might therefore be disinclined to approve any recommendations from the group which could make the value of participating in the exercise questionable.
- The delays to the launch of the review would mean that the deadline would need to be extended which would take up time that could be spent on other scrutiny activities.

On the basis of these concerns Councillor Laight asked it to be noted that he was resigning from the Task Group.

The potential outcomes of the review were debated by the Board. Some concerns were raised in respect of the potential financial and administrative implications of entering into a shared waste collection and disposal service with other Councils in Worcestershire. It was also noted that any recommendations arising from the Task Group would need to be considered by Cabinet and, as with any scrutiny recommendations, there would be no requirement to endorse the group's proposals.

Members discussed the terms of reference for the review. The Board noted that these terms of reference did not include consideration of Worcestershire County Council's current review of their Energy from Waste project. Concerns were raised that it might not be appropriate for the Task Group to consider some of the objectives detailed in the terms of reference, particularly those pertaining to district Councils, in the absence of most authorities. Under these circumstances Members noted that it would be appropriate to inform Worcestershire County Council of Councillor Laight's resignation and to refrain from appointing a replacement to the group until further clarification had been provided as to whether the terms of reference for the review would be amended.

The process for determining whether to participate in the review was briefly debated. Members noted that the Board had, following the proper democratic process, collectively agreed to participate in this exercise at their previous meeting. To ensure that all subsequent action in relation to this review complied with the democratic process the Board agreed that a 5 minute adjournment should take place to consider the constitution.

Following the completion of this 5 minute adjournment it was

**RESOLVED** that

- (a) Councillor Laight's resignation from the Joint Integrated Waste Task Group be reported to Worcestershire County Council;
- (b) Further clarification be sought from Worcestershire County Council regarding the final terms of reference for the review.

12/14

## **JOINT WRS SCRUTINY TASK GROUP**

The Chairman of the Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group, Councillor R. J. Laight, explained that the group had completed its investigations. The group's report had been published and was available on the Council's website to view. During June and July the report would be presented for the consideration of every Overview and Scrutiny Board in the county and subsequently presented for the consideration of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee in October 2014. Subject to the outcome of the debate by the Joint Committee the report would then be referred back to the Cabinets at each partner authority for consideration.

Councillor Laight explained that the Task Group had completed a thorough review of the subject. On the basis of the evidence that had been gathered during the review the group was proposing 12 recommendations which were designed to improve the shared service. Some of these recommendations would require significant changes to existing processes, particularly in relation to the governance of the partnership.

The Board noted that senior Officers were currently exploring options for the partnership to enter into a strategic partnership with a private sector partner. Members briefly discussed the process that would need to be applied in the event that one or more partners was not inclined to enter into this strategic partnership. Officers explained that there was an opt-out clause available to partners and this would need to be applied if a partner chose not to become part of the strategic partnership.

13/14

## **WCC HEALTH OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY COMMITTEE**

Councillor B. T. Cooper, the Council's representative on the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee (HOSC) explained that the previous meeting of HOSC had been cancelled. The next meeting would take place on 17th June.

Concerns were raised about recent reports that charges might be introduced for provision of incontinence pads to customers who required them. Councillor Cooper confirmed that he would raise these concerns on behalf of the Board at the following meeting of HOSC.

14/14 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME 1ST JULY TO 31ST OCTOBER 2014**

The Chairman explained that the format of the Cabinet's Work Programme was due to be refreshed. As part of this process further information would be provided in future in the document about key decisions.

Members were asked to note that when selecting items for pre-decision scrutiny from the Work Programme an element of forward planning was required due to the fact that items listed for the following Cabinet meeting would be considered before the next meeting of the Board.

15/14 **ACTION LIST**

Officers reported that the CCTV Code of Practice had been updated in line with the Board's suggestions at their previous meeting.

Members raised concerns regarding the resilience of CCTV equipment, particularly in cases where certain technical parts used for this type of equipment were becoming difficult to obtain at a national level. The Board requested that this subject be raised with the manager of the service and feedback be provided about the implications for the system in Bromsgrove district.

16/14 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The Board noted that the following items had been requested for Members' consideration at the July meeting:

- Information about the reasons for the current delays in the Council's Planning process.
- The WRS Joint Scrutiny Task Group's final report.

Members were also advised that Officers were aiming to provide an initial update on the Council's projected budget position at a meeting of the Board in September 2014.

Officers explained that there was capacity for a further Task Group to be launched to take place alongside the Leisure Provision Task Group. To ensure that membership appointments and other Task Group processes were clarified for the new municipal year Members agreed that the guidelines for Task Group exercises should be revisited and discussed at a future meeting of the Board.

The meeting closed at 8.53 p.m.

Chairman

## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

14th July 2014

### JOINT WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES (WRS) SCRUTINY TASK GROUP – FINAL REPORT

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor (at the time of the investigation)
Portfolio Holder Consulted	The Portfolio Holder was consulted by the group during the review as an expert witness. However, he has not been consulted about the group's recommendations.
Relevant Head of Service	Steve Jordan, Head of Regulatory Services
Ward(s) Affected	All wards

#### 1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To consider the findings and recommendations from the joint scrutiny investigation undertaken by the Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group and hosted by Bromsgrove District Council.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Committee is asked to **RECOMMEND** to the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee that

- (a) the 12 recommendations of the Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group be endorsed; and  
 (b) to **RESOLVE** that the report be noted.

#### 3. KEY ISSUES

##### Background

- 3.1 The Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group was originally proposed in summer 2012 by Wychavon District Council. Terms of reference for the review were developed and by early 2013 the lead Overview and Scrutiny Committee at each local authority in the county had agreed to participate in the exercise. Bromsgrove District Council, as the host authority for the shared service, also hosted this joint scrutiny exercise.
- 3.2 The first meeting of the group took place in September 2013 and Members subsequently met 15 times during the course of the review.

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- 3.3 At the end of the review the group proposed 12 recommendations which are designed to address some of the main challenges for the service that Members identified during the course of the review.

**Report Route**

- 3.4 Members will be aware that under normal circumstances, the Overview and Scrutiny Board is asked to consider and approve recommendations from Task Groups which are then referred directly to the Cabinet for approval. The initial decision making body for Worcestershire Regulatory Services is the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee, to which two representatives from each partner authority are appointed annually. The Overview and Scrutiny Board is therefore being asked to consider whether to endorse the Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group's recommendations and to refer their conclusions to the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee.
- 3.5 The Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee has the power to make some decisions on behalf of all partners, though in other cases, particularly where a decision requires a change to policy, recommendations may be referred to Executive Committees at participating Councils. The report is not due to be considered by the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee until 2nd October 2014. It is unlikely, therefore, that the Task Group's findings will be considered by Cabinet until after that date.
- 3.6 The Overview and Scrutiny Committees at each Council in Worcestershire have considered the Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group's final report at meetings during June and July 2014.
- 3.7 The Scrutiny Task Group recognised that some Overview and Scrutiny Committees may wish to suggest alterations to the report and/or to reject some of the recommendations whilst endorsing others. It has therefore been agreed, that in cases where Overview and Scrutiny Committees wish to make suggestions, highlight concerns or differing opinions these will be attached as addendums to the group's final report and will then be presented to the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee.

**Financial Implications**

- 3.8 There are a number of financial implications to the group's recommendations as detailed in the report. There is also a specific chapter in the report dedicated to financial considerations.
- 3.9 The group has highlighted the fact that financial pressures are having a significant impact on the shared services. These pressures and the suggestions proposed by the group to ensure that effective services remain available to residents living in Worcestershire, including Bromsgrove District, should be considered carefully when responding to this report.



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**Legal Implications**

- 3.10 There are a number of legal implications to the group's recommendations which are detailed in the main report.

**Service / Operational Implications**

- 3.11 The group's recommendations have a number of service and operational implications which are detailed in the report.

**Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

- 3.12 A number of the group's recommendations have an indirect impact on the service received by customers. However, a number of the group's proposals, particularly those relating to the future business model for the service and communications, have direct implications for the customer. These implications are detailed within the main report.
- 3.13 There are no specific equalities and diversity implications.

**4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

The group is suggesting in their report that if action is not taken to implement their recommendations and to enact change within the shared service there is a risk that the partnership will become unsustainable and the future role of Regulatory Services within the County and District will become uncertain.

**5. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group Final Report

**AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Amanda Scarce - Democratic Services Officer

Email: [a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

Tel.: (01527) 881443

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**JOINT WORCESTERSHIRE  
REGULATORY SERVICES  
SCRUTINY  
TASK GROUP**

Worcestershire  
**Regulatory Services**

*Supporting and protecting you*

**June 2014**



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## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK GROUP**



**(From left to right) Councillors Peter Tomlinson (Vice Chairman), Simon Cronin, Rod Laight (Chairman), Richard Udall, Alan Mason and John Raine.**

The Members in the photograph above regularly attended the meetings.

### Lead Member

Rod Laight  
John Raine  
Alan Mason  
Simon Cronin  
Richard Udall  
Peter Tomlinson  
Helen Dyke

### Substitute

Pete Lammas  
Mike Morgan  
Gay Hopkins  
Paul Denham  
Lynn Duffy  
Alastair Adams  
Tim Ingham

### Authority

Bromsgrove DC  
Malvern Hills DC  
Redditch BC  
Worcester City  
Worcestershire CC  
Wychavon DC  
Wyre Forest DC

## **SUPPORTING OFFICER DETAILS**

Amanda Scarce – Democratic Services Officer  
[a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:a.scarce@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)  
Jess Bayley – Democratic Services Officer  
[jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:jess.bayley@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

## **Foreword from the Chairman and Vice Chairman**

This group came together for the first time in late September 2013. Since then we have met together on 14 further occasions. Our journey together has been taxing, concentrated, at times somewhat frustrating but, in the main, both fulfilling and stimulating. At no time have the divisions which separate us politically played any part whatsoever in our discussions, deliberations or our conclusions. Indeed it became clear from the outset that whatever views individual members of this Task Group may have held about Worcestershire Regulatory Services or whatever their own experiences may have been prior to the review, every single Member was prepared to wipe that individual slate clean and to approach the task with an open and enquiring mind. Working as a team on this Task Group has therefore proved to be very demanding though, for each of us, one of our most worthwhile experiences as Councillors to date.

And it has been some task! We have interviewed 16 people including regulatory professionals, senior Officers from the districts and elected Members representing all the partners in this complex organisation. We have asked for and been given evidence about the performance of WRS in all the areas it covers and we have circulated our own survey amongst elected Members. The overall success of this Joint Scrutiny has been achieved by a team working well together with trust and integrity.

It must be said that all those interviewed by the Task Group have been honest, open and forthright. In particular the Head of Regulatory Services, Steve Jorden, along with his team have been very open and transparent. We have had to listen to and digest a plethora of often divergent views from those sitting on the same Committee. But it would be fair to say that where contrary opinions were put to us they were expressed coherently and with passion. Without exception all those we spoke to believed in Worcestershire Regulatory Services and wanted it to succeed. As our knowledge of the workings of this organisation grew and as we took the pulse, as it were, of all those involved we became ever more certain that the challenge we had taken on was not only timely but vital to the survival of Worcestershire Regulatory Services.

The majority of members of the Task Group took their responsibilities very seriously, though unfortunately the representatives from Wyre Forest District Council were unable to attend the majority of meetings. Similarly in most cases those invited to attend our meetings to be interviewed by us came willingly and in a spirit of co-operation. There was, however, one exception, which again we found most disappointing and that was, when given ample notice, no senior Officer was able to attend from Worcestershire County Council. A written response to our questions was provided by the County Council but this allowed no cross examination. Throughout our work, experience proved that whilst written answers were useful, the real meat then came from our probing of those answers.



# Agenda Item 4

We think we speak for all of us on this Task Group when we say that our work though onerous and demanding has been both enlightening and fulfilling. Now that the end is in sight we hope that our recommendations will help underpin the future of WRS. It has achieved so much in such a short space of time it deserves to succeed.

On behalf of all the Task Group Members we would like to thank our two Democratic Services Officers Amanda Scarce and Jess Bayley who have kept us on the straight and narrow, prompted us when we stalled, found the evidence we knew we had heard but had forgotten, nudged us with both advice and insight and generally kept this unique group of disparate individuals good tempered, courteous and above all focused. Thank you both, we could not have done it without you.



**Councillor Rod Laight (Bromsgrove District Council)  
Chairman (pictured on the right)  
Councillor Peter Tomlinson (Wychavon District Council)  
Vice Chairman**

## Summary of Recommendations

After consideration of all the evidence available (both documentary and from the interviews and other consultations) the Task Group have proposed the following recommendations (with full details of the supporting evidence provided in the chapters following this summary):

### **CHAPTER 1 - WRS PERFORMANCE AND COMMUNICATIONS**

<b>Recommendation 1</b>
Performance Management Information should continue to be made available for Members' consideration at every meeting of the Joint Committee and be sufficiently high on the agenda to be discussed in detail.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> There are no financial implications for WRS.
<b>Legal Implications:</b> There are no legal implications to this recommendation.
<b>Resource Implications:</b> Additional officer time may be required should extra meetings be introduced as suggested under recommendation 9.

<b>Recommendation 2</b>
Twelve months after the new contact centre arrangements for WRS have been introduced, replacing the use of the Worcestershire Hub, the Joint Committee should review the effectiveness of these arrangements for communicating with the public.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> There are no financial implications.
<b>Legal Implications:</b> There are no legal implications to this recommendation.
<b>Resource Implications:</b> Additional officer time would be required in order to produce this additional report.

<b>Recommendation 3</b>
The web-pages of each partner authority should be regularly monitored to ensure they are kept up to date, with the inclusion of a prominent and obvious link to the WRS website.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> There are no financial implications to WRS.
<b>Legal Implications:</b> There are no legal implications to this recommendation.
<b>Resource Implications:</b> There would be additional Officers' time from within WRS for the monitoring to take place and to follow up on any extra actions necessary identified during the monitoring process.

<b>Recommendation 4</b>
The purpose, content and circulation of the WRS newsletter should be thoroughly reviewed, with a view to it providing a more systematic and comprehensive account of the work and performance of the shared service, and with the content and format being agreed by the Joint Committee.
<b>Financial Implications:</b> There are no financial implications for WRS.
<b>Legal Implications:</b> There are no legal implications to this recommendation.
<b>Resource Implications:</b> A small amount of additional Officer time will be required to review the content of the newsletter and to present it to meetings of the Joint Committee. However, it is likely that the Officers from WRS who already attend meetings of the Joint Committee could present this item for the consideration of Members.

## **Recommendation 5**

That WRS have a designated member of staff to act as a Member Liaison Officer and as a single point of contact to signpost Member enquiries.

### **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications as it should be possible for this work to be undertaken by an existing member of WRS staff.

### **Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications to this recommendation.

### **Resource Implications:**

There would be additional Officer time required from the member of WRS staff designated to this role.

## **CHAPTER 2 - FINANCING OF WRS**

## **Recommendation 6**

In order to reduce the focus on financial considerations which currently play a major part in influencing partner participation, to the detriment of other equally important aspects of the service, the following should be addressed:

- (a) A new business model for WRS be developed through the Chief Executives' Panel, building on the proposals already being produced by the Panel.
- (b) Consideration be given to the option for partner authorities to purchase an "out of hours service".

### **Financial Implications:**

Initially there would be no financial implications from carrying out this review. It is acknowledged, however, that the intention behind this recommendation is to identify a financial model that would stabilise the funding of WRS in the long term.

Should this financial model vary to the charging mechanism already in place there may be additional costs for certain partners (with reductions in costs for others). The impact of any variances would have to be considered by partner Councils.

Each local authority needs to be aware that the option to introduce an out of hours' regulatory service in their area has significant financial implications in term of the Council's financial contribution to the service. Out of hours services are not currently available anywhere in the county and so would require additional expenditure from partners.

**Legal Implications:**

The existing legal agreement includes a Statement of Partner Requirements, which can be agreed with the Joint Committee. Should the charging model be revised the legal agreement would have to be amended to reflect this and it would have to be approved by the Joint Committee and the Partners.

**Resource Implications:**

Initially Officer time would be required to carry out the exploratory work although the group understand that the Chief Executives' Panel have already been investigating this matter.

## **CHAPTER 3 - GOVERNANCE OF WRS**

**Recommendation 7**

A new strategic decision making board for WRS should replace the Joint Committee, comprising one elected member per partner authority and supported by senior officers. This should be called the WRS Board.

- (a) Meetings of this Board should take place at the base of WRS.
- (b) Responsibility for attendance at Board meetings should lie with each authority's representative, and the quorum for meetings proceeding should be set at 5 representatives in attendance.
- (c) Meetings of the Board should take place bi-monthly.
- (d) Elected members appointed to the Board should be provided with an induction programme and sufficient ongoing training to enable them to fulfil their role effectively.
- (e) Members appointed to the Board be expected to serve a minimum of two years to ensure continuity.
- (f) The Chair of the WRS Board should be elected annually by the members of the Board.

**Financial Implications:**

Initially there would be some financial implications for this proposal, but these are likely to be quite limited. In particular there would be financial implications in respect of additional meetings of the WRS Board and in relation to holding an induction programme and on-going training.

**Legal Implications:**

This proposal fundamentally affects the constitution of the Joint Committee under s101 of the Local Government Act 1972 and s20 of the Local Government Act 2000 as established by the founding legal agreement dated 1 June 2009 and would essentially require a re-negotiation of it by member authorities.

**Resource Implications:**

There would be resource implications in terms of Officer time in preparing additional agendas and minutes for the extra meetings and in planning and delivering suitable training. This could be offset by the fact that Democratic

Services Officers would no longer need to spend time ensuring that the meetings are quorate.

There may also be some initial resource implications in relation to convening meetings at the base of WRS (currently Wyatt House in Worcester) as opposed to Bromsgrove Council House where meetings are currently held.

## Recommendation 8

The Management Board be disbanded, with the WRS Management Team taking the lead responsibility for operational decision making under the leadership of the Head of Regulatory Services.

### **Financial Implications:**

There would be a “one off” financial implication due to having to change the partnership’s legal agreement, although this is likely to be limited.

### **Legal Implications:**

This recommendation would require changes to the current legal agreement for WRS and each partner would need to approve these changes.

### **Resource Implications:**

The Officers currently serving on the Management Board would potentially have greater freedom to concentrate on the service needs within their remits of their own authorities.

There are no particular resource implications for WRS staff as operational considerations relating to regulatory services are already within their professional area of expertise.

## Recommendation 9

- (a) The Head of WRS should be fully accountable to the WRS Board (as the strategic decision making body).
- (b) The Chief Executive of the host authority to act in a mentoring role as and when necessary.

### **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications.

### **Legal Implications:**

This will require an amendment to the existing legal agreement as the role of the Management Board and the Head of WRS are set out therein.

### **Resource Implications:**

There are no resource implications. In fact if the Head of Regulatory Services was to report to a single body this might help to reduce both financial and resource implications for all partners.

## **CHAPTER 4 - LESSONS LEARNED**

### **Recommendation 10**

- (a) All decisions made by the WRS Board be formally reported back to all elected members of the partner authorities in a timely manner.
- (b) Attention should be paid to communicating updates about any planned changes to WRS services to all elected members of partner authorities..
- (c) The agendas and minutes of all WRS Board meetings should also be uploaded on to the WRS website in a timely fashion.

#### **Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications.

#### **Legal Implications:**

- (a) Minutes of the meetings of the Joint Committee are referred to the participating Councils where further discussion is possible and in some cases agreement required.

#### **Resource Implications:**

This could potentially require Members appointed to the WRS Board to spend additional time formally reporting back to their Councils about the work of WRS and the Board. In addition, the Democratic Services Officers at each Council would need to spend a limited amount of time uploading the agendas and minutes on to their websites, together with a representative from WRS carrying out this work on the WRS website. This should be fairly easy to achieve as the host authority provides a prepared pack for uploading.

### **Recommendation 11**

The lessons learned from the WRS shared service experience, particularly as detailed in this report, should be heeded by elected members and senior officers when considering any future proposals for shared service arrangements involving multiple partners.

#### **Financial Implications:**

There are no direct financial implications. However, by reviewing the lessons learned from the WRS Shared Service when considering future proposals for shared services elected members and senior Officers could potentially save partner organisations a significant amount of money.

#### **Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications to this recommendation.

**Resource Implications:**

Officer time would be required to consider these lessons, though the time required would vary dependent on the shared service being considered.

**Recommendation 12**

- (a) The Joint Scrutiny Protocol should be reviewed in order to take on board the lessons learned during this review.
- (b) Consideration should be given to the reinstatement of the Worcestershire Overview and Scrutiny Chairs Group as a means of feeding back the monitoring of recommendations from Joint Scrutiny exercises, as and when required.

**Financial Implications:**

There are no financial implications.

**Legal Implications:**

There are no legal implications to this recommendation.

**Resource Implications:**

Officer time would be required from representatives of all the Democratic Service teams at each authority in Worcestershire to review this document.



## **Introduction and Background Information**

### Background to the Joint Scrutiny

Wychavon District Council originally proposed that Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS) should be subject to a joint scrutiny (in July 2012). Each Council within Worcestershire was consulted about the proposal and all had agreed to participate by spring 2013. Draft terms of reference were drawn up by Wychavon District Council and in line with the agreed framework for joint scrutiny in Worcestershire, each Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee had considered and approved these terms of reference by May 2013.

The potential role of Overview and Scrutiny in holding the Joint Committee and WRS officers to account had in fact been considered in the original partnership agreement for the shared service. However, whilst Overview and Scrutiny was clearly recognised as having a legitimate role to play in this regard, it had also been felt unreasonably onerous for the Head of Regulatory Services to have to report to seven different scrutiny committees across the County. Therefore, as part of the original legal agreement, partners had determined that scrutiny should not be undertaken by any one Overview and Scrutiny Committee but, rather, should be carried out jointly. This review has been conducted in accordance with that principle as a collective exercise.

The terms of reference included the following main tasks (full details are provided at Appendix 1):

- To review the final business case for the shared service (as agreed by the participating Councils) against current operation.
- To compare the previous service levels of each participating Council compared with current levels and those outlined in the final business case.
- To establish the performance of the service for participating Councils prior to and since the establishment of the shared service.
- To review levels of customer satisfaction prior to and following establishment of the shared service and how feedback informs practice.
- To consider the governance arrangements between the shared service and the participating Councils to include how changes to the service requested by one or more Councils can be achieved.

It was agreed that the Scrutiny Task Group should comprise one representative from each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees of the partner authorities and for there to be a named substitute for each. It was also agreed that each representative, or their substitute, should be either the Chair or Vice Chair of their Council's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

At the first meeting of the Scrutiny Task Group the nominated members elected as their Chair, Councillor Rod Laight (being the representative for the

WRS host authority, Bromsgrove District Council). Councillor Peter Tomlinson, from Wychavon District Council, was appointed as Vice Chair.

## Evidence gathering

The Task Group gathered evidence through a range of means, including scrutiny of relevant documentation and interviews with various representatives of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee (the elected member decision making body for the shared service), the Management Board (comprising officer representatives from each partner authority who advise the Joint Committee), the WRS management team and officers of the host authority (Bromsgrove District Council). The Group also consulted with parish councillors and other elected members from across the County, who were neither on the Joint Committee nor on the Task Group, to find out about their experiences of working with WRS. The feedback provided through this consultation process has been greatly valued and has helped to inform its conclusions. However, the Task Group would like it to be noted that, since only a very small number of councillors responded, the wider representativeness of the feedback received was difficult to gauge.

Consideration was given at an early stage to the potential for a questionnaire to be circulated to obtain feedback from members of the public and from local businesses about the services they had received from WRS. Whilst the Task Group would undoubtedly have benefited from such additional feedback it was concerned about the difficulties involved in obtaining a suitably large or representative sample of responses from across the County. For this reason it was agreed that it should rely instead on the already available 'complaints and compliments' data held by WRS as a basis for assessing the level of customer satisfaction with the services.

At various stages of the review, updates were provided both to Task Group members and to the Democratic Services teams at participating authorities for use when reporting back to partner Overview and Scrutiny Committees. The lead Member from each authority was also encouraged to inform colleagues about progress with the joint scrutiny review as and when appropriate.

## Background to Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS)

The shared Worcestershire Regulatory Service (WRS) was initially conceived as part of the Worcestershire Enhanced Two Tier (WETT) programme in 2009. Each of the seven authorities in Worcestershire expressed an interest at this stage in participating in the shared service. Three key principles underpinned the design of the shared service as follows:

1. Achievement of service improvement and increased effectiveness.
2. Achievement of greater efficiency, cost savings and return on investment.
3. Achievement of a greater degree of sharing of resources for service delivery.

These key principles underpinned thinking in the drafting of the partnership agreement for WRS where it was specifically stated that the shared service had been established “*for the purpose of achieving financial efficiencies, sharing resources and improving delivery of services*”.

Wychavon, Worcestershire County and Redditch and Bromsgrove Councils each submitted a bid to host the shared regulatory service. Initially, the County Council was considered best placed to take on this role. However, at the request of the Worcestershire Chief Executives’ Panel, an independent external evaluation was requested, from a private sector partner and in September 2009, this concluded that Bromsgrove District Council would be the most appropriate host authority.

The shared WRS service was subsequently launched in 2010. Each of the councils signed up to the current partnership agreement for the service in June of that year. This established the governance arrangements for the service, which included a Joint Committee (of elected members from each partner organisation), a Management Board (of officers from each authority) and a WRS management team (of senior practitioners from the new shared service). The agreement also established arrangements for withdrawal from the service, a scheme of delegated responsibilities and financial arrangements, as well as detailing the arrangements for transferring all regulatory staff from their respective local authorities into the employment of the host authority.

Under the terms of the hosting arrangement, Bromsgrove District Council accepted responsibility for the following:

- Arranging suitable accommodation.
- Administration of the Joint Committee.
- Audit services.
- Data protection and information security.
- HR and personnel services.
- Financial services.
- ICT services (and licensing of ICT systems and equipment).
- Insurance.
- Legal services.
- Pensions and procurement.

(It should be noted that whilst Bromsgrove District Council is the host authority, each partner authority contributes to the overhead costs).

At an early stage partners agreed that the shared service needed to be based at a single location, even though staff would be required to work across the County as necessary. It was also agreed that the base should be a building already in the ownership of one of the partner authorities. A number of such buildings were assessed and Wyatt House in Worcester (owned by Worcester City Council) was eventually identified as offering the most suitable base. Accordingly, WRS entered into a 10 year lease for the premises.

## The Role of Worcestershire Regulatory Services (WRS)

WRS covers three key service areas

- Trading Standards
- Licensing
- Environmental Health

(A more detailed list of the constituent activities is provided at Appendix 4).

Key elements of Trading Standards are statutory responsibilities of County Councils in two tier authority areas (and remain so ultimately even under the shared service arrangement). However, WRS also undertakes a number of trading standards-related activities that are discretionary. The main trading standards functions are; fair trading/consumer protection, product safety, food standards, metrology and animal health and welfare.

Environmental Health functions, on the other hand, are primarily a responsibility of district councils, (again even under a shared service arrangement). These include responsibility for food safety/hygiene, nuisance complaints (e.g. noise), air quality and pollution, and health and safety, again with some statutory responsibilities and some discretionary activities.

There are certain licensing functions which, under the terms of the Licensing Acts 2003 and 2005, remain the responsibility of district councils in a shared service environment. Each district council must determine the fees for licenses in its area and each must have a Licencing Committee and Sub-Committee(s) which make (quasi-judicial) decisions about whether to grant licensing applications. Licenses can be provided for a range of services including taxis, alcohol and gambling establishments and a raft of other regimes. The role of WRS in this context is to provide expert advice to each council and to deliver the services required.

On the whole the majority of trading standards, environmental health and licensing services are provided by WRS consistently across the County. However, there are a few services which certain local authorities within the partnership have chosen not to receive (for example Malvern Hills District Council does not receive a pest control service). All service choices are taken into account when calculating the financial contributions made by each local authority to the partnership.

## Chapter 1

### **WRS Performance and Communications**

#### Performance

This particular joint scrutiny review was launched largely as a result of concerns raised by members from Overview and Scrutiny Committees about the limited information apparently available about the performance of WRS. Requests had been made for performance data to be provided alongside equivalent performance data for the services as provided previously under in-house arrangements by each council.

The Task Group learned that, in the original business case, it had been agreed that WRS performance would be measured in accordance with the five relevant national indicators (NIs) set by the then government. However the launch of WRS coincided with a change in national government in 2010 and the scrapping of the national indicator framework. WRS took advantage of this change and of the new discretion on local authority performance measurement, choosing an outcomes-based model in preference to the largely output-based national performance indicators approach. This was agreed by both the Management Board and the Joint Committee.

The Task Group has thus found it difficult to assess performance and particularly to draw comparisons between the periods before and after the launch of WRS because of the absence of a consistent series of data. Indeed, it found there to be a very limited amount of relevant performance information available for the individual partner authorities prior to WRS with the result that it was difficult for the Task Group to address objective three of the terms of reference in any real depth.

The Task Group also learned of the considerable difficulties WRS had encountered in its first four years in putting in place an integrated ICT support system. Although the original business case for WRS had envisaged an early procurement process for an appropriate ICT system to support the new service, this proved a more protracted process than expected and the service has had to rely on at least 20 different legacy ICT systems for several years. Indeed, at the start of this scrutiny review in September 2013 six of those legacy systems still remained in place and were clearly a continuing source of inefficiency.

The Task Group was informed by the Head of Regulatory Services that the subject of how best to meet the ICT requirements of WRS had been extensively discussed within the Management Board and culminated in a decision to procure something bespoke for the new service rather than an “off the shelf” package, even though this was recognised as meaning further delay and greater cost. Four years on the specially tailored ICT system is finally in place and at last, there is the basis for provision of good quality management and performance information.

The Task Group is keen that such information should, from now on, be available at every meeting of the Joint Committee. Moreover, the Task Group think that such performance reports should be placed sufficiently high on the agendas to ensure that elected members have the opportunity to consider them in a diligent and constructive manner.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 1</b>
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Performance Management Information should continue to be made available for Members' consideration at every meeting of the Joint Committee and be sufficiently high on the agenda to be discussed in detail.
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## Communications with the Public

It was proposed in the original business case that the Worcestershire Hub would play a key strategic role in the new service model for WRS by acting as the main communications centre for the public and other service users. This was justified on the basis that the Hub was well equipped to provide "...a more customer focused and streamlined delivery for the unified regulatory services..." and the Hub was "...nationally regarded as an exemplar of best practice..." in terms of customer access.

However, early in the scrutiny review concerns were raised about shortcomings in the Hub's responsiveness to the public and based on experiences by elected members across the County. Examples are reproduced below:

*"I have not been happy with recent experiences, primarily in relation to getting hold of WRS."*

*"Communication links with officers can be variable".*

*"The problem I have experienced with WRS is that I have been passed from pillar to post. I have been told "we have never heard of the WRS. We don't know what you mean?" I have been put through to another department... It took me about three hours to contact the person I wanted to speak to and then she had left the office so I had to start all over again the next day."*

The Task Group concluded that such comments were particularly indicative of shortcomings in communications between the Hub and WRS rather than any indictment of WRS itself. Moreover, an analysis of WRS 'complaints and compliments' data for the period June 2011 to September 2013 highlighted the extent to which customers' concerns related more to the manner in which their complaint was referred on for action than to the actions subsequently

taken by WRS. In each of those three years the majority of issues related to a breakdown in communications.

The Task Group learned that WRS staff were aware that the contact arrangements with the Hub were not working satisfactorily enough and that discussions had been held with the Hub's senior management about the capacity to meet the needs of WRS customers. The issue had also been raised at the Joint Committee on 26th September 2013 when members discussed a letter from the Chairman of the Worcestershire Hub Shared Services Management Board in which it had been suggested that additional Customer Service Advisors would need to be recruited to handle regulatory services enquiries and for which an increase in funding would be required. In response, the Head of Regulatory Services had advised the Joint Committee that he did not feel convinced about the additional need and cost and that the alternative would be to bring the customer enquiries work in-house within WRS – where it would be easier to refer matters more directly to the appropriate officer. This indeed is what the Joint Committee decided to do and it is understood that the new customer service arrangements were due to be implemented in May 2014.

Given the history of complaints concerning communications with WRS and the frustration that this has caused, the Task Group considers it important that the effectiveness of the new arrangements are closely monitored in the period ahead. The Task Group also suggest that a full report on the effectiveness of the change in customer contact arrangements should be presented to the Joint Committee in 12 months' time – when the change should have become embedded.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 2</b>
Twelve months after the new contact centre arrangements for WRS have been introduced, replacing the use of the Worcestershire Hub; the Joint Committee should review the effectiveness of these arrangements for communicating with the public.

The Task Group also noted that information on partner councils' websites regarding regulatory services was not always up to date or easily accessible. As part of the investigation, each Task Group member reviewed their own council's website to assess the quality of the information on regulatory services and the ease of linkage with the WRS website. In doing so, the Task Group recognised that most customers seeking information about such services online would be likely to visit their own council's website initially (probably being unaware of the existence of WRS). Whilst in some cases the websites were helpful and the links straight-forward, it was found that the available information was not always as comprehensive or as up-to-date as should be expected.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

### **Recommendation 3**

The webpages of each partner authority should be regularly monitored to ensure they are up to date and with the inclusion of a prominent link to the WRS website.

### Internal Communications

The Task Group also considered other mechanisms for communicating information about WRS to interested parties across the County and particularly focused on the WRS Newsletter (which is circulated to all members in Worcestershire on a quarterly basis). This is a potentially informative and valuable means of communication, but in its present format the document tends to be more selective and anecdotal than systematic and comprehensive in presentation of the work and performance of WRS.

The Task Group recognises the challenges involved in communicating effectively the diverse work of a multi-functional service in a manner that is satisfactory both to elected members and to a range of other potentially interested parties. However, the Task Group believe the current format and content of the Newsletter could be much improved and that this would help to promote a better understanding of WRS and its work among the wider body of elected members and other stakeholders. The Task Group suggests that members of the Joint Committee should take a more active part in agreeing the style and content of a quarterly newsletter and that its members should be consulted about each edition before it is published.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

### **Recommendation 4**

The purpose, content and circulation of the WRS newsletter should be thoroughly reviewed, with a view to it providing a more systematic and comprehensive account of the work and performance of the shared service and with the content and format being agreed by the Joint Committee.

Since one of the key concerns raised by elected members across Worcestershire was the difficulty experienced in contacting a representative of WRS directly (despite recent re-circulation to all members of the directory of WRS staff telephone and email contact details) the Task Group considers that it would be useful for a lead member of WRS staff to be specifically assigned the role of 'Member Liaison Officer' to provide a further first point of contact, e.g. for queries and issues where there is uncertainty about who might be best placed to assist. This arrangement is felt to work well for the County Council's Highways Department, where there is an area-based structure of Member Liaison Officers.



# Agenda Item 4

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 5</b>
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That WRS have a designated member of staff to act as a Member Liaison Officer and as a single point of contact to signpost Member enquiries.
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## Chapter 2

### **Financing of WRS**

As detailed in the background section of this report, one of the key drivers for the shared regulatory service was the potential for efficiencies and cost savings. From the Task Group's interviews with the Head of Regulatory Services, it was learned that WRS had already exceeded the originally anticipated financial savings (which had benefited all the partner councils) yet the overall budget had been further reduced significantly since 2010. For 2014/15, it had been proposed that the WRS budget be further cut (by an additional £646,000 from the 2013-14 figure of £5.626m). Members also learned that the Head of Regulatory Services had advised the Joint Committee of his view that this was the absolute minimum with which WRS could realistically operate if it were to continue to deliver services at current levels. Any further reductions would, in his judgement, impact on service delivery and quality.

More generally and over the life of WRS to date, it appeared to the Task Group that the quest for cost reductions has tended to dominate debate within and between the partner authorities rather than issues of regulatory standards and public protection. Indeed, the Task Group considers finance has been the key driver both for the Management Board and the Joint Committee and has largely come to trump the other objectives that had underpinned the rationale for the shared service in the first place.

In the original partnership agreement it was determined that the budget for WRS should be considered and approved by the Joint Committee by the end of November each year. This would ensure that the partner authorities would be clear about their financial contributions ahead of their own budget setting processes. The Task Group was advised that this arrangement had worked well in the early years of the partnership but that, because of the deterioration in the financial position of partners' budgets, it would probably not be so suitable for future years. Indeed, whilst this joint scrutiny review was taking place, Worcestershire County Council proposed significant reductions in its budget contribution – to be implemented incrementally over a three year period (and which would see the County Council's contribution to WRS decreasing from £1.5m in 2014/15 to £250,000 in 2016/17).

Such a reduction, the Task Group was informed, would have significant implications for the quality and level of services of WRS. Already since 2010, staff numbers have decreased from 154 to 117 (in 2013), and the Head of Regulatory Services indicated to the Task Group that, if implemented, the further proposed budget reductions would imply further shrinkage to an estimated 102 in 2014/15 and probably still smaller numbers in subsequent years.

The Task Group was also advised more specifically of the potential implications for trading standards staff. In this respect, the indication is that,

by 2016/17, the level of funding might support just six trading standards officers for the whole of the County (compared with 25 in 2013/14). . Such a contraction clearly raises questions about resilience within WRS to respond to unforeseen challenges or emergencies such as the horse meat scandal of 2013. In this regard the Task Group was interested to learn that, nationally, the Trading Standards Institute has recently commissioned research on the impacts and cost-effectiveness of different trading standards activities to understand better the possible consequences of such funding and staff reductions.

Recognising the potential risks for all partner councils and their communities if funding is reduced to the point where capacity is unduly compromised, the Joint Committee recently agreed that the WRS budget should in future be planned on a three year rolling programme basis to facilitate longer-term planning. In the same context, a new budget matrix has been designed to assist decision-making as to the costs of different service options for partners. This matrix approach, which was also approved by the Joint Committee in September 2013, has been developed from a “zero based” budget exercise and indicates the minimum resources and budget required to meet existing levels of demand and statutory obligations in all relevant functional areas. The matrix also provides risk assessments in relation to key regulatory objectives of protecting vulnerable people, supporting the local economy and improving health and well being.

A further issue that has recently been pursued as a response to the difficult financial context for WRS and its partners is that of seeking a private sector strategic partner. Here the rationale is to look to grow WRS (either or both by acquiring more local authority partners and undertaking more work for others on a contractual basis) and for which, the argument goes, the commercial experience and marketing skills of the private sector would be especially helpful. In November 2013, during the early months of this joint scrutiny, the Joint Committee approved initial ‘soft marketing’ ahead of a decision to commence a formal procurement process in 2014.

At this early stage, the Task Group has had little information by which to form a view as to the potential of such a private sector strategic partnership in helping WRS in relation to its financial challenges. Accordingly, the Task Group do not draw any conclusion or make recommendations on this issue. However, it is fair to say that the Task Group received mixed feedback on the proposal. Some officers and members on the Joint Committee regarded it as the only viable solution while others stated their concerns that the process was being brought forward too quickly and without sufficient consideration of other options. Concerns were also articulated that a private sector partner’s interests might be selective in focusing largely on the more commercial of WRS’s services and that if capacity was further reduced as a result of shrinking partner financial contributions, the organisation might likely become less attractive to the private sector in any case. The general view taken by the Task Group was that, whilst a strategic partnership might well help to achieve some early financial stability for WRS, a more fundamental reconsideration of the business model and rebuilding of partner commitment

were probably required if the partnership were to remain viable for the longer term.

In this context, a more significant concern of the Task Group was the possibility of members of the partnership losing confidence in the venture and for financial and other reasons, deciding to withdraw and instead once again provide their own regulatory services. The Task Group's clear view here is that any such development would not just be highly regrettable but at odds with the logic of more integrated public service provision that has been pioneered within Worcestershire.

It could also be quite costly as, under the current governance arrangements, the agreement specifically states that

*“... the Member Authority giving notice of termination (or if there is more than one such Member Authority then each of them in equal shares) shall bear all costs arising out of or in connection with such termination and shall indemnify the remaining Member Authorities against all costs and expenses incurred by them arising out of or in connection with that termination...”*

This would include costs such as those for redundancy or redeployment of staff, termination of any leases or licenses for use of premises or equipment, procurement of alternative accommodation, preparation and disaggregation of relevant data or records and reimbursing staff or administrative overhead costs. Feedback received by the Task Group from various witnesses during the review suggested that awareness of this clause within the original agreement was less widespread amongst partners than perhaps it should have been, since, in the current economic climate at least, most authorities would struggle to afford such costs.

Instead, the Task Group is keen to propose a more constructive option for the future. This would build on the work undertaken recently by the Worcestershire Chief Executives' Panel in developing a budget matrix that indicates costs for different activities and for different levels of provision. In this way, more tailored and costed packages of regulatory services might be offered to partners to suit their local needs and budgets, which could be helpful in building partner confidence in WRS. Indeed, such a bespoke approach might well include enhanced as well as reduced services, for example, the possibility of an 'out of hours' service for partners with concerns about late night noise nuisance problems.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

**Recommendation 6**

In order to reduce the focus on financial considerations which currently play a major part in influencing partner participation, to the detriment of other equally important aspects of the service, the following should be addressed:

- (a) A new business model for WRS be developed through the Chief Executives' Panel, building on the proposals already being produced by the Panel.
- (b) Consideration be given to the option for partner authorities to purchase an "out of hours service"

## Chapter 3

### Governance of WRS

The partnership agreement for WRS was drawn up by Legal Services Officers representing all seven partner councils in Worcestershire and is divided into two parts; the first section introduces the framework and the second provides details on regulatory services.

In that agreement the main elements of the governance structure for WRS are defined as follows:

- **Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee**, comprising two councillor representatives per authority, is designated as the key strategic decision-making body.
- **The Management Board**, comprising officer representatives from each partner authority is responsible for providing advice on both strategic and operational matters.
- **The WRS Management Team** is responsible for service delivery.

As WRS was the first and only shared regulatory service in a two-tier local government structure, there has been no exemplar framework agreement or constitution available to replicate or learn from. Accordingly, the above governance arrangements were proposed and approved without knowing for sure how well they might work in practice.

### Governance Review

Two years on, the Head of Regulatory Services requested that the Chief Executives' Panel conduct a review of those governance arrangements in light of concerns particularly about the Management Board. While the Task Group understand that assurances were given, no governance review had taken place ahead of this joint scrutiny Task Group. However, consultations with stakeholders have highlighted further recognition of the need for such a review and not least because of the possibility now of a private sector strategic partner also becoming involved. Indeed, several consultees alluded to the importance of getting the governance arrangements as effective and efficient as possible to ensure that WRS would be able to present itself as an attractive proposition to commercial organisations. The following comments from representatives of both the Joint Committee and the Management Board underline this viewpoint:

*“... there will need to be a full governance review of both the Joint Committee and the Management Board and an alternative solution found. It would be a very different picture with much less Member involvement and would very much be at arm's length.”*

*“I think that if a strategic partnership with the private sector is pursued further all of the governance arrangements for WRS will need to be reviewed and a different structure put in place.”*

*“The partnership agreement was very constrained and no one was aware at the time of how things would change. The partners now need to make changes to governance to make it more flexible.”*

The Task Group has been surprised and concerned at the delay in undertaking such a governance review following the request by the Head of Service two years ago and particularly given the level of confusion encountered amongst some members of the Joint Committee about their own role and that of the Management Board (outlined in detail below). However, the Task Group’s terms of reference for this scrutiny included (at point 5) an objective ‘*to consider the governance arrangements between the shared service and the participating councils*’ and accordingly the Task Group has paid particular attention to this issue and made a number of key recommendations which are designed to resolve some of the problems it identified.

## **Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee**

In first establishing WRS as a shared service, legal requirements had to be followed (notably, that, under Section 101 of the Local Government Act 1972, there would need to be an elected member decision-making body which resulted in the formation of the Joint Committee). At the time, it was agreed by the Executive Committees/Cabinets of each partner authority that delegated power should be granted to the Joint Committee to consider and make decisions on all the regulatory functions detailed in the agreement on their behalf, albeit that any additional changes to policy should be referred back to the respective Executive Committees/Cabinets.

The particular roles of the Joint Committee, as detailed within the agreement, were as follows:

- To make strategic decisions on behalf of the partnership.
- To oversee the development, implementation and operation of the shared service.
- To establish a framework for the operation of the shared service.
- To appoint sub-committees where necessary.

Under the terms of the agreement, each member authority was required to appoint two members to the Joint Committee each year. In the case of those authorities operating Leader/Cabinet arrangements, at least one of these members has to be a member of the Cabinet/Executive Committee. The agreement also permitted substitute members to attend in place of the lead member when necessary. Some councils have chosen to appoint named substitutes each year (although this is not a requirement).

The agreement states that a minimum of one elected representative from each authority should be present at meetings of the Joint Committee in order for those meetings to be quorate (although, as a Legal Services representative informed the Task Group, this is not a general legal requirement, purely something that the partners for this particular agreement insisted upon). The quorum for the Joint Committee was reviewed in 2013 when Members decided to continue with these same requirements.

Attendance, however, is not without its problems and the Task Group learned that Democratic Services officers frequently have to spend significant amounts of time contacting and “chasing” Joint Committee representatives to ensure quorate meetings. To minimise the resources involved in this respect, the Task Group concluded that the onus should be on each partner authority, rather than the officers of the host authority, to ensure that their representatives would indeed be able to attend or to arrange substitutes.

The Task Group was also concerned about the potential for conflicts of interest to arise between membership of the Joint Committee and membership of a particular authority’s Cabinet/Executive Committee in making budgetary decisions (i.e. if the financial pressures of their own local authorities were to influence their voting in relation to the WRS budget). Further potential conflicts of interest were identified in relation to those members of the Joint Committee who were both district and county councillors; and also for the Chair of the Joint Committee in relation to their particular own local authority.

Under current arrangements the Chair of the Joint Committee is appointed on an annual basis from the membership and on a rotating basis. Of concern to the Task Group here, however, was the possibility of a member assuming the chair (because it was ‘their turn’) but without necessarily having a sufficient understanding of the nature of regulatory services or sufficient time to devote to the responsibility. The Task Group considered the alternative of having an independent chair person – someone who specialised in regulatory functions. However, it was recognised that finding such a suitable and willing person could be difficult and also that this approach might seem inappropriate for an essentially democratic decision making body. Consequently, the Task Group concluded that probably the best approach to choice of chair would be for the Joint Committee membership to elect its chair based on merit rather than rotation.

The Task Group was keen to ensure that the Joint Committee as a whole was able to operate effectively as the key decision-making body for WRS and to this end, the Task Group discussed a range of pertinent issues including, duration of appointment for members, size of committee, frequency and location of meetings and training arrangements:

- With regard to duration of appointment, the Task Group considers that members should be expected to serve a minimum term of two years (to develop the necessary understanding and experience of WRS). At present, as indicated, appointments are made on an annual basis and



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this has tended to result in frequent turnover of representatives from some authorities. The Task Group believes a minimum term of two years would also help to strengthen commitment and ensure greater continuity in the composition of the Joint Committee, so enabling the level of expertise and experience as a whole to grow.

- Regarding the size of committee, the Task Group believes a committee of fourteen members (two per partner authority) to be unwieldy, especially so as there are usually at least four officers also in attendance in support roles). Indeed, when the Task Group observed a meeting of the Joint Committee, it witnessed how difficult it was for many members to engage fully in such a large ‘conference-like’ setting and for discussion to develop in any depth on the issues under consideration. Accordingly, the Task Group’s clear view is that it would be better to have just one member nominated from each council rather than two as now. This would help to ensure more inclusive debate, it would facilitate deeper discussion and it would facilitate more efficient and effective decision-making and provision of the clear strategic steer that the Head of Regulatory Services and his team look for from the Committee.
- Rather than the current quarterly meetings, the Task Group considers that meetings every other month (i.e. six times per year) would also help to build expertise and commitment in relation to regulatory services. Additional meetings might also mean shorter agendas but create more opportunity to consider the important issues in more depth. Its own experiences as a Task Group illustrate, much time is needed together for rapport and understanding to build between representatives from different local authorities. The Task Group is sure that a leaner Joint Committee, with members meeting more frequently, will greatly help in making the Joint Committee a more effective decision-making body.
- A smaller committee would more easily support the ideal – as the Task Group sees it - of Joint Committee meetings being held at WRS’s main office location where the professional staff and other supporting resources are on hand. While no doubt there are some advantages in the current arrangement of holding Joint Committee meetings at the base for the host authority, with just seven members (and supporting officers) the base of WRS would seem a more appropriate setting and one that would of course afford members with the opportunity to see more of the staff and some of the regulatory work first hand. It would also represent a suitably neutral location for all members.
- The issue of training for members of the Joint Committee was also considered – this, too, being seen as vital to the building of a stronger and more competent governance body for WRS. Accordingly, the Task Group asked all the members it interviewed about the amount of training they had received both prior to and during their periods of service on the Committee. Some longer-serving members explained

that in the first year of the shared service, a programme of training had been provided (prior to the first meeting) and that there had been follow-up half day sessions in subsequent months. However, it was understood that members appointed more recently had not received the equivalent induction or training opportunities (some having received little more than a half hour briefing from their authority's representative on the Management Board).

Some relevant comments in this regard were as follows:

*"I have not received any specific training although I did receive a briefing from the Council's representatives on the Management Board and I have not had a chance to visit Wyatt House."*

*"I learnt by osmosis and I think it is up to members to be proactive and to find out what the role is themselves."*

*"I received a briefing from my Council's representative on the Management Board and I spoke with the other councillor from my authority on the Committee as he had served on it for a number of years. I also made a point of arranging to visit Wyatt House and met with the Head of Service and some of the other staff. I found the visit in particular really useful as it helped to explain the role of WRS."*

*"I have an understanding of the workings of a Council and the Committee as I have been a councillor for seven years. Members should make time to educate themselves. Having said that I did receive a two hour briefing from my Council's representative on the Management Board when I started."*

From all such feedback the Task Group concluded that training provision was less than consistent and together with the policy permitting substitutes (who would typically be attending without any prior training at all), meant that levels of understanding and experience of regulatory services around the Committee table were likely to be, at best, variable and in many cases quite inadequate for the nature of responsibility being exercised.

The shared view of the Task Group is that something akin to the requirements for development control committees should be in place. There, members must undergo at least a basic training programme before they can play any part in development control decision-making. Whilst recognising that the decisions in relation to WRS are not quasi-judicial in the manner of those for development control, the Task Group believe that mandatory training for Joint Committee participation is similarly justified, particularly given the diverse and technical nature of the work and the importance of the governance role and the various decisions that members are entrusted to make here.

Despite the quite specific purposes and roles for the Joint Committee (as described in the original formal agreement and summarised above) the Task Group was also surprised to find some quite significant differences of

understanding and viewpoint between members, particularly about the Committee's relationship with the other key body – the Management Board. In the various interviews with members of the Joint Committee, the Task Group listened to a number of apparently conflicting accounts of the Joint Committee's role. For example, while some understood their primary role as being to make strategic decisions on behalf of the partnership, others talked of it more in terms of providing a 'critical friend' role and holding the Management Board to account, as the following comments illustrate:

*"The Joint Committee is the democratic arm that considers the work of the Management Board and ensures that the delivery of services is efficient and equitable."*

*"We could be seen as the critical friend of the senior management of the service, holding them to account for strategic decision making as well as monitoring the budget and performance of the service. We are appointed by our Councils with some powers of delegation as laid down in the original partnership agreement."*

*"The Joint Committee is the critical friend of the service as well as the ultimate decision maker for the service. We are also ultimately responsible for the setting of the budget and the management of the finances as well as agreeing to the strategic direction of the service."*

*"The difference is that the Management Board is held in private and Joint Committee meetings are held in public."*

*"The Joint Committee is ultimately in charge of decision making. However the Management Board generates reports and provides advice and therefore has influence over the decisions that are made in a similar manner to Officers influencing decisions at Cabinet."*

*"The role of the Joint Committee is to act as a watching brief to see that the service is being provided and the money spent well"*

Moreover, the Task Group's own doubts about the clarity of understanding among Joint Committee members as to their role were echoed by at least one of the members themselves, as follows:

*"I do not know if all present members fully understand the governance or the structure. It may be the case that even long-term members do not fully understand it."*

The Task Group is in no doubt that the prevalence of such role ambiguities and uncertainties represents a serious weakness in the governance arrangements for WRS and one that needs to be addressed as a matter of high priority. Of particular concern to the Task Group was the perspective held by more than a few members that regarded their primary objective as being to 'represent' the needs of their own local authority in relation to WRS – with the needs of WRS being very much a secondary consideration. It was

also suggested that the listing on the front page of the agenda papers for Joint Committee meetings of the names of the local authorities with members' names alongside only served to reinforce such a representational mind-set.

*"I believe that members need to strongly represent the interests of their district when attending meetings of the Joint Committee, though this should be tempered by the fact that WRS is a shared service. One local authority should not be allowed to dictate the direction of the service to all the other partners, regardless of its size and status."*

*"... the primary role of members on the Joint Committee is to protect the interests of their council with the function of WRS being secondary"*

To be fair, other members indicated feeling no conflict between the two roles and argued that they were able to represent the interests of both their Council and WRS equally.

*"At a Joint Committee meeting I feel I am representing the district's needs and the needs, requirements and future of WRS across Worcestershire. I am very aware that each Council has its own individual needs and requirements but there are many things which we all share."*

A number of the officers that were interviewed also commented on the tendency of some Joint Committee members to prioritise their own local authority considerations over the needs of the partnership and were similarly concerned that this risked undermining the partnership. One such interviewee suggested that *"localism has no place in Regulatory Services"*. While recognising the contentious nature of such a statement, the Task Group is clear in the view that, unless and until the full membership of the Joint Committee can demonstrate its prioritisation of a shared interest in WRS over that of individual local authority interests, this will always be a weak and fragile partnership and one that will struggle to sustain itself, let alone grow and flourish.

One further small change that the Task Group feels could help make a significant difference in this respect would be a change of title from one that tends particularly to emphasise the 'representational' role of members in relation to their local authorities (i.e. 'Joint Committee'), to one that more specifically focuses on the shared responsibility for WRS governance (i.e. 'Board'). Accordingly, the Task Group considers that switching to a new title - 'the WRS Board' - could be an important step forward.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

## **Recommendation 7**

A new strategic decision making board for WRS should replace the Joint Committee, comprising one elected member per partner authority and supported by relevant officers. This should be called the WRS Board.

- (a) Meetings of this Board should take place at the base of WRS.
- (b) Responsibility for attendance at Board meetings should lie with each authority's representative and the quorum for meetings should be set at 5 representatives in attendance.
- (c) Meetings of the Board should take place bi-monthly.
- (d) Elected members appointed to the Board should be provided with an induction programme and sufficient ongoing training to enable them to fulfil their role effectively.
- (e) Members appointed to the Board be expected to serve a minimum of two years to ensure continuity.
- (f) The Chair of the WRS Board should be elected annually by the members of the Board.

## **Management Board**

The other key body in the governance structure for WRS - the Management Board - was similarly the subject of careful consideration by the Task Group. As with the Joint Committee, a set of roles for the Management Board were defined in the original partnership agreement, these being as follows:

- To oversee and guide the development of WRS, in particular in relation to operational matters.
- To help develop a shared vision and strategy for the partners that takes into account partners' varying needs and priorities.
- To contribute to the transformation of service delivery.
- To resolve matters of concern to the partnership.
- To advise elected Members and to make recommendations to the Joint Committee (alongside the Head of Regulatory Services).
- To report back to their local authorities on the work of WRS and the decisions of the Joint Committee.

Membership of the Management Board comprises the Head of Regulatory Services together with one senior officer representative from each partner authority. Meetings of this Board are also attended by the lead Finance Officer from the host authority and the two Business Managers from WRS, while chairing is undertaken in (annual) rotation by one of the partner authority representatives.

The Task Group heard various viewpoints on the Management Board but, above all, the good news that, in recent times at least, it was felt to have been working more effectively than in the past. Several members of the Joint

Committee that were interviewed highlighted the value to them of the briefings they themselves had received from the representatives on the Management Board of their own authorities regarding the agendas of business and generally, the Management Board was considered to have contributed helpfully to recent discussions on key matters such as the possibility of a strategic link with a private sector partner. Joint Committee members also valued the corporate management expertise that officers appointed to the Management Board were able to add to deliberations and the useful links their representatives also had with other relevant services, such as the Hub shared service.

The Task Group also learned of several other aspects about the Management Board and its role that were concerning, including the following:

- Most of the officers on the Management Board, as representatives of partner authorities, are not from a regulatory services background and may not, therefore, necessarily have the specialist experience to appreciate fully the requirements of and expectations upon WRS.
- Engagement by the officer representatives tends to be variable and with a small core of officers being particularly influential in shaping thinking and conclusions.
- Some of the officers tend to prioritise their own Council's interests over and above those of the partnership.
- Differences of viewpoint between the Head of Regulatory Services and some of the other officers comprising the Management Board have frequently arisen and been quite difficult to resolve because only the Joint Committee has the authority to direct the Head of Service.
- Officers on the Management Board tend to be inconsistent in reporting back to their councils about developments in relation to WRS and do not always act as "advocates" for the shared service within their authorities.

The Task Group was also concerned about apparent differences of viewpoint as to the appropriate role of the Management Board amongst its officers. In particular, some such officers clearly regard their role legitimately as including the provision of advice on operational matters and the Task Group learned of a worrying tendency by the Board to attempt to micro-manage the Head of Regulatory Services.

The Task Group's clear view is that this is both unhelpful and inappropriate and that WRS itself – with its professionally qualified cadre of managers and staff - should be entrusted with full operational responsibility under the leadership of the Head of Regulatory Services. Two principal benefits here, as identified by the Task Group are as follows:

- WRS officers should be the source of advice to elected members about operational matters based on their professional expertise and experience (as, of course, is the case in most other specialist public service contexts – e.g. children's and adult services, highways and transport and planning).

- Officer leadership from WRS itself would be likely to result in a stronger focus on the needs of the partnership as a whole rather than on those of individual councils.

The Task Group's conclusions go further than this. For it does not see a sufficient case for retaining a Management Board as well as a Joint Committee (WRS Board) within the governance structure for WRS. Instead, the Task Group thinks that the disestablishment of this additional layer of management would greatly simplify, clarify and unify the governance structure. Instead, the Task Group considers a more appropriate role for officer representatives from the partner authorities to be in attendance at the WRS Board (Joint Committee) meetings as non-voting participants – sitting alongside and supporting their respective elected members, and providing additional advice (particularly from the perspective of the partner authorities).

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 8</b>
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The Management Board be disbanded, with the WRS Management Team taking the lead responsibility for operational decision making under the leadership of the Head of Regulatory Services.
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### The WRS Management Team

The Head of Regulatory Services leads the WRS team and should, the Task Group suggests, be formally accountable to the WRS Board (Joint Committee) as the corporate governing body. At present, line management and oversight of his role (including conduct of his annual performance development review) is provided by the Chief Executive of Bromsgrove District Council as head of paid service at the host authority. This arrangement generally works well; the Task Group learned and felt it to be entirely appropriate that the Head of Service should enjoy the benefits of chief officer support (from the host authority) and the additional accountability that this involves. The recommendation to disband the Management Board would, be further beneficial in protecting the Head of Service from feeling over-managed and accountable to multiple senior officers.

The Task Group recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 9</b>
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| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) The Head of WRS should be fully accountable to the WRS Board (as the strategic decision making body).</li><li>(b) The Chief Executive of the host and with the host authority to act in a mentoring role as and when necessary.</li></ul> |
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## Chapter 4

### Lessons Learned

The Task Group has undertaken a wide ranging and detailed review of a complex shared service and in the process, inevitably, a number of lessons have been learned of potential value to other shared service arrangements and indeed, for other joint scrutiny exercises. In this chapter the key such lessons are summarised.

### Communications between a Shared Service and Partner Authorities

At the launch of the WRS shared service, consideration was given to the most appropriate methods by which the work of the new organisation and the decisions of its Joint Committee might be reported back to partner authorities. A formal protocol was developed for the referral of decisions to partner authorities and this stipulated that the following arrangements should be in place:

- The committee clerk for each meeting should draft and circulate minutes from the meetings within ten working days to Joint Committee and Management Board members as well as to the Democratic Service teams from across the county.
- The minutes should be submitted to the next Executive Committee/ Cabinet meetings at each authority for consideration, both in cases where decisions have been taken under delegated powers and where recommendations have been proposed.
- In cases where the minutes contain a recommendation, the supporting reports should be provided for the consideration of the Executive Committees/Cabinets at each authority.
- The Executive Committee/Cabinet at each authority should make a decision about any recommendations referred for their consideration, the result of which should be referred back to the Democratic Services Officer of the host authority who maintains appropriate records.
- In the event that any recommendations are not approved by all partners the Head of Regulatory Services is required to report this fact back to the next Joint Committee meeting.

Despite the specificity and clarity of these protocols, the Task Group investigation identified that partner authorities were not always complying with the expectations, particularly in relation to the handling of minutes of the meetings of the Joint Committee. While in some cases, minutes were consistently being presented for consideration by the Executive Committee/ Cabinet, in others they were only circulated when there happened to be a particular recommendation within them requiring partner approval. In very few instances, the Task Group learned, was there much, if any, discussion at partner authorities of the issues presented in the minutes of WRS Joint Committee meetings.



One consequence of such variable practices is that the majority of elected members in partner authorities have very limited awareness and understanding of the work of WRS, or of the decisions of its Joint Committee. In discussion with Joint Committee members the shortcomings of the communications process with the wider membership of partner authorities was recognised, as was their personal responsibility, as Joint Committee members, to report back to their respective councils. As one acknowledged:

*“There is also a need for the Joint Committee member to promote the service back at their Council and ensure that members are kept informed of how the service is developing”.*

On the other hand, another member of the Joint Committee argued that it was the responsibility of every elected member in the County, not just those appointed to the Joint Committee, to familiarise themselves with the work of WRS:

*“There are few problems with internal communications. At some councils, the minutes of each Joint Committee meeting are considered at Executive meetings and copies are also published on every Council’s website. It is the responsibility of every member to read these minutes and to familiarise themselves with the subject”.*

While some may well subscribe to such a point of view, Task Group members were concerned about the reality that, in practice, the wider body of elected members across the County (i.e. those who had not been involved with the Joint Committee) had very limited knowledge or understanding of WRS and its important public protection functions. Indeed, the Task Group was persuaded that this was a significant enough problem, which needed to be addressed by the following circumstances:

1. Concerns about performance data (e.g. the National Indicators) not being provided to Overview and Scrutiny Committees suggested that scrutiny members had not been aware of the decisions taken by WRS to change their performance monitoring arrangements. At some councils there was also surprise that the partnership agreement for WRS did not allow for scrutiny by local Overview and Scrutiny Committees.
2. When the Scrutiny Task Group consulted with other elected members across the County (and with parish council representatives) several of the responses referred to aspects outside the remit of WRS, demonstrating the level of misunderstanding.
3. Several months after the Joint Committee’s decision to explore the potential for a strategic partnership with a private sector partner for WRS, the Head of Regulatory Services presented a series of updating briefings on the subject to different partner authorities, but encountered at one, widespread ignorance of the decision (and dismay at not having been aware of, or consulted on, the matter).

Such apparent failures in communication have underpinned the Task Group's conclusion that more systematic processes need to be put in place to ensure that all decisions made by the Joint Committee (WRS Board) are indeed communicated back to all elected members of partner authorities and that regular updates of WRS and its work are provided to partner councils. The Task Group suggest that a common approach should be followed in all partner authorities, whether this takes the form of written reports to Executive Committees/Cabinets and/or to Overview and Scrutiny Committees and full Council meetings.

It would also help if Democratic Services officers in partner councils took responsibility for drawing their elected members' attentions to the publication of both the agendas and minutes of each meeting of the WRS Board (Joint Committee) and by highlighting the web links to the relevant pages of the WRS website).

Although the website for WRS was updated and refreshed during the time that the scrutiny Task Group was underway, it noted that copies of agendas and minutes from meetings of the Joint Committee were not always uploaded promptly on to the WRS webpages and available for viewing via the websites of partner authorities. Not least for the purposes of transparency, the Task Group considers it important that such documents are indeed made accessible to all at the earliest opportunities (along with other relevant information about WRS and its operation and governance structures).

Such lessons about the importance of good communication and transparency are relevant of course to all shared services and it is to be hoped that the recommendations in this respect will promote like-minded actions in relation to other such partnership arrangements.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 10</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) All decisions made by the WRS Board be formally reported back to all elected members of the partner authorities in a timely manner.</li><li>(b) Attention should be paid to communicating updates about any planned changes to WRS services to all elected members of partner authorities.</li><li>(c) The agendas and minutes of all WRS Board meetings should also be uploaded on to the WRS website in a timely fashion.</li></ul>



## Sharing Services

In conducting this scrutiny review the Task Group inevitably encountered and debated the many strengths and weaknesses that apply to any shared service arrangement, particularly those involving multiple partners. For example, the opportunity to share resources and skills across several councils and so have better overall capacity and capability was widely recognised as a positive outcome by members and officers alike. Similarly, the financial savings that

could be achieved through this way of working were also universally welcomed, especially in the current climate of public sector austerity.

The following comments illustrate such positive perspectives on multi-partner shared services arrangements:

*“In my experience smaller district councils often struggle to attract the good, qualified, professional staff needed to deliver regulatory services. Amalgamation with other local authorities has helped us to attract and retain these types of staff”.*

*“Because the countywide model inevitably involves working with a larger team and a bigger budget, you can attract the professional and skilled staff you need to deliver the services.”*

*“One of the benefits of sharing regulatory services, particularly for district councils, is that it enables those councils to access expertise and resources that might not otherwise have been available. For example, as a result of this shared service, Bromsgrove District Council has been able to directly access officers with expertise in the field of air quality, which has been useful because there are significant problems with air pollution in Bromsgrove district.”*

However, the scrutiny consultations also underscored some of the problems often associated with shared service arrangements, particularly where multiple partners are involved. Above all is the potential for shared service operations to seem remote and detached from the councils they serve, at least for most councillors and officers. Indeed, there is a tendency for bodies like WRS to seem to operate more like separate organisations, delivering services on behalf of the councils, akin to contract-based provision rather than as partnerships of the councils and in which there is a common interest and responsibility.

The following comments expressed to the Task Group epitomise such perspectives:

*“Sometimes we are all partners. Sometimes, usually when something goes wrong, there is a feeling that WRS is acting as a contractor providing services rather than being an integral part of the local government offering”.*

*“Some partners have tended to regard WRS as having been outsourced once the shared service was launched. For example, some of the early problems with ICT were exacerbated by the fact that partner organisations were not always willing to engage in discussions about how to resolve the problem”.*

Such a sense of distance and detachment between the councils and WRS probably also explains, in part at least, the determination of some partners to impose financial reductions on WRS that to regulatory service professionals at

least seem quite unreasonable and unrealistic, as illustrated in the following comment:

*“Very disappointingly some partners have come forward seeking very large reductions but without any clear idea of the necessary changes to their services to achieve this.”*

Compounding this distancing and detachment problem has been some widespread negativity about WRS arising early on in its life as a result of difficulties encountered by councillors (and the public) in contacting regulatory staff and in getting apparently small and simple problems resolved (e.g. complaints about barking dogs or odour problems). It is to be hoped that the new in-house customer contact arrangements now in place will help overcome such negativity and that WRS’s reputation for responsivity will quickly improve. A key lesson is that, under shared service arrangements and particularly one where staff are located elsewhere from the local authority, contact and communication arrangements need to be especially well planned and managed for confidence in the venture to be sustained.

In this context the Task Group was also intrigued as to why, after much initial interest in the Worcestershire initiative from other local authorities, WRS remains the only two-tier regulatory partnership in England. Probably part of the reason has been inertia and fear, particularly on the part of district councils, of surrendering more public service responsibility to their counties and so inadvertently bolstering arguments for unitary council status in the future. Perhaps also a reason has been concern among district councils at the prospect of losing control of some important protective services, notably environmental health and licensing and of councillors feeling that this would weaken their ability to directly address many of the problems routinely raised by local people and businesses. But once again, the key lesson here concerns the quality of the contact and communication arrangements that are put in place between councils and the shared service and the confidence that the partnership body is able to instil among councillors and the general public.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 11</b>
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The lessons learned from the WRS shared service experience, particularly as detailed in this report, should be heeded by elected members and senior officers when considering any future proposals for shared services arrangements involving multiple partners.
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## Joint Scrutiny

This scrutiny is not the first such joint scrutiny review to be undertaken in Worcestershire, although it is the first one involving all seven councils and hosted by one of the district councils. Perhaps because of the increasing number of shared service arrangements now being established within the

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County there will be more such joint exercises in the future. Assuming so, the Task Group considers the lessons that it has learned during the process of this joint scrutiny should be of considerable value for others to follow.

The Task Group's review was conducted in accordance with the Framework for Joint Overview and Scrutiny in Worcestershire (which was approved by all councils in 2011). That framework details the principles underlying joint working, processes to be followed and conduct to be expected during such work, resource requirements, meeting arrangements and other matters conducive to effective collaborative working. (A copy of the framework can be viewed at Appendix 2).

As in this case, joint scrutiny reviews are normally hosted by an individual council, usually the one that first proposed the review or the host authority if the subject is a shared service. However, the expectation with all joint scrutiny work is that there should be representation and participation from all the relevant authorities and full co-operation with the process by all parties, for example, in providing evidence and participating in proceedings.

During this joint scrutiny, members of the Task Group sought evidence from a wide range of parties – both elected members and officers from each of the seven partners and of course, from WRS as well. In most instances the Task Group encountered very positive co-operation and generous support, including willingness to travel some distances to attend interviews and preparedness to provide written, as well as verbal, responses to questions. The Task Group wishes to thank all the witnesses who gave evidence during the review for their time and their helpful contributions.

Unfortunately, the Task Group have to report that it did not encounter the same level of co-operation and support from every quarter. It struggled, in particular, to obtain the evidence needed from Worcestershire County Council, particularly regarding the authority's proposed budget reductions for the next three years. Initially, the Task Group sent a letter to the Leader of the Council and to a senior officer (in early February), prior to the authority's setting of its budget. The letter outlined the Task Group's concerns about the implications of budget reductions for the viability of WRS and requested that the Council consider postponing the decision on funding until this joint scrutiny review had been completed. It proved necessary to chase the County Council for a response to this letter and the Task Group subsequently invited a representative to attend one of its meetings (in early April) to respond to various questions. Although a written response was eventually received, the Task Group was disappointed that no-one from the County Council offered to attend the meeting and indeed, the written response itself was quite short and generally less helpful than those received from other witnesses.

The Task Group was also disappointed that not all partners played an equally active part in the joint scrutiny exercise. While most authorities were consistently represented at the meetings, one council, Wyre Forest, was represented at only 5 out of the Task Group's 15 meetings (and this despite the fact that this Council, as with all seven, had designated a substitute as

well as a lead member). While recognising the extra time pressures that participation in such scrutiny exercises creates for members and the various legitimate reasons for absence, the Task Group was nevertheless surprised at the persistent failure to submit apologies or to propose a change in the nomination to ensure due representation from Wyre Forest and the opportunity, with other partners, to shape the final recommendations.

There are lessons here, for sure, for other joint scrutiny exercises and the Task Group considers that in future, particular care should be taken to minimise such missed opportunities for participation. To this end the Task Group suggests that some aspects of the formal framework should be revisited and perhaps amended. In particular, it would be useful to give more consideration to the barriers and constraints likely to affect participation in such Task Groups and to ways of ensuring the desired level of commitment on the part of all members and partner authorities. It would be good to give early priority to reviewing the framework for joint scrutiny and to giving thought to how engagement might be maximised since it is understood that another joint exercise – this on joint arrangements for waste collection and disposal - is about to commence.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 12</b>
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- |  |
|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>(a) The Joint Scrutiny Protocol should be reviewed in order to take on board the lessons learned during this review.</li><li>(b) Consideration should be given to the reinstatement of the Worcestershire Overview and Scrutiny Chairs Group as a means of feeding back the monitoring of recommendations from Joint Scrutiny exercises, as and when required.</li></ul> |
|--|

## **Conclusion**

The perspectives of the membership of the Joint Scrutiny Task Group on WRS changed quite markedly during the course of this exercise as the evidence was gathered and as more of the realities of the situation became clear. At the start of the review there was some scepticism among Task Group members about the quality of service being provided by WRS, particularly based on anecdotal evidence from customer complaints and members own experiences of trying to get problems resolved. However, by the conclusion, the Task Group members had developed a much better understanding of the challenges and pressures being experienced by the shared service and of the difficulties and shortcomings in relation to governance. Indeed, the Task Group had developed greater empathy with the situation and this has inspired its desire to see the weaknesses and problems addressed and to ensure a better future for WRS.

Some of the proposals to this end may seem radical. But in the Task Group's analysis, significant changes are called for in a number of respects if WRS is to survive and flourish in the manner expected of it at the outset.

The Task Group recognises that, if the recommendations are accepted by partners, each council is likely to have to relinquish a further measure of control and place more trust in the practitioners in WRS to lead and manage the service in Worcestershire's best interests. The Task Group recognises and supports all the efforts currently being made to improve the viability and prospects for the shared service in difficult financial times, including consideration of the possibilities offered by a private sector partner. However, it also considers that a number of other changes – particularly to the governance framework and to the communication processes between WRS and partner authorities – need to be made as well and with similar priority.

Returning to the old (fragmented) way of providing regulatory services at both district and county levels is, the Task Group is sure, not a sensible or realistic option for Worcestershire - tempting though it might perhaps appear in present times when the challenges of partnership working and of coping with financial pressures seem so daunting. Instead, the Task Group concludes, the way ahead lies in building on the foundations that have already been laid; in learning the lessons of the first few years of WRS and in being prepared to adjust and adapt in light of those lessons. The way forward, the Task Group is sure, is to address the challenges as a partnership with renewed commitment and with confidence. Worcestershire's pioneering work in developing a more integrated regulatory service has indeed already been worthwhile and not just in achieving financial savings but also in ensuring higher quality protection for citizens and businesses across the county and beyond.

## **Appendix 1**

### Joint Scrutiny of Worcestershire Regulatory Services

#### Terms of Reference

##### Objectives

1. To review the final business case for the Shared Service (as agreed by the participating Councils) against current operation, including:
  - resilience in the model to cope with fluctuations in workload;
  - efficiencies achieved;
  - cash savings and how these have been used;
  - its level of fitness for purpose;
  - the impact of the model on service levels/quality.
2. To compare the previous service levels of each participating Council compared with current levels and those outlined in the final business case.
3. To establish the performance of the service to participating Councils prior to and since the establishment of the shared service.
4. To review levels of customer satisfaction prior to and following establishment of the shared service and how feedback informs practice.
5. To consider the governance arrangements between the shared service and the participating Councils to include how changes to the service requested by one or more Councils can be achieved.

##### Membership

6. The Team will be made up of one representative from each of the Overview and Scrutiny Committees from Bromsgrove, Malvern Hills, Redditch Borough, Wyre Forest, Worcester City, Worcestershire County Council and Wychavon District Councils.
7. Each authority will also appoint a named substitute, who will be sent details for each meeting and may attend meetings as an observer to keep up to date with the exercise.
8. That at least one of the appointed Members to the Team or their named substitute must comprise either the Chairman or Vice Chairman of the Authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee.

##### Roles

9. Members of the Panel are expected to:



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- undertake appropriate reading and research, which may involve consultation, visits and evidence gathering between meetings;
  - having agreed a programme of meetings of the Team, to attend as many of them as possible;
  - to ask for support, training and development if/when they feel it is necessary;
  - to contribute fully to the drafting of any reports.
10. Each member is responsible for reporting back to parent Overview & Scrutiny Committees as appropriate.
11. Officer support will be provided by Bromsgrove District Council as the host authority, for meeting arrangements and scrutiny support, as well as liaison with officers from each authority to provide evidence and practical help (provision of meeting rooms etc)

## Arrangements for Meetings

12. The Team will make its own arrangements for meetings.
13. The meetings may be held in public or in private. In considering how it will meet, the Team will balance the desire for transparency and openness with making visitors feel welcome and comfortable, to encourage frank and open discussion.
14. It will not normally be the case that full notes will be made of each meeting. In most cases a short “action list” will be sufficient for the Team’s use.

Deadline: April 2014.

## Appendix 2

### FRAMEWORK FOR JOINT OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY IN WORCESTERSHIRE

#### Principles Underlying Joint Working

Any joint scrutiny process needs to ensure:

- a) Good quality scrutiny – which adds value and properly investigates issues of concern to participating authorities.
- b) Efficiency – avoiding duplication and bureaucracy.
- c) Confidence in the outcomes of the joint scrutiny exercise by each participating authority's Overview and Scrutiny Committee, and clear communication of expectations from the outset.
- d) Clear working planning and co-ordination.
- e) A coherent approach to scrutiny for external partner organisations
- f) Clear arrangements for reporting and follow-up to ensure action on recommendations.
- g) Reporting arrangements should not create delay through over complexity, and should not create scope for other bodies to block recommendations.
- h) Flexibility in how to carry out joint scrutiny.
- i) It does not undermine each authority's O&S Committee's remit, or officer support available.

#### Deciding to Scrutinise Jointly

It is for each authority's O&S Committee to decide if they wish to participate in a joint scrutiny but this needs to be done as efficiently and speedily as possible.

To initiate a joint scrutiny proposal a scoping form should be completed and circulated which will then be subject to agreement of each authority's O&S Committee.

The Worcestershire Scrutiny Officers' Network, in consultation with their respective Chairmen should make proposals for joint scrutiny for considered by the scrutiny chairmen's network (possibly in between meetings) and subsequent recommendation to individual overview and scrutiny committees.

#### Carrying out Joint Scrutiny

There are a number of ways that joint scrutiny can be carried out.

There may be times when an individual authority wishes to co-opt members from other authorities onto a particular scrutiny.

There may also be times when it is agreed by each O&S committee that one authority takes the lead in scrutinising an issue on behalf of all authorities.

However, it is suggested that in Worcestershire joint scrutiny should usually be carried out by joint time-limited scrutiny task and finish groups, led by the authority from which the scrutiny originated.

## **Agreeing Membership of Joint Scrutiny Task Group**

After O&S Committees agree to participate in a joint scrutiny they then nominate members.

As the task group would not be an official council committee, political balance requirements do not apply.

The number of Members participating in a joint scrutiny will depend on how many authorities are involved but if all Worcestershire authorities take part it is suggested that one member be appointed from each authority.

## **Agreeing Chairmanship of a Joint Task Group**

Nominations for chairing the task group will be sought from all members of the task group.

Where one authority is leading the scrutiny it may be appropriate for the Chairman to be appointed from that authority.

## **Agreeing Terms of Reference/Scope of the Scrutiny**

Each participating authorities' Overview and Scrutiny Committee would be asked to agree terms of reference for the scrutiny as per the scoping and proposal form.

## **Conduct of the Scrutiny**

Meetings of the joint task group will be arranged by the supporting scrutiny officer(s).

The task group should strive to conduct their business in a consensual, open, responsible and transparent way across the political divides and seek to avoid expressing views based purely on political considerations.

## **Equal Participation**

It is important for all members to be equal participants in the process and for officer support to be available on an equal basis.

## **Meeting Venues**

To be decided by the Review Panel as appropriate to the particular review.

## **Approval of Report's Recommendations**

The joint task group would agree their report and recommendations, normally by consensus. The Overview and Scrutiny Committee would then be asked to endorse the report, and could submit their own comments to their Executives.

Time constraints for recommendations need to be fully considered at the scoping stage.

## **Publicising Outcomes from Joint Scrutiny/Sharing Findings**

Once the scrutiny report is agreed by the overview and Scrutiny Committees it should be circulated to Executive members, witnesses and any others involved, by the scrutiny officers supporting the scrutiny.

It could also be put on the website of all the participating authorities.

## **Resourcing and Supporting Joint Scrutiny**

It is intended that joint scrutiny will be supported within the existing resources available to all seven authorities for scrutiny.

Scrutiny officer support for each joint scrutiny should be agreed at the outset. Whilst the authority leading the joint scrutiny would normally provide support for it, ways of sharing the workload should be explored at the scoping stage.

Any expenses for members of a joint scrutiny should be paid by that member's authority in line with that authority's allowance scheme.

## **Tracking the Outcomes of the Scrutiny**

The Review Panel will decide upon arrangements for tracking the implementation of recommendations.

Individual O&S Committees may wish to adopt their own methods for joint scrutiny recommendation tracking.

It is suggested that recommendation tracking for joint scrutinies should be part of the watching brief of the Joint Chairmen's meeting.

## Appendix 3

### SUMMARY OF MEETINGS AND ATTENDANCE

<b>Meeting Date</b>	<b>Summary</b>
26 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	Appointment of Chair / Vice Chair, endorsement of terms of reference and work planning (including setting future meeting dates).
10 <sup>th</sup> October 2013	The Task Group reviewed the content of the original business case for WRS and one of the WRS newsletters.  Members also provided some initial feedback on behalf of colleagues at participating local authorities about Members' experiences of working with WRS.
22 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013	Interview with Steve Jorden, Head of Regulatory Services, and consideration of feedback on WRS experiences from other elected Members and Parish Councillors.
12 <sup>th</sup> November 2013	Consideration of WRS Partnership Agreement and Shared Services Joint Committee Protocol and consideration of further feedback as detailed above.
21 <sup>st</sup> November 2013	Observed Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee meeting prior to interview with the Chair and Vice Chair of this Committee.
4 <sup>th</sup> December 2013	Consideration of written responses to questions put to the Chair of the Management Board together with work planning, including questions for future witnesses.
18 <sup>th</sup> December 2013	Interview with Steve Jorden, Head of Regulatory Services, and WRS senior managers.
16 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	Interview with a member of the Management Board – Ruth Mullen (Ivor Pumfrey was unable to attend).
29 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	Interview with Kevin Dicks, Chief Executive of the Host Authority, and Jayne Pickering, Executive Director, Finance and Resources, Bromsgrove District Council.
6 <sup>th</sup> February 2014	Visit to Wyatt House.
20 <sup>th</sup> February 2014	Interview with Clare Flanagan, Principal Solicitor of the Host Authority, and Ivor Pumfrey, Chair of the Management Board.
19 <sup>th</sup> March 2014	Complaints and compliments data analysed and review of the investigation so far.
26 <sup>th</sup> March 2014	Interview with a number of Members of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee.
20 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	Agree draft recommendations and report format.
28 <sup>th</sup> May 2014	Agree the draft report.

## ATTENDANCE RECORD

	TOTAL ATTENDANCE	
	Lead	Sub
<b>Bromsgrove</b>	11	1
<b>Malvern Hills</b>	13	0
<b>Redditch</b>	7	4
<b>Worcester City</b>	12	0
<b>WCC</b>	10	0
<b>Wychavon</b>	13	3
<b>Wyre Forest</b>	0	5

## **Appendix 4**

### **LIST OF SERVICES PROVIDED BY WRS**

The following services are delivered by WRS:

- Air quality.
- Animal health and welfare (including dog warden service).
- Consumer and business advice.
- Contaminated land.
- Environmental packaging
- Environmental permitting (pollution control).
- Fair trading / anti rogue trader activities.
- Food safety.
- Food standards (labelling and composition).
- Health and safety.
- Health promotion.
- Infectious diseases.
- Licensing.
- Metrology.
- Nuisance investigations.
- Pest Control.
- Product safety.
- Public health (burials, drainage, water supplies etc.)
- Under age sales.

## Appendix 5

### ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

The Task Group would like to give particular thanks to Steve Jordan and members of the WRS team, especially Mark Kay and Simon Wilkes, who provided evidence, both in person and in writing, throughout the review.

Thanks also go to the following Officers:

#### Bromsgrove District and Redditch Borough Councils

Kevin Dicks	Joint Chief Executive
Jayne Pickering	Executive Director, Finance and Resources
Clare Flanagan	Principal Solicitor
Pauline Ross	Democratic Services Officer (responsible for clerking meetings of the Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee)

#### Management Board

Ivor Pumfrey	Malvern Hills District Council
Ruth Mullen	Worcester City Council

#### Worcestershire Shared Services Joint Committee - Councillors

Lucy Hodgson	Chair - Worcestershire County Council
Mark Bullivant	Vice Chair - Bromsgrove District Council
Kit Taylor	Bromsgrove District Council
Bronwen Behan	Malvern Hills District Council
David Hughes	Malvern Hills District Council
Brandon Clayton	Redditch Borough Council
John Fisher	Redditch Borough Council
Lynn Denham	Worcester City Council
Roger Berry	Worcester City Council
Anthony Blagg	Worcestershire County Council
Ron Davis	Wychavon District Council
Ken Jennings	Wychavon District Council
Marcus Hart	Wyre Forest District Council



## **Appendix 6**

### **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

At each meeting Members were asked to declare any interests. The following declarations were received:

*Councillor Cronin, Worcester City Council, declared an other disclosable interest as the publican at The Plough Inn, Broadheath, Worcester.*

**Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services**

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

Telephone: 901527) 881288

Email: [scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk](mailto:scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk)

## **Cabinet Response to the Overview and Scrutiny Artrix Outreach Provision Task Group Report**

### Introduction

At the Cabinet meeting on 4th June 2014 consideration was given to the report of the Air Quality Task Group. As the Chairman of the Task Group, the Leader welcomed Councillor S.P. Shannon to the meeting and thanked him for being present to provide clarification on any matters raised by Cabinet members.

The Cabinet considered the recommendations of the Task Group which were contained within 5 chapters of the report:

- Funding from Bromsgrove District Council
- Raising Awareness of Outreach Work with Members
- Outreach Provision
- Raising Awareness of Outreach Work with Residents; and
- General

The Cabinet then discussed and considered each of the recommendations of the Task Group in detail.

### Response to recommendations

Please find below responses to the recommendations contained within the scrutiny report:

#### **Recommendation 1**

- (a) that the inclusion of a set of clear performance indicators in respect of Outreach work be included within the new Service Level Agreement; and
- (b) that a proportion of the funding provided by the Council be ring fenced for Outreach work.

#### **Cabinet Response**

The Cabinet sought confirmation that the Artrix Centre had been consulted on this and then approved the recommendation.

#### **Recommendation 2**

That the Bromsgrove District Council logo be more prominent in Artrix promotional literature.

## Cabinet Response

This was approved.

### Recommendation 3

- (a) that in order to complement the formal reporting of performance indicators to Officers that the Council receives a quarterly informal (narrative and image based) report from the Artrix detailing the events that have taken place together with the number of those attending; and
- (b) that those Member representatives on the Operating Trust report back regularly to full Council.

## Cabinet Response

This was approved.

### Recommendation 4

- (a) that the Artrix Centre liaise with Members in respect of specific activities within their ward; and
- (b) that the Artrix Centre explore ways in which it could raise awareness of its activities in all areas within the District. (For example through Parish Council, school and other notice boards throughout the District.).

## Cabinet Response

This was approved.

### Recommendation 5

- (a) that the Artrix Centre ensure that there is a defined profile for the target participants / audience that the Outreach Provision is provided for;
- (b) that the Artrix Centre ensure that participation in such activities is not prohibitive due to cost (for example, seek funding for bursaries where possible); and
- (c) that the Artrix Centre make activities available throughout the main school holidays, particularly during the Easter and summer breaks.

## Cabinet Response

Councillor M. J. A. Webb proposed that, in addition, the Artrix Centre be invited to provide a presentation for the benefit of Council members outlining its plans at least once each year. Councillor S. P. Shannon indicated that Artrix Centre had undertaken to do so. In response to a query over Councillors acting as Trustee Board members and reporting back to the Council there was discussion as to the

legal propriety of such a course of action. The Principal Solicitor undertook to investigate this matter and report back to the Committee following the meeting. This recommendation was approved, as amended.

## **Recommendation 6**

That an insert, prepared by the Artrix, be included within Together Bromsgrove detailing Outreach activities at the Artrix.

### **Cabinet Response**

This was approved.

## **Recommendation 7**

That the main programme brochure which is produced by the Artrix be used to promote its Outreach work.

### **Cabinet Response**

This was approved.

## **Recommendation 8**

That the Artrix promote all the facilities available to those with a disability.

### **Cabinet Response**

Councillor C. B. Taylor enquired whether any facilities within the Artrix were not available to those with a disability. Councillor S. P. Shannon responded that the issue was less one of accessibility and the recommendation was more concerned with the improved promotion of facilities and programme provided for those with a disability. This was approved.

## **Recommendation 9**

That the Artrix consider contacting Worcestershire County Council with a view to improving the signage within the Railway Station and Town Centre areas.

### **Cabinet Response**

This was approved.

The Leader thanked the Task Group Chairman and Members for their work in producing a very useful report.

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Councillor Mike Webb – Portfolio Holder for Leisure Services, Economic Development and Emergency Planning.

## **Overview and Scrutiny Board –**

### **Inquiry/Task Group Procedure Guidelines**

There are two ways in which the Overview and Scrutiny Board can complete an in depth investigation of a topic.

#### **Short, Sharp Inquiry**

The first, 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.

The guidelines below will be followed when carrying out a “short sharp inquiry”:

1. The Board decide that a specific topic requires a more in depth investigation and agree to carry out a “short sharp inquiry” and all Board Members will be involved in the investigation.
2. As it is likely that such an inquiry will need to be completed fairly quickly, the Board will discuss broad terms of reference and set a time scale for completion of the inquiry at the same time as agreeing to carry out the investigation.
3. Members will also stipulate who they wish to interview, what evidence they wish to gather etc and set a date for the initial informal meeting of the inquiry. The Board may appoint people as non-voting co-optees if they so wish.
4. The Chairman of the Board, Committee Services Officer and relevant Head of Service will then meet, as quickly as possible after that meeting, to agree the terms of reference (this will be done by completing an Overview and Scrutiny Exercise Scoping Checklist, Appendix 2).

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5. At the first meeting of the Inquiry, the Terms of Reference will be confirmed, the Timetable (Appendix 3) will be agreed together with the Meeting Work Plan (Appendix 4), and if possible initial witnesses interviewed.
6. A progress update will be given at each formal meeting of the Board and if appropriate, some witness sessions will also be included within the formal Board meetings.
7. The Committee Services Officer will compile the final report on behalf of the Board, based on recommendations proposed by Members. The content of the draft report will be approved by Members.
8. The Chairman of the Board will take a lead in presenting the final report for the consideration of the Cabinet, though the Committee Services Officer will attend alongside him/her to help where required.
9. The Portfolio Holder will then present the Cabinet response to the next Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.
10. Cabinet decisions on Inquiry recommendations will be placed on the Quarterly Recommendation Tracker to be monitored and, with the approval of the Board, removed when completed.
11. After 12 months the Committee Services Officer will meet with the relevant Head of Service to go through the original report and recommendations to pick up any further actions that may be necessary.
12. The Committee Services Officer will compile the report for the 12 month review of the inquiry, for presentation at the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.

## **Task Group**

The second way is for the Overview and Scrutiny Board to set up a task group, which is separate from the Board and can include Members who are not Members of the Board (Members of the Cabinet cannot join a task group). When setting up a task group the following steps need to be considered:

1. For any task group that is proposed a Topic Proposal Form (Appendix 1) must be completed and presented, with a covering report, for Members' consideration at a meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. This can be a topic put forward by a Councillor (not necessarily a Member of the Board) or from a member of the public.



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2. If the Board agrees to commission the task group the Chairman will ask at that meeting whether there were any volunteers from amongst the Members of the Board to act as Chairman (the Chairman of the Board is not expected to be the Chairman of the task group).
3. All task groups will be chaired by a member of the Board and each Chairman is required to provide an update on the progress of the task group at future meetings of the Board in order for it to be able to hold the task group to account for the work it is carrying out.
4. Following the Board meeting, when a task group has been approved, copies of the completed Topic Proposal Form will be circulated amongst non-Cabinet Members for consideration. Members will be advised to contact the Committee Services Officer to let them know whether they are interested in participating in the task group. If there is insufficient interest from Members, the Group Leaders will be asked to nominate Members for the task group, in order that membership can then be confirmed relatively quickly.
5. Membership of task groups must be at least 4 but no more than 7 Members (including the Chairman).
6. The Chairman of the task group, Committee Services Officer and relevant Head of Service will then meet to agree the terms of reference (this will be done by completing an Overview and Scrutiny Exercise Scoping Checklist, Appendix 2).
7. The Chairman of the task group will then provide an update, for information, at the next meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, which will include the terms of reference and membership. A timescale for completion of the investigation will also be set at that meeting (usually 3 months from the date of the first meeting).
8. At the first meeting of the task group the Timetable (Appendix 3) will be agreed together with the Meeting Work Plan (Appendix 4), as far as possible. (This meeting may take place prior to the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board at which an update on the terms of reference and membership is given.)
9. Members will stipulate who they wish to interview, what evidence they wish to gather etc. The task group may appoint people as non-voting co-optees if they so wish.
10. The Committee Services Officer will compile the final report on behalf of the task group, based on recommendations proposed by Members. The content of the draft report will be approved by Members.

# Agenda Item 6

11. The Chairman of the task group will take a lead in presenting the task group's recommendations for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Board, though support will be provided by the Committee Services Officer where required.
12. If approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Board the Chairman of the task group will then take a lead in presenting the final report for the consideration of the Cabinet, accompanied by the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, though again the Committee Services Officer will attend alongside him/her to help where required.
13. The Portfolio Holder will then present the Cabinet response to the next Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.
14. Cabinet decision on recommendations will be placed on the Quarterly Recommendation Tracker to be monitored and, with the approval of the Board, removed when completed.
15. After 12 months the Committee Services Officer will meet with the relevant Head of Service to go through the original report and recommendations to pick up any further actions that may be necessary.
16. The Committee Services Officer will compile a report for the 12 month review of the task group, for presentation at the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.



## OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL

<b>Name of Proposer:</b> _____	
<b>Tel No:</b> _____ <b>Email:</b> _____	
<b>Date:</b> _____	
<b>Title of Proposed Topic:</b>	
<b>Specific subject areas to be investigated:</b>	
<b>Reasons why this subject should be considered:</b>	
<b>Evidence to support the need for this particular investigation:</b>	
<b>Council priorities it links to:</b>	
<b>Possible key outcomes: (i.e. what do you anticipate could be achieved?)</b>	

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

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

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

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**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY EXERCISE SCOPING CHECKLIST**

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

▪ Topic:

▪ Specific subject areas to be investigated:

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

▪ Should the relevant Portfolio Holder(s) be invited to give evidence? **YES/NO\***

▪ Which officers should be invited to give evidence?  
(Please state name of officer and/or job title)

▪ Should any external witnesses be invited to give evidence? **YES/NO\***  
If so, who and from which organisations?

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

- Is it anticipated that any site visits will be required? **YES/NO \***  
If so, where should members visit?

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

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

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

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

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

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

(\*Delete as appropriate)

## Overview and Scrutiny Board Task Group - Timetable

<b>Key Stage</b>	<b>Start Date</b> <i>(agenda despatch)</i>	<b>Finish Date</b> <i>(meeting)</i>	<b>Completed?</b>
1. <i>Proposal to the Board</i>			
2. <i>Chairman elected by the Board</i>			
3. <i>Invitation to all relevant Members of the Council and Group Leaders</i>			
4. <i>Draft TOR discussed with Head of Service</i>			
5. <i>Draft TOR, Timescale and Membership approved by the Board</i>			
6. <i>First meeting of Task Group to agree Work Plan and Timetable.</i>			
7. <i>Evidence sessions start/finish</i>			
8. <i>Consideration of draft recommendations and conclusions by the Task Group.</i>			
9. <i>Consideration of draft report and recommendations by the Task Group.</i>			
10. <i>date of the Equalities and Diversity Forum / despatch date (if applicable)</i>			
11. <i>Comments on technical accuracy by the Head(s) of Service / external agencies</i>			
12. <i>CMT Meeting /agenda despatch date</i>			
13. <i>Agreement of draft report and recommendations by the Task Group</i>			
14. <i>Date of the Overview and Scrutiny Board to agree the draft report and recommendations / agenda despatch date.</i>			
15. <i>Date of Leader's Group / despatch date.</i>			
16. <i>Date of Cabinet meeting to agree/amend /reject recommendations &amp; Cabinet Response and Executive Decisions / despatch date</i>			
17. <i>Cabinet Response presented to Overview and Scrutiny Board.</i>			
18. <i>Date of consideration by external decision makers to agree/amend/reject recommendations &amp; Executive Response and Executive Decisions / despatch date</i>			
19. <i>Date of consideration by full Council &amp; Policy and Budgetary Decisions / despatch date (if applicable)</i>			
20. <i>Deadline for Executive Response / Action Plan(s)</i>			
21. <i>Date of 12 month review of Implementation of Executive Actions Plan(s) and agreed recommendations.</i>			

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**Overview and Scrutiny Board Task Group Meeting Work Plan**

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<b>Meeting 1</b>		
<b>Subject</b>		
<b>Date</b>		
<b>Topics</b>	<b>Work Required</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
<b>Attendees</b>		
<b>Date Information Required</b>		

# Agenda Item 6

Appendix 4

<b>Meeting 2</b>		
<b>Subject</b>		
<b>Date</b>		
<b>Topics</b>	<b>Work Required</b>	<b>Lead Officer</b>
<b>Attendees</b>		
<b>Date Information Required</b>		

**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

**July 2014**

**RECOMMENDATION TRACKER REPORT**

**1. SUMMARY**

This Recommendation Tracker lists all recommendations made by the Overview and Scrutiny Board (including Task Group recommendations) until implementation is complete.

The recommendations are grouped in date order and by topic.

(N. B. Column 4 also shows each month the Tracker comes before the Board. To ensure recommendations are reviewed at the appropriate time, a tick is placed next to the quarter for which the Cabinet response advised the recommendation was estimated to be implemented.)

**2. RECOMMENDATIONS**

- 2.1 That the Board notes the Quarterly Recommendation Tracker and agrees to the removal of any items which have been completed.

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
<b>PLANNING POLICY TASK GROUP</b>										
10th September 2012	<u>Recommendation 4</u> That a detailed review of the Planning Enforcement Policy, which was adopted in April 2011 (as encouraged in Section 8 – Conclusion), be carried out giving particular attention to Sections 4 – Enforcement Procedures (Informal) and 7 – Council’s Commitment to Complainants.	4th July 2012	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Comment:</u> Agreed Implementation date – this will form part of the on going transformation process.  <u>Update September 2013</u> <i>This will occur, if necessary, when the Enforcement process is considered through the Transformation process.</i>							
10 <sup>th</sup> September 2012	<u>Recommendation 8</u> That through the Transformation programme a review and mapping exercise be carried out in respect of the process post planning application approval stage and that the results of this be shared with the Overview and Scrutiny Board.	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2012	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Comment:</u> Agreed Implementation date – this will form part of the on going transformation process.  <u>Update September 2013</u> <i>Enforcement is not yet at the Transformation stage.</i>							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
10 <sup>th</sup> September 2012	<u>Recommendation 9</u> That the Internal Audit Report recommendations be supported and included within the Overview and Scrutiny Board's Quarterly Recommendation Tracker report to ensure that progress on the implementation is monitored in an appropriate and timely manner.	4 <sup>th</sup> July 2012	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Comment:</u> Agreed Implementation date – with immediate effect.  <u>Update September 2013</u> <i>Recommendations from this report and comments are attached at Appendix 1 of the tracker.</i>							
<b>YOUTH PROVISION TASK GROUP</b>										
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 1</u> That Worcestershire County Council ensures that regular meetings between the commissioner and local providers of Positive Activities (within the Bromsgrove District) take place to ensure there is no overlap of services and to enable best practices to be shared.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response - Agreed</u>							
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 2</u> That Bromsgrove District Council write to Worcestershire County Council highlighting its concerns in respect of the limited life span and uncertainty over the provision of a building for the youth	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response – Agreed</u> Members were concerned that little progress appeared to have been made by the County Council in identifying alternative accommodation.							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
	services provided by EPIC in the Rubery Ward.									
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 3</u> That Worcestershire County Council ensure that the activities, which should focus on the Town Centre and provided by the £15k from Sandwell Leisure Trust, are commissioned through the Positive Activities process to ensure that no further delays occur.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> - Agreed							
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 4</u> That Bromsgrove District Councillors familiarise themselves with all facilities for young people within their Ward and build relationships with local providers where appropriate.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – Agreed The Cabinet felt however that it was for Group Leaders to deal with this recommendation rather than the Leader.							
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 5</u> That through the Local Strategic Partnership's Balanced Communities Group a process is found whereby all providers of youth activities throughout Bromsgrove District are given an opportunity to support each other and share ideas and best practice.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> - Agreed							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 6</u> That the Chairman of the Task Group (supported by Democratic Services Officers) give a presentation, of the Task Group's findings, to CALC in order to encourage Parish Councils to support local youth groups.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> - Agreed							
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 7</u> That Bromsgrove District Council launches a Twitter campaign to promote activities for young people across the District.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – Agreed The Cabinet did request that it be confirmed that there would be no cost implications in respect of this.							
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 8</u> That Bromsgrove District Council uses active young people to help with and schedule the Twitter campaign including creating the #tag.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – Agreed The Cabinet did request that it be confirmed that there would be no cost implications in respect of this.							
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 9</u> That via Twitter, Bromsgrove District Council carries out a consultation on youth activities in the District including which activities young people would like to see more/less of.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – Agreed The Cabinet did request that it be confirmed that there would be no cost implications in respect of this.							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
15 <sup>th</sup> July 2013	<u>Recommendation 10</u> That the Overview and Scrutiny Board includes within its Work Programme an investigation into the provision of services available to disaffected young people and those not in education, employment or training within the District.	4 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – it was felt this was a matter for the Overview and Scrutiny Board to determine as part of their future work programme.							
<b>AIR QUALITY TASK GROUP</b>										
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2013 and 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	<u>Recommendation 1 – 2007 Report</u> <u>Recommendation 17 – Taxi Ranks</u> – Regular reminders are given to taxi drivers in respect of leaving their engines running whilst waiting for the next are at a taxi rank. With WRS regularly reporting back to the Overview and Scrutiny Board to ensure that this is implemented.	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	√
			<u>Cabinet Comment</u> – This was approved and Overview and Scrutiny were able to request this report from WRS.							
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2013 and 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	<u>Recommendation 5</u> WRS Applies for funding from the DEFRA Air Quality Grant Programme. If the first application is not successful the WRS should persist in submitting further applications in subsequent years.	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	√
			<u>First Cabinet Response</u> It was agreed that WRS should apply for DEFRA funding as appropriate and in accordance with the Air Quality Action Plan.  <u>Second Cabinet Response</u> Cabinet did not wish to							



Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
			amend its previous decision particularly in view of the WRS resources which would be required to prepare and submit an appropriate and fully evidenced funding application.							
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2013 and 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	<u>Recommendation 6</u> That Worcestershire County Council applies for funding from the Worcestershire Local Transport Body in order to fund traffic management measures that will tackle air pollution in the Bromsgrove AQMAs.	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	√
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – whilst this is a matter for the County Council there was no objection to requesting them to make the application. The Portfolio Holder undertook to write to the WCC Portfolio Holder on this issue.							
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2013 and 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	<u>Recommendation 7</u> That Worcestershire County Council liaises with local bus operators to establish a local bus quality partnership in order to investigate the potential to update the bus fleets operating within the Bromsgrove district.	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	√
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – whilst this is a matter for the County Council there was no objection to requesting them to liaise with the relevant bus operators. The Portfolio Holder undertook to write to the WCC Portfolio Holder on this issue.							
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2013 and 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	<u>Recommendation 8</u> That the health implications of air pollution be the focus of a detailed review by the Worcestershire Health Overview and Scrutiny Committee.	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2014	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – the Cabinet had no objection to the District Council representative on the HOSC raising this issue with the committee.							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
			<i>Action – 9/05/14 a copy of the final report was sent to the Chair of HOSC who in turn has passed this to the Health and Wellbeing Board via the Northern Council representative with the request for their comments and any action they deem necessary.</i>							
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2013 and 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	<u>Recommendation 10</u> That Bromsgrove District Council sends a letter to the relevant Government Minister urging him/her to accelerate efforts to address problems with the higher emission levels from HGVs with a copy of the letter also being sent to the local M.P.	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	√
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – agreed and the Portfolio Holder undertook to action this.  <i>Action – a letter has been sent to the appropriate Minister from the Portfolio Holder on 28/5/14 – to date no response has been received.</i>							
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2013 and 20 <sup>th</sup> January 2014	<u>Recommendation 11</u> That Bromsgrove District Council sends a letter to the relevant Government Minister responsible for DEFRA urging him/her to review the role of those responsible for Air Quality with a copy of the letter also being sent to the local M.P.	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013 and 2 <sup>nd</sup> April 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	√
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – agreed and the Portfolio Holder undertook to action this.  <i>Action – a letter has been sent to the appropriate Minister from the Portfolio Holder on 28/5/14 – to date no response has been received.</i>							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
16 <sup>th</sup> September 2013	<u>Recommendation 12</u> The Overview and Scrutiny Board consider launching a separate review of CO2 emissions in the District.	2 <sup>nd</sup> October 2013	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	√
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> – it was felt this was a matter for the Overview and Scrutiny Board to determine as part of their future work programme.  <i>This has now been included on the Board's Work Programme for consideration at a future date.</i>							
<b>ARTRIX OUTREACH PROVISION TASK GROUP</b>										
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<u>Recommendation 1</u> (a) The inclusion of a set of clear performance indicators in respect of outreach work be included within the new Service Level Agreement; and (b) A proportion of the funding provided by the Council to be ring fenced for Outreach work.	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> –							
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<u>Recommendation 2</u> That the Bromsgrove District Council logo be more prominent in Artrix promotional literature.	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> –							
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<u>Recommendation 3</u> (a) In order to compliment the formal reporting of performance indicators to Officers that the	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> –							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
	<p>Council receives a quarterly informal (narrative and image based) report from the Artrix detailing the events that have taken place together with the number of those attending.</p> <p>(b) Those Member representatives on the Operating Trust report back regularly to full Council.</p>									
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<p><u>Recommendation 4</u> The Artrix Centre to:</p> <p>a) liaise with Members in respect of specific activities within their ward; and</p> <p>b) explore ways in which it could raise awareness of its activities in all areas within the District. (For example through Parish Council, school and other notice boards throughout the District.)</p>	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response –</u>							
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<p><u>Recommendation 5</u> The Artrix Centre to:</p> <p>(a) ensure that there is a defined profile for the target participants/audience that the Outreach Provision is provided</p>	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response –</u>							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
	for; (b) ensure that participation in such activities is not prohibitive due to cost (for example, seek funding for bursaries where possible); and (c) make activities available through out the main school holidays, particularly during the Easter and summer breaks.									
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<u>Recommendation 6</u> An insert, prepared by the Artrix, to be included within Together Bromsgrove detailing outreach activities at the Artrix.	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response –</u>							
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<u>Recommendation 7</u> The main programme brochure which is produced by the Artrix to be used to promote its outreach work.	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response –</u>							
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<u>Recommendation 8</u> That the Artrix promote all the facilities available to those with a disability.	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response –</u>							
14 <sup>th</sup> April 2014	<u>Recommendation 9</u> That the Artrix consider contacting Worcestershire County Council with a view to improving the signage within the	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct		Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response –</u>							

Date of O&S Board	Recommendation	Date Considered by Cabinet	Comments on action taken to implement the recommendation(s)							
	Railway Station and Town Centre areas.									
<b>BOARD RECOMMENDATIONS</b>										
24 <sup>th</sup> March 2014	<u>Quarter 3 Write Off of Debts Report</u> That the Council issue a press release to advise resident with Council Tax arrears about the payment options available and the support provided by the Council with this process.	4 <sup>th</sup> June 2014	July		Oct	√	Jan (2015)		April	
			<u>Cabinet Response</u> This was agreed by Cabinet							

**INTERNAL AUDIT REPORT – Ad Hoc Investigation: Marlbrook Tip**

Recommendation	Comment on actions taken to implement recommendation
<p>1. <u>Planning Approval</u>                      Where a planning application may result in the approval including a significant number of conditions, that the Planning Committee is made aware of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• the resources needed to effectively monitor compliance;</li> <li>• whether there are suitably qualified and/or experience officers within the Council; and</li> <li>• if not, what outsourcing arrangements would be required.</li> </ul>	
<p>2. <u>Monitoring Arrangements</u>                      That for any future similar developments and in order to provide clear accountability monitoring should be undertaken by officers and/or a group with suitable experience and expertise and the authority to make decisions.</p>	

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# Agenda Item 8

## DRAFT Scrutiny Proposal

<b>Topic: Integrated Waste Services</b>			
<b>Background to the issue</b> (what is it and why is it being considered for scrutiny)	<p>On 16 January 2014 Council agreed the following notice of motion:</p> <p><i>"It is frequently suggested that large savings can be achieved by combining District Councils' responsibility for collection of waste with the County Council's responsibility for disposal. In view of this Council requests the Overview and Scrutiny Performance Board to set up a Task and Finish Group in conjunction with the Cabinet Member with Responsibility to investigate the potential of an integrated refuse collection and disposal service across the County leading to greater efficiency and more sustainable outcomes. This review to be completed by October 2014."</i></p> <p>On 30 January the OSPB agreed that a Scrutiny Task Group should be set up, led by Councillor Ken Pollock.</p>		
<b>Terms of reference</b>	<p>To:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• investigate the potential for introducing an integrated waste collection and disposal service in Worcestershire</li> <li>• examine potential costs, savings, benefits and barriers</li> <li>• make recommendations to Cabinet on a way forward</li> </ul>		
Scrutiny Officer & Scrutiny Liaison Officer	<p>Suzanne O'Leary, Overview and Scrutiny Manager            Stella Wood, Overview and Scrutiny Officer            Kevin Stilgoe, Scrutiny Liaison Officer</p>		
<b>Suitability for scrutiny.</b> Which of the following criteria does it meet?			
<i>Is the issue a priority area for the Council?</i>	No	<i>Does it examine a poorly performing service?</i>	No
<i>Is it a key issue for local people?</i>	No	<i>Has it been prompted by new Government guidance or legislation?</i>	No
<i>Will the scrutiny have a clear impact on services?</i>	Yes	<i>Will it result in improvements to the way the Council operates?</i>	Potentially
<i>Are improvements for local people likely as a result?</i>	Possibly		
<b>Scope of scrutiny</b> (what issues will it cover and what won't it cover)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Overview of current arrangements for waste collection and disposal in Worcestershire including the current level of joint working and future plans</li> <li>• Details of waste collection in each District to include type and length of contracts, assets, types of material collected, method of collection, waste collected per head and cost per head in each District</li> <li>• Details of waste disposal to include contract details, type of disposal facilities, methods of disposal, staff and assets, disposal data and costs etc</li> <li>• The potential costs, savings and benefits of and barriers to introducing an</li> </ul>		

	<p>integrated waste collection service in Worcestershire</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Options for models of a joint integrated waste collection and disposal service, what might work best in Worcestershire and when joint working might best be introduced</li> <li>Implications for District Councils if joint working could be introduced</li> <li>Task Group's view regarding potential future implications of EU Waste Framework Directive on sorting recyclables at source (rather than commingled)</li> <li>How integrated waste services operate in Unitary authorities</li> <li>Best practice in other authorities (i.e. Somerset Waste Partnership, East Kent and South East Wales)</li> </ul> <p><i>N.B. O&amp;S has committed to ensure that the following are considered in all scrutiny reviews as appropriate</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>equality and diversity issues</i></li> <li><i>commissioning</i></li> <li><i>localism</i></li> </ul>
<p>Advantages to conducting scrutiny &amp; Indicators of success (ie how will you know a good scrutiny has been done?)</p>	<p>The evidence on whether a joint integrated waste collection and disposal service would be feasible, and the potential costs, savings, benefits and barriers will be clearly understood.</p>
<p>Has anyone else examined the issue?</p>	<p>Joint Scrutiny of Partnerships in Waste Management – June 2007: (Joint scrutiny report by 4 Councils in South East Wales) LGA, CCN and WIN Case Studies (Somerset and East Kent)</p>
<p>Any disadvantages or pitfalls to conducting this scrutiny?</p>	
<p><b>INFORMATION NEEDS</b></p>	
<p>Key Documents, Reports &amp; Data required</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Council Minute No 1534, 16 January 2014 (Notice of Motion)</li> <li>Joint Municipal Waste Management Strategy</li> <li>Waste Core Strategy</li> <li>Overview of current situation and details of existing contracts, staff and assets involved in waste collection, types of material collected, method of collection, waste collected per head and cost per head in each District etc</li> <li>Member and Officer Waste Forum discussion notes relating to advice from Worcestershire Leaders Board on pursuing partnership working in 2011</li> <li><a href="#">East Kent Joint Waste Partnership (to save £30million) – WIN Case Study March 2011</a></li> <li>Somerset Waste Partnership (Savings £1.7million per year) – LGA Case study <a href="http://www.local.gov.uk/search/-/journal_content/56/10180/3486363/ARTICLE">http://www.local.gov.uk/search/-/journal_content/56/10180/3486363/ARTICLE</a></li> <li>Waste Information Network and Regional Improvement &amp; Efficiency Partnerships (RIEPs) – guidance</li> <li>Government Guidance</li> </ul>
<p>Is an expert adviser needed?</p>	<p>Seek expert witness possibly re options for potential models and how these might be introduced</p>
<p>Possible</p>	<p>Cabinet Member for Waste and Sustainability</p>

# Agenda Item 8

interviewees	<p>John Hobbs, Director, BEC          Rachel Hill, Programme Director          Richard Woodward, Waste Services Manager          District Council Officers responsible for waste collection          Waste Collection Contractors          Waste Disposal Contractor          Unitary Authority representative for waste services          Somerset Waste Partnership representative          Expert witness (possibly from SE Wales Integrated Waste Partnership tbc)</p>
Is this an issue that young people would be interested in? If so, ask Youth Cabinet for evidence.	No, the issue is about the potential for an integrated waste collection service and how the County and District Council's can work together to achieve savings.
Site Visits	Consider Somerset, South East Wales and East Kent waste partnerships
Types of meeting/consultation needed? (eg workshops/focus groups/public meetings/questionnaires etc)	Task Group Meetings
Any meetings to be held outside of County Hall?	Potentially
Media & publicity needs?	?
<b>OUTLINE TIMETABLE</b>	
Proposal to OSPB	12 March 2014
Evidence Gathering	April – July 2014
Scrutiny Report to OSPB	17 September 2014
Scrutiny Report to Cabinet	October 2014

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# **CABINET LEADER'S WORK PROGRAMME**

**1 AUGUST 2014 TO 30 NOVEMBER 2014**

**(published as at 1 July 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](http://www.bromsgrove.gov.uk)

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

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

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

**CABINET MEMBERSHIP**

Councillor 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
Mobile Homes Act 2013 – New Policy relating to Licensing Fees	Cabinet <i>(with possible recommendation to Council)</i>	3 September 2014	Report of the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R. Dent
Disposal of Council-Owned Land, Aintree Close, Catshill	Cabinet <i>(may be some confidential parts to the report)</i>	3 September 2014	Report of the Executive Director and Deputy Chief Executive	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R. Dent
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
Finance Monitoring Report Q1	Cabinet	3 September 2014	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources)	Jayne Pickering 01527 881400 Councillor R. Hollingwood



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
Housing Allocations Policy Review Update (To include remainder of Homelessness Grant Expenditure)	Cabinet	3 September 2014	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R. Dent
Local Lettings Policy (linked to the Housing Allocations Policy item)	Cabinet	3 September 2014	Report of the Deputy Chief Executive and Executive Director	Derek Allen Housing Strategy Manager 01527 64252 ext 1278 Councillor R. Dent
Council Tax Support Scheme To consider Draft Regulations following public consultation	Cabinet	24 September 2014	Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda De Warr 01527 881241 Councillor R. Hollingworth
Final Accounts Statement 2013/14	Cabinet ( <i>with recommendations to Council</i> )	24 September 2014	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources)	Jayne Pickering 01527 881400 Councillor R. Hollingworth
Audit Findings Report 2013/14	Cabinet ( <i>with recommendations to Council</i> )	24 September 2014	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources)	Jayne Pickering 01527 881400 Councillor R. Hollingworth

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	1 October 2014	Report of the Head of Leisure and Culture	Karl Stokes Parks and Green Spaces Services Manager 01527 64252 ext 3377 Councillor M. Webb
Debt Recovery Policy	Cabinet ( <i>possible recommendation to Council</i> )	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 ( <i>may be some confidential parts to the report</i> )	1 October 2014	Report of the Town Centre Regeneration Programme Manager	Richard Savory 01527 881281 Councillor R. Dent
New Policies in relation to the Town Centre, including Street Café Areas, Street Collections and premises Licences	Cabinet ( <i>possible recommendations to Council</i> )	5 November 2014	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
Council Tax Support Scheme To consider Final Recommendations	Cabinet ( <i>possible recommendations to Council</i> )	3 December 2014	Report of the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support	Amanda De Warr 01527 881241 Councillor R. Hollingworth
Finance Monitoring Report Q2	Cabinet	3 December 2014	Report of the Executive Director (Finance and Resources)	Jayne Pickering 01527 881400 Councillor R. Hollingworth

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**- 1 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 16<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
<p><b>Item 6 – Summary of Results of Staff Survey</b></p>	<p>Members received a presentation</p>	<p>(a) The Board to be provided with a timeline for implementation of the recommendations.                      (b) An update of progress being made at a future meeting.                      (c) Members to have input in any future staff survey.</p>	<p>Head of Business transformation and Organisational Development.</p>	<p>Autumn 2014</p>	
<p><b>Item 7 – Making Experiences Count Quarter 4 Report</b></p>	<p>Members considered the Making Experiences Count Quarter 4 Report.</p>	<p>An update report from the Head of Planning and Regeneration in respect of the complaints received by Development Control.</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Regeneration – email request sent 17/06/14</p>	<p>14<sup>th</sup> July 2014 O&amp;S meeting.</p>	
<p><b>Item 8 – Write Off of Debts Quarter 4 Report</b></p>	<p>Members considered the Write Off of Debts Quarter 4 Report.</p>	<p>(a) Clarification on whether, under Data Protection legislation, the Council was able to publish the names and address of residents with outstanding debts owed to the Council.                      (b) The inclusion of percentages in respect of unrecoverable debts</p>	<p>Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>		

**- 2 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 16<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
		within future reports.. (c) A more detailed explanation and possible revision of the format in reporting outstanding arrears analysis.			
<b>Item 10 – Leisure Provision Task Group</b>  Page 11	The Board received a written update from the Chairman of the Task Group in respect of its consideration of the Dolphin Centre Business Case Report at its last meeting.	Members requested sight of the Business Case Report and supporting appendices.	Democratic Services Officer	As soon as possible.	Emailed to all Board members and substitutes present 17/06/14.
<b>Item 11 – Joint Integrated Waste Scrutiny Task Group</b>	Cllr Laight provided Members with a verbal update.	Members requesting further information in respect of how the Joint Scrutiny would progress with little support from district councils.	Democratic Services Officer	As soon as possible.  County Scrutiny Officer emailed 17/06/14	Feedback to be provided at O&S meeting 14/07/14
<b>Item 15 – Action List</b>	Members considered the outstanding actions from the previous meeting.	CCTV – Members understood that there had been issues around replacement parts for some cameras and significant delays were occurring in these being repaired. Concerns were	CCTV and Telecare Manager  Email sent 17/06/14	As soon as possible.	

**- 3 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 16<sup>th</sup> June 2014**

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
		raised in respect of the impact this could have on the service and asked for further information from the relevant officer.			
<b>Outstanding Actions – 14<sup>th</sup> April 2014</b>					
<b>Item 10 – Cabinet Work Programme</b> Page 115	Members considered the Cabinet Work Programme for the period 1 <sup>st</sup> May to 31 <sup>st</sup> 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. Email follow up sent 17/06/14.	

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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

<b>Date of Meeting</b>	<b>Subject</b>	<b>Additional Information</b>
<b>14<sup>th</sup> July 2014</b>	Joint WRS Scrutiny Task Group – Draft Final Report	
	Cabinet Response to the Artrix Outreach Provision Task Group Report	
	Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	Task Group Guidelines and Scoping Documents - Review	
	Leisure Provision Task Group – Update	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
<b>15<sup>th</sup> September 2014</b>	Development control – Making Experiences Count update	Requested 16/06/14
	Budget Scrutiny for 2015/16	
	Leisure Provision Task Group – Update	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
<b>13<sup>th</sup> October 2014</b>	Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Partnerships – Update North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership	
	Summary of Environmental Enforcement	
	Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	Leisure Provision Task Group – Update	

# Agenda Item 13

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

<b>Task Group</b>	<b>Date of Review</b>
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>