



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

THURSDAY 25TH SEPTEMBER 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, C. J. Tidmarsh and R. L. Dent

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. Town Centre - Update Presentation
4. Making Experiences Count Quarter 1 Report (Pages 1 - 16)
5. Finance Monitoring Quarter 1 Report (Pages 17 - 30)
6. Write Off of Debts Quarter 1 Report (Pages 31 - 36)
7. Youth Provision Task Group Final Report - 12 Month Review (Pages 37 - 42)
8. Task Group Procedure Guidelines - Review (Pages 43 - 52)
9. Worcestershire Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee

10. Action List (Pages 53 - 56)
11. Overview and Scrutiny Board Work Programme (Pages 57 - 60)
12. 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.

The Council House
Burcot Lane
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B60 1AA

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

17th September 2014



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OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: 25th September 2014

MAKING EXPERIENCES COUNT - QUARTERLY COMPLAINTS REPORT

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

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

This report provides the Board with customer feedback data for the first quarter of 2014/15

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

The Board is asked to:

2.1 Note the contents of the report.

3. KEY ISSUES

3.1 This report details the customer feedback received by the authority during the 1st quarter of 2014/15, including Local Government Ombudsman complaints and the outcomes of customer complaints.

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

Financial Implications

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

Legal Implications

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

Service/Operational Implications

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

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

Date: 25th September 2014

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

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

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

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 - **Quarterly Customer Feedback Report Quarter 1
2014/15**

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

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

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Lynn Jones
E Mail: lynn.jones@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881288 extension 3851



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

**Making Experiences Count
Quarterly Customer Service Report**

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

1 April 2014 – 30 June 2014



Bromsgrove
District Council

www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

1. Introduction

Agenda Item 4

This report details the customer feedback received by Bromsgrove District Council during the period from 1 April 2014 to 30 June 2014.

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

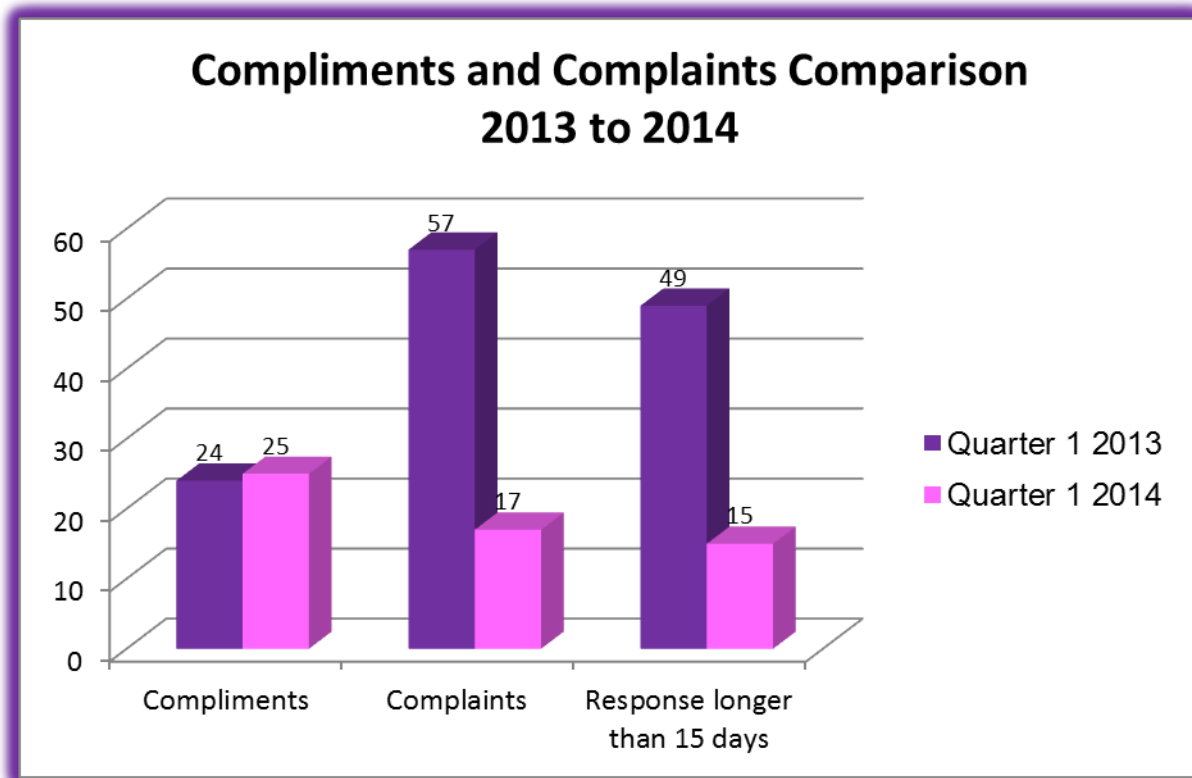
2. Customer Feedback Analysis

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

82 % of complaints received were answered in 15 working days or less.

We also received 25 compliments.

This chart shows number of complaints and compliments for this quarter and the same quarter in 2013 - 14.



We can see from the comparison chart above that last year that there were 40 less complaints in the same quarter this year. This is mainly due to the Route Optimisation for refuse collections. When it was first introduced last year it caused an increase in complaints as customers got used to the changes. Teething problems were resolved, improvements made and customers are now very happy with the service. This is reflected in the low numbers of complaints and the increase in compliments received.

The common themes in the complaints received this quarter were:

- Lack of understanding of our processes
- Delays
- Staff attitude

Number of complaints by service (detailed)

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



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

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

- We are actively recruiting more planning staff to help with the delay in applications and are keeping customers informed of the situation.
- We are looking at the processes within Council tax to try and save time for the customers who may not need to fill out lengthy forms

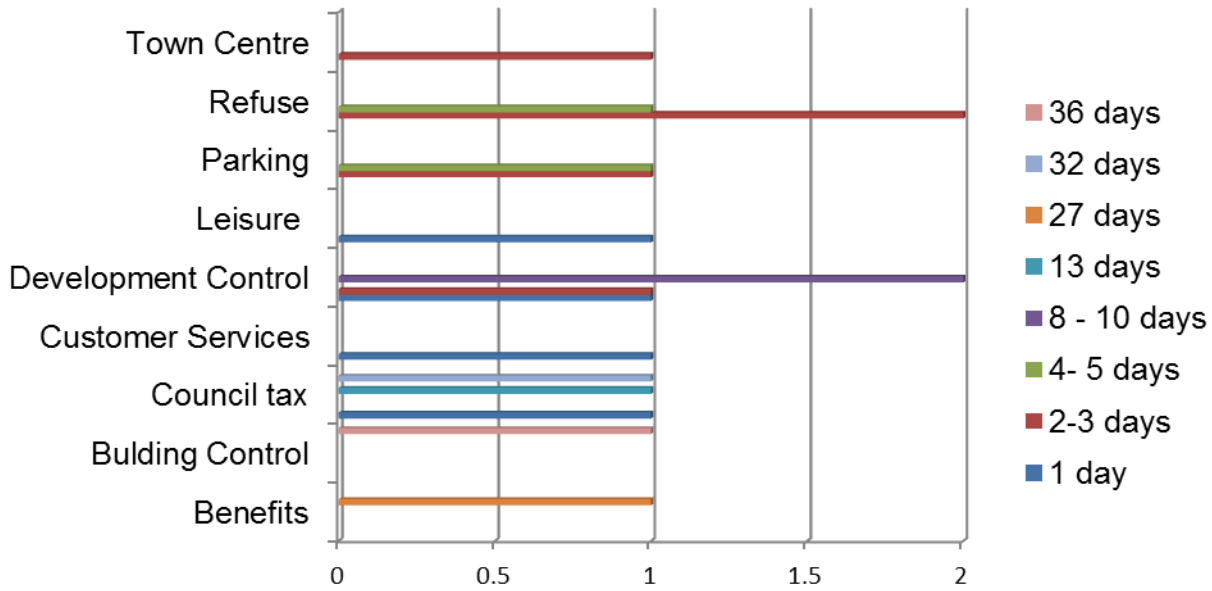
Number of complaints escalated to Head of Customer Services or to Stage 2

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

Time taken to respond to complaints

We aim to respond to customer complaints within 15 working days and **82%** of complaints received during this quarter were dealt with within that time frame. 3 complaints took longer to resolve as they were complex cases which needed time to gather information for the customer.

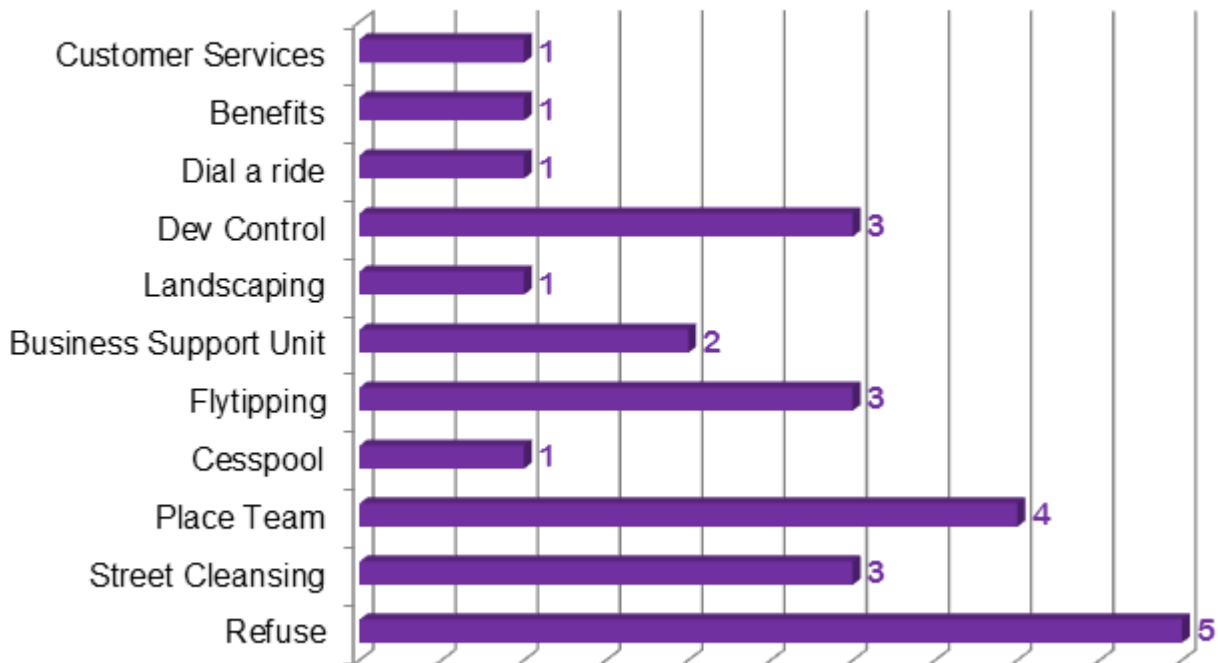
Time taken to respond by service



Happy Customers!

From the **25** compliments received we can see that customers appreciate the range of services the Council provides, especially when we deal with their requests in a timely and professional manner.

Compliments by service



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

Refuse

Craig Jarvis and Wayne pulled a dog from my cat. They did what they could trying to help. Customer was so impressed and she wanted to say a big thank you.

Customer called to say thank you for the service received by the refuse crews. They have always been very pleasant, polite & professional. An excellent service.

Good nature and kindness shown by the operative who found my purse and delivered it to me at my home.

Wanted to compliment the refuse team on the bulky collection service. My request for a collection was executed within an hour and a half. An excellent service.

Customer called Cllr Bullivant to pass on a big thank you to the staff - she described the service as "Outstanding".

Street Cleansing

Praised street cleansing for work carried out.

Very quick service.

Customer called on behalf of all the residents in Hadley Close to say thank you for all the work that Leon and other members of his team have done. They have done such an excellent job in cleaning up this area. We want to thank all the team for their hard work, well done lads and keep up the good work.

Place team

Customer very impressed with how quickly we delivered her bin.

Thank you for picking up litter.

From Cllr Bullivant - I am personally proud of the achievement to date and thank the team.

Very impressed with bin delivery.

Cesspool Team

Many thanks for cesspool service, very professional.

Fly tipping

Thank you for removing it so fast.

Really great service and fast.

Reported problem at 10.00 done by 12.30.

Business Support Unit Environmental Services

Thank you for being so helpful and friendly – it's lovely to hear a friendly voice.

Many thanks to Julie for excellent services sorting out replacement brown bin.

Landscaping
Thank you for responding so quickly.
Development Control
Officer's proactive and professional regarding rights of way policy.
Officer was helpful with professional approach and explained issues to me.
I've just been singing your praises to a colleague and topped it off with a helpful email.
Dial a Ride
Thanks to all staff at Dial a Ride for boosting my confidence.
Benefits
The lady was very professional and took the time to explain details.
Customer Services
Thank you for everyone's help with parking permits.

3. Local Government Ombudsman Complaints

There were no complaints referred from the Ombudsman this quarter.

4. Customer Service Centre Information

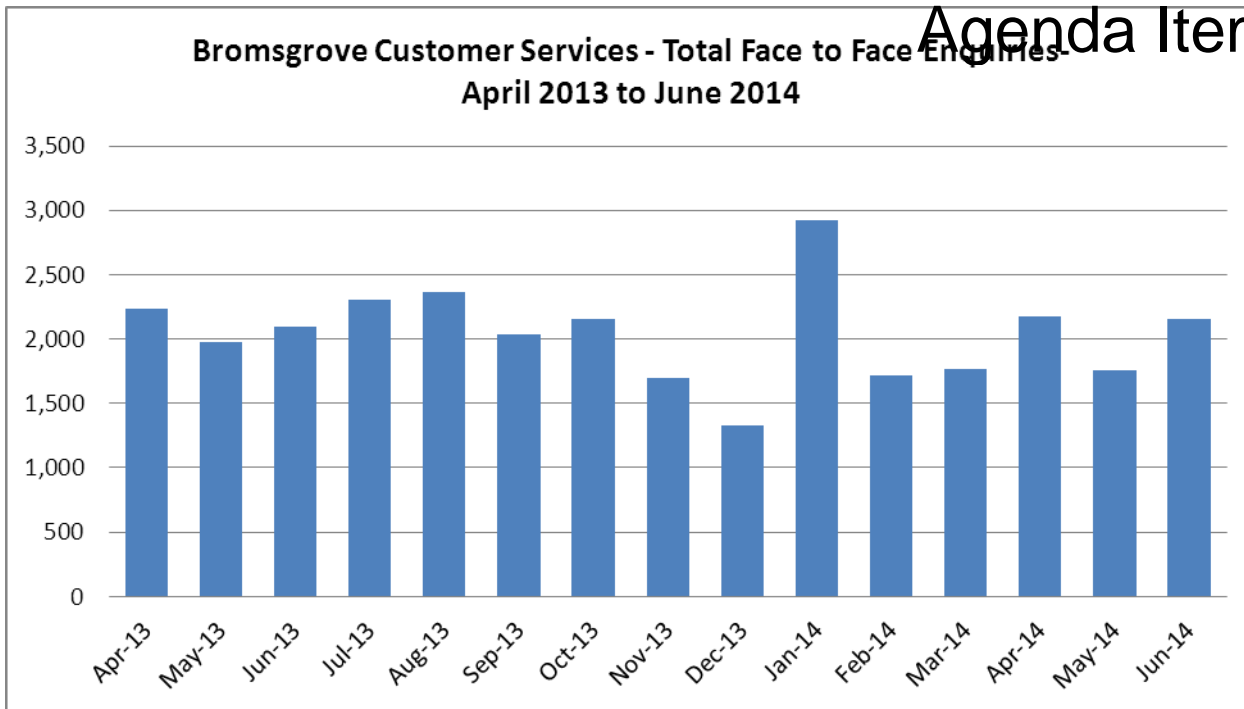
This section provides some statistical information in respect of the amount of customer demand received via the telephone, face to face and through our payment channels.

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

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

Face to face demand at the Customer Service Centre

The following chart shows the total face to face enquiries being dealt with at the Customer Service Centre on a month by month basis since April 2013 to June 14. It informs of patterns that occur and the data is then used to plan for busy times and to check the reasons for the peak as this may identify waste in systems which can then be addressed.

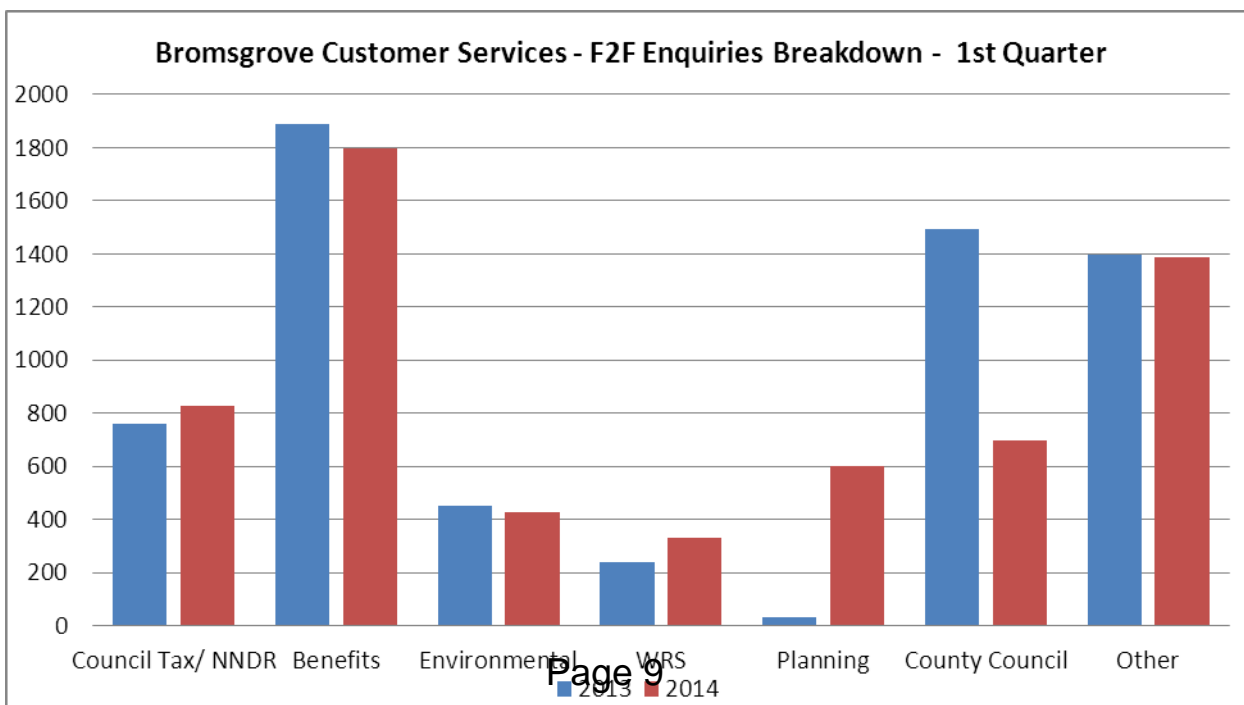


The following chart shows the breakdown of face to face customer enquiries received during quarter 1 2014, compared with the same period in 2013.

County Council enquiries continue to reduce through the Customer Service Centre; these services are now accessed via online methods.

During this quarter we have seen an increase in planning enquiries. Planning has made changes to how they work: officers are in regular contact with customers about their applications and they provide planning surgeries at Bromsgrove Council House which are very successful.

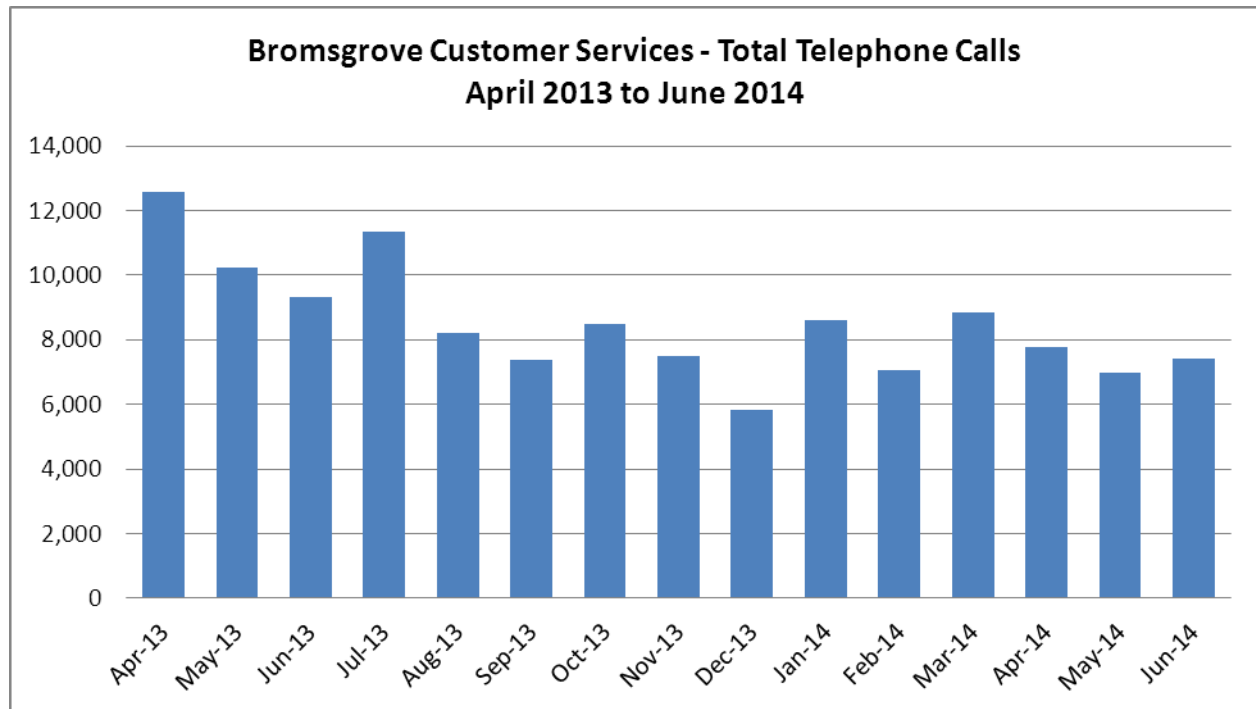
At the end of March customers receive their Council Tax bills for 14/15 and Benefits statements which at results in an increase in customer demand.



The following chart shows the total telephone calls recorded on the customer service systems from April 2013 until the end of June 2014.

The data shows an overall reduction in calls compared with quarter 1 2013

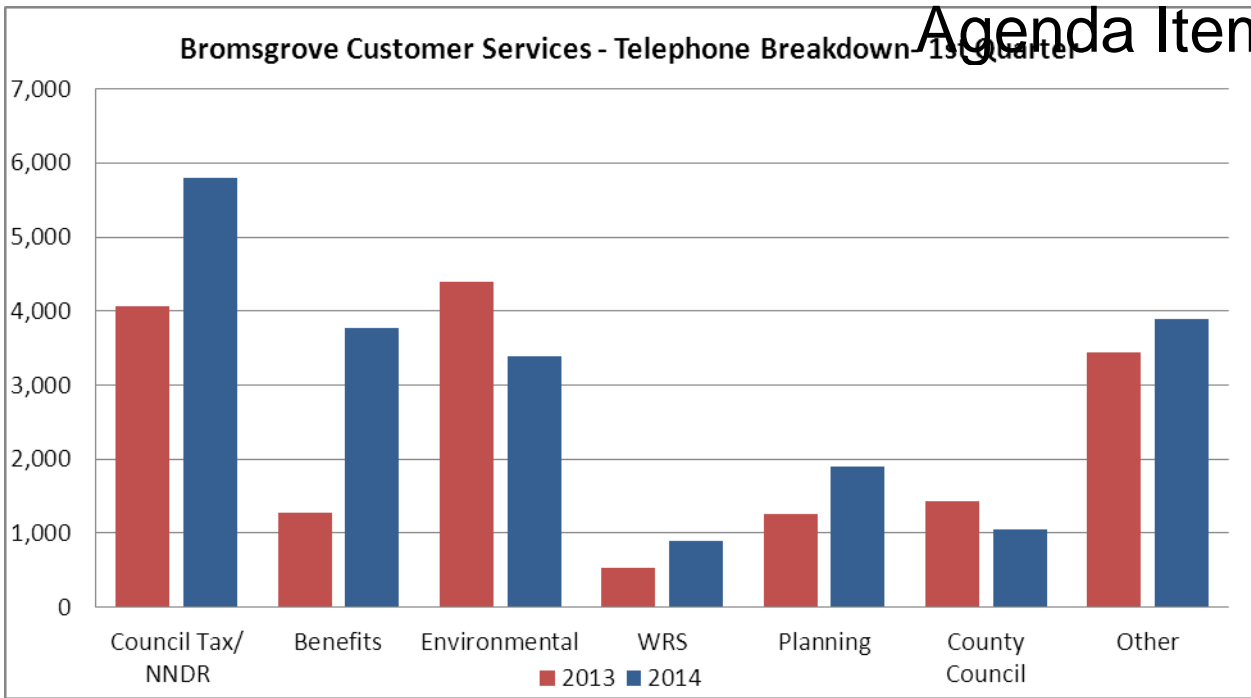
Revenues, Benefits and Environmental Services calls are now answered by the service staff which would account for the reduction as more calls will go through directly to the relevant team.



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

Compared with quarter 1 2013 the data shows an increase in the number of Benefits and Council Tax calls in 2014. Officers are aware that there has been an increase in customer contact for Benefits as a result of changes to the way the team operate. Various trials are in place to improve the customer journey and reduce failure demand.

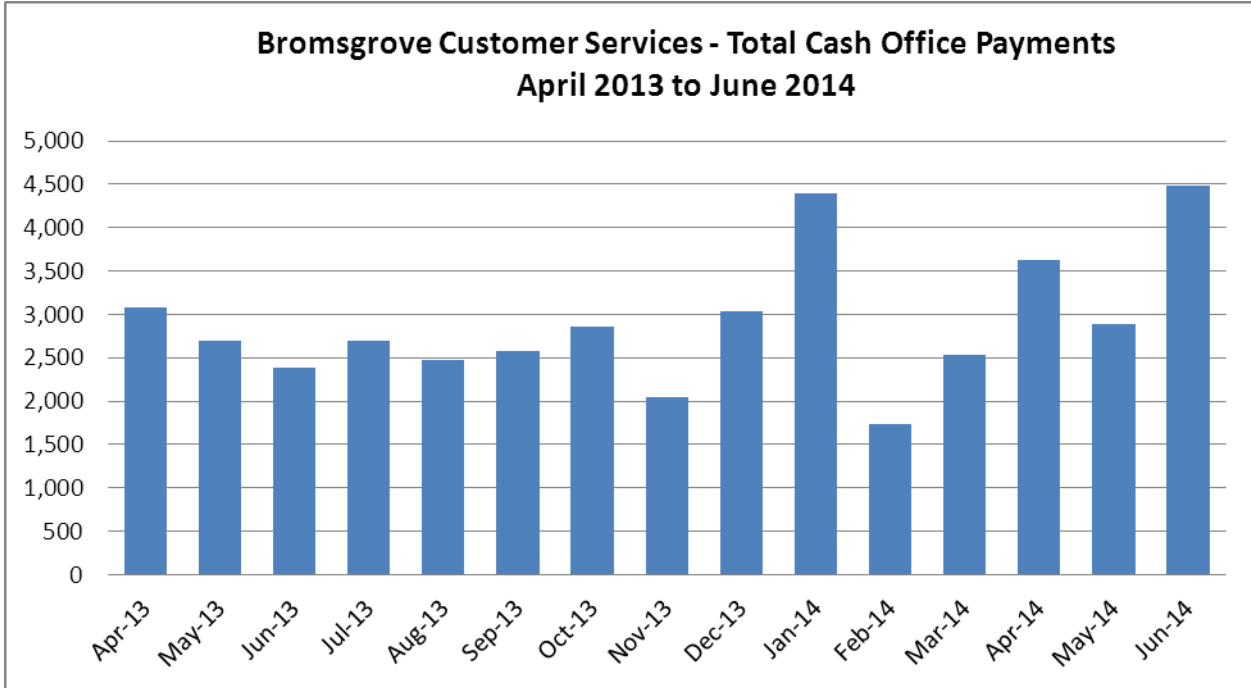
Investigation is under way to put a Benefits telephone solution in place which will provide greater flexibility of resources available and improve the customer experience.



Payments

The following chart shows a month by month comparison of payments received by the cash office and customer services staff during the period April 2013 – June 2014.

Comparison shows an increase in payments during the 1st quarter 2014 compared with April – June 2013. This is due to changes in invoicing for the lifeline service.

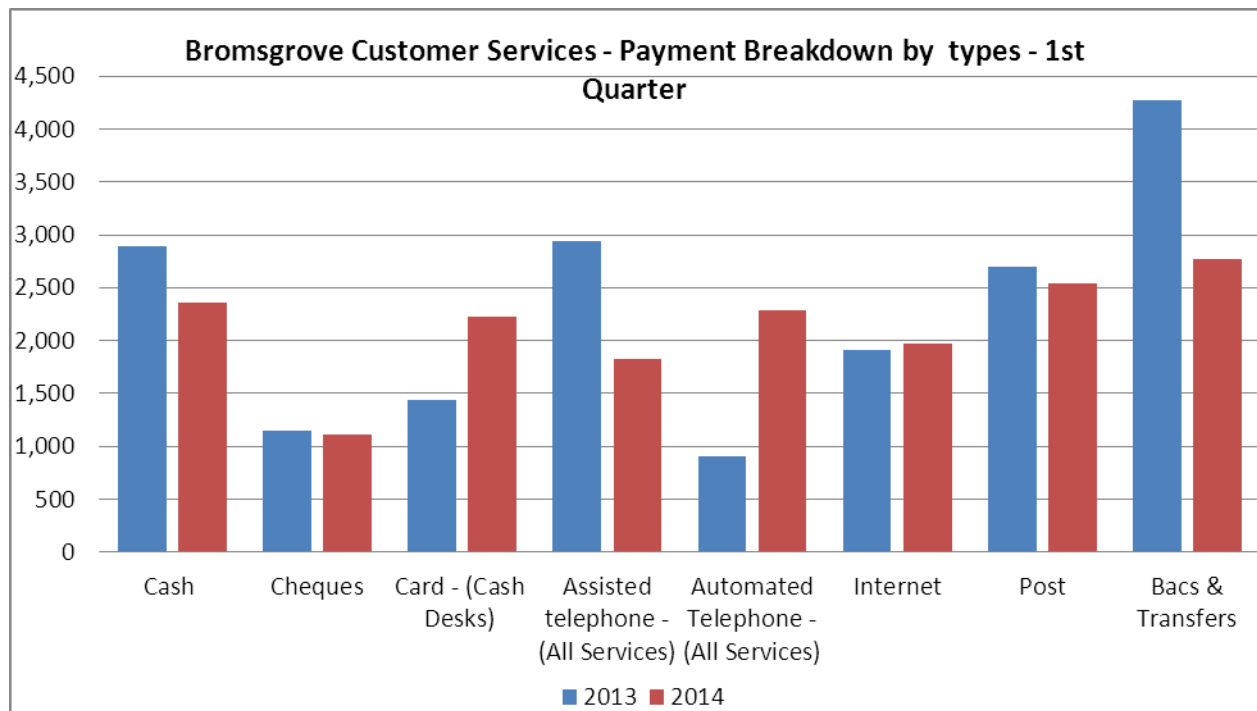


The chart below shows the breakdown of payments across all payment channels.

In February 2014 an upgrade to Bromsgrove payments system was installed. This has improved access to online and automated telephone payments self-serve access. The data shows we are seeing an increase in these methods of payments in. Page 11

We can also see an increase in payments by card at the cash desk, which is in line with the general trend away from cash.

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Lynn Jones
Customer Services Manager
July 2014

Complaint Details April to June 2014

Complaint details	Days taken to respond	Action taken	Outcome update from HOS
Benefits			
<p>Customer not happy that claim was not allowed and the way that she was spoken to.</p>	<p>27</p>	<p>The Deputy Manager contacted the customer and an apology was given to customer about the way she was spoken to.</p> <p>The officer who was dealing with this case was trying to help the customer understand why her claim was not accepted. Customer was asked to provide evidence to support her claim and didn't understand the reasons.</p> <p>Since this complaint customer care training has been delivered for Benefits staff and coaching to support staff.</p>	<p>There was contact on a number of occasions with the customer during the response period. Regular quality assurance monitoring to be put in place which will form part of staff development reviews appraisals.</p> <p>In August 14 Managers will receive refresher training in dealing with complaints.</p>
Building Control			
<p>Complaint regarding building control and various issues in getting a result and lack of communication</p>	<p>36</p>	<p>Delay in resolution time due to the need to obtain specialist reports and third party calculations by both us and complainant.</p> <p>Apology given to customer for delays.</p> <p>After investigation it was found that poor workmanship by the builder had occurred and customer was advised to seek redress against builders insurance.</p>	<p>This has raised some learning points about flat roof insulation specifications which will be discussed with the team.</p>
Council Tax			
<p>Customer unhappy that she was advised to complete wrong form and spent a lot of time doing it.</p>	<p>13</p>	<p>Staff instructed to take a pragmatic approach rather than send out forms unnecessarily.</p> <p>Apology given to customer and she was assured that processes would be changed.</p>	<p>We are aiming to improve this system by looking at what forms we really need to send out.</p>

<p>Customer unhappy that he had received a letter querying his single person discount.</p>	<p>32</p>	<p>Customer unhappy that his case is being reviewed.</p> <p>Further facts gathered by telephone call to customer.</p> <p>Following investigation the manager spoke to the customer and explained that this was normal practice and the reasons why we have to do this.</p> <p>Followed up with a letter confirming conversation.</p>	<p>This case required investigation with a 3rd party in order to fully respond to the customer</p>
<p>Customer unhappy that she is still receiving bills and court summons when property sold and bill paid</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>Customer had paid an incorrect amount, which led to a summons.</p> <p>Customer advised of the payment outstanding and that this payment was required in full to prevent further action.</p>	<p>No further action</p>
<p>Customer Services</p>			
<p>Customer unhappy with the attitude and rudeness of staff and that she had been given an incorrect telephone number</p>	<p>1</p>	<p>The officer who took this call found it difficult to understand what the customer was asking for, and did not hear clearly which service the customer asked to be transferred to.</p> <p>Apology given to the customer and officer advised to take the time required and ask relevant questions to ensure call is transferred correctly.</p>	<p>Teams to be reminded of the importance to listen and question the customers to ensure they give the correct details first time.</p>
<p>Development Control</p>			
<p>Customer unhappy about caravans illegally sited on land.</p>	<p>8</p>	<p>Site visit made to secure removal of caravans</p>	<p>No further action</p>
<p>Customer acknowledged letter responding to his queries but wants more detailed response as he still considers works are illegal</p>	<p>9</p>	<p>Investigation carried out. All relevant information given to the customer.</p> <p>Suggested contacting Ombudsman for independent review if not happy with the way matter has been handled.</p>	<p>No further action</p>

Customer unhappy about delays in pre application	1	Case officer visited site and explanation given to customer.	No further action
Customer unhappy about length of time taken in dealing with application	3	Apology given as this didn't actually need permission so therefore didn't need to be in the backlog.	We are aiming to recruit more staff to reduce the backlog
Leisure			
Customer unhappy and wants explanation why toilets in Rubery village are closed at 14.30 and not 4.30	2	Apology and explanation given to customer and she was assured that the new opening hours will match time of local retail units opening hours.	No further action
Parking Enforcement			
Customer unhappy about the attitude of staff issuing parking tickets.	3	Customer contacted and apology given as there was no intention to upset them. Customer rapport has been discussed with Enforcement officer involved.	No further action
Customer unhappy about parking enforcement fine issued whilst loading vehicle at Worcester Road.	4	Customer contacted and it was explained that the PCN was issued correctly and no evidence was found to his claim that businesses in Bromsgrove were being victimised.	No further action
Refuse			
Customer unhappy about the recycling and general waste service at Newland Close.	4	Spoke to customer and arranged new collection point.	No further action
Customer unhappy about brown bin payment and collection.	3	Error with payment – apology given to customer and collection made.	No further action
Customer unhappy about non delivery of grey bin.	3	Error on delivery list. Apology given to customer and bin delivered.	No further action

Agenda Item 4

Town Centre

Customer unhappy as she fell over in the High Street because of a raised slab.	3	It was explained that the pavement slabs in this area belonged to a private company and she was given the contact details for them.	No further action
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Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

APRIL - JUNE (QUARTER 1) FINANCE MONITORING REPORT 2014/15

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Roger Hollingworth, Portfolio Holder for Finance, Partnerships and Economic Development
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering, Executive Director Finance and Corporate Resources
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To report to Cabinet on the Council's financial position for the period April -June 2014 (Quarter 1 – 2014/15)

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the financial position for the period April – June 2014 be noted.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 This report provides details of the financial information across the Council. The aim is to ensure officers and members can make informed and considered judgement of the overall position of the Council. The report is currently based on the departments within the Council. The aim is to report the financial position across the strategic purposes in future reports.
- 3.2 This report includes both revenue and capital expenditure with a summary for the Council followed by the departmental analysis of expenditure.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

**Revenue Budget summary
Quarter 1 (April – June) 2014/15 – Overall Council**

Service Head	Revised Budget 2014/15 £'000	Profiled budget April - June £'000	Actual spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014/14 £'000	Projected Variance £'000
BDC Reg Client	612	26	22	-4	596	-16
Business Transformation	110	569	558	-31	68	-42
Community Services	2,507	215	172	-42	2,432	-76
Corporate Resources	1,832	566	557	-9	1,818	-14
Customer Access & Financial Support	951	-742	-736	6	956	5
Environmental Services	3,682	59	52	-7	3,731	49
Finance & Resources	0	101	101	0	0	0
Legal & Democratic Services	1,330	176	174	-2	1,330	0
Leisure & Cultural Services	1,965	593	594	1	1,966	1
Planning & Regeneration	1,276	157	165	8	1,243	-33
SERVICE TOTAL	14,264	1,720	1,660	-79	14,140	-124
Interest Payable	283	71	0	-71	283	0
Interest on Investments	-58	-15	-14	0	-58	0
COUNCIL SUMMARY	14,489	1,776	1,646	-150	14,365	-124

Financial Commentary:

The position at the end of the first quarter shows that there is projected underspend for the financial year of £124k across all departments.

The underspends are mainly as a result of vacant posts and renegotiation of contracts. These savings are offset by a number of income shortfalls in car parking and additional maintenance costs on the environmental services fleet.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

Capital Budget summary
Quarter 1 (April -June) 2014/15 – Overall Council

Department	Revised latest Budget 2014-15 £'000	Profiled budget April - June £'000	Actual spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Business Transformation	9	9	9	0	9	0
Community Services	939	939	414	-524	939	0
Environmental Services	2,540	245	209	-36	2,540	0
Leisure & Cultural Services	2,835	113	112	-1	2,834	-1
Planning & Regeneration	4,920	4,920	1,035	-3,885	4,929	8
Regulatory Services	0	0	0	0	19	0
COUNCIL SUMMARY	11,243	6,226	1,780	-4,447	11,295	7

Financial Commentary

The Capital schemes represent expenditure incurred on developments and purchase of new plant, fleet and machinery. The majority of projects are anticipated to be fully committed by the end of the year however there are a number currently underspent due to the timing of the project or procurement being undertaken.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

**Environmental Services
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15**

Revenue Budget Summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014- 15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Car Parks/Civil Enforcement Parking	-475	-34	-17	17	-431	44
Bereavement Services	82	10	8	-2	70	-12
Cesspools/Sewers	-94	-29	-18	11	-56	38
CMT	0	13	13	0	0	0
Depot	15	207	180	-27	-49	-64
Grounds Maintenance	635	95	93	-2	622	-12
Highways	250	38	31	-7	237	-13
Refuse & Recycling	1,963	-441	-423	18	2,046	82
Street Cleansing	1,274	191	176	-15	1,257	-16
Transport	-40	-15	-15	0	-42	-2
Waste Management, policy, promotion, management	-5	-1	-1	0	-3	3
Climate Change	16	4	4	0	17	1
Land Drainage	61	21	22	0	62	1
Grand Total	3,682	59	52	-7	3,731	49

Financial Commentary:

- Income from off street/on street parking enforcement is less than anticipated. Wychavon District Council who provide the parking service under an SLA agreement are currently investigating the variances.
- There is a projected overspend on cesspools due to additional costs associated with the pumping station at Frankley Green. This is currently being investigated by officers.
- Salary savings account for most of the underspend on Depot Services.
- Major vehicle repairs have taken place during the first quarter within the Refuse and Recycling service and accounts for the majority of the projected overspend. Officers are reviewing all vehicles to ensure that maintaining remains better value than purchase of new fleet. However vehicle replacement is due to take place during the latter stages of 2014/15.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

Capital Budget Summary

Capital Project Description	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Profiled budget April - June £'000	Actual spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Projected Variance £'000
North Cemetery Phase 2	479	1	1	0	479	0
Refuse collection vehicle replacement programme	2,025	208	208	0	2,025	0
Cemetery Toilets	0	0	0	0	0	0
Depot Security	0	0	0	0	0	0
Rollout of bins for round extensions	0	0	0	0	0	0
Flooding Mitigation Measures	36	36	0	-36	36	0
Total	2,540	245	209	-36	2,540	0

Financial Commentary:

- North Cemetery Phase 2 - the infrastructure review is now taking place. Budget has been reprofiled to reflect expenditure taking place at end of second quarter.
- Refuse Vehicle replacement programme is for Environmental Services Vehicles and plant. Procurement of vehicles is currently taking place.
- Flood Mitigation Measures - replacement of culvert grilles - the work has been undertaken but invoices have not yet been received

**Community Services
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15**

Revenue Budget summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Housing Strategy	1,821	219	222	3	1,782	-39
Community Safety & Transport	580	-34	-80	-45	544	-35
Community Cohesion	107	30	30	0	105	-1
Grand Total	2,507	215	172	-42	2,432	-76

Financial Commentary:

- There has been a reduction in the cost of running the community transport scheme due to the contract being renegotiated.
- Within Housing Strategy there is a saving due to BDHT not increasing their contract by inflation for 2014/15.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

Capital Budget summary

Capital Project Description	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Profiled budget April - June £'000	Actual spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Disabled facilities Grant	515	515	399	-116	515	0
Energy Efficiency Home Insulation Project	17	17	0	-17	17	0
Grants - affordable housing	313	313	10	-303	313	0
Implementation of Localism Changes	5	5		-5	5	0
Discretionary Home Repair Assistance & Housing Renewal Grants	89	89	5	-84	89	0
Total	939	939	414	-524	939	0

Financial Commentary:

- There has been less demand for Disabled Facilities grants during the first quarter of the year. Officers are continuing to work with residents to ensure all support is in place in their homes.
 - Affordable Housing grants relate to funds to support Registered Social Landlords and these have not yet been drawn on for 2014/15

**Leisure and Cultural Services
Quarter 1 (April – June) 2014/15**

Revenue Budget summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Business Development	110	309	311	2	110	0
Cultural Services	297	89	89	0	297	0
Leisure & Cultural Mgt	-4	24	24	0	-6	-2
Parks & Green Space	479	32	30	-2	476	-3
Sports Services	1,083	138	140	2	1,088	6
Grand Total	1,965	593	594	1	1,966	1

Financial Commentary:

- There are no significant variances to report at this quarter.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

Capital Project Description	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Profiled budget April - June £'000	Actual spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Sports Facilities	2,224	0	0	0	2,224	0
Play Areas	494	113	112	-1	493	-1
Other Schemes	117	0	0	0	117	0
Total	2,835	113	112	-1	2,834	-1

Financial Commentary:

- Officers have advised that all schemes are scheduled to take place before the end of the financial year, so the budgets have been re-profiled to reflect the fact that expenditure will be in Quarter 2 - Quarter 4 (July 2014 – March 2015).

- The revised full year budget has been re profiled by £170k to reflect expenditure planned for 2015/16.

**Planning and Regeneration
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15**

Revenue Budget summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Building Control	-26	-32	-6	26	-37	-10
Development Control	493	43	68	25	458	-35
Economic & Tourism Development	192	30	35	5	198	6
Emergency Planning / Business Continuity	14	3	3	0	16	2
Strategic Planning	550	101	53	-48	535	-15
Town Centre Development	53	12	13	0	55	1
Grand Total	1,276	157	165	8	1,225	-51

Financial Commentary:

- The overspend in quarter 1 within Economic & Tourism Development is due to the shortfall in income as a result of the changes to the market location. It is anticipated that this will not increase during the remainder of the year and the aim is to encourage further use of the new market stalls from September.

- Strategic Planning has a saving from a vacancy in the 1st quarter of 2014/15 however this has now been filled going into the 2nd quarter.

- Development Control and Building Control have seen shortfalls in income for the first quarter. It is anticipated that this will be offset by further income and savings within the service by the end of the financial year

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

Capital Budget summary

Capital Project Description	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Profiled budget April - June £'000	Actual spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Town Centre Development - Project Management	38	38	0	-38	38	0
Town Centre - Public Realm	1,533	1,533	177	-1,356	1,533	0
Market Hall development site	0	0	8	8	8	8
Stourbridge Road development site	0	0	1	1	1	1
Parkside School	3,350	3,350	850	-2,500	3,350	0
Total	4,920	4,920	1,035	-3,885	4,929	8

Financial Commentary:

- There are a number of projects that are under construction within this service area. Both the redevelopment of Parkside and the High Street Improvements are committed to be fully spent by the end of the financial year.

Regulatory - Client
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15

Revenue Budget summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Environmental Health	798	69	63	-6	778	-20
Licensing	-186	-42	-41	2	-182	4
Grand Total	612	26	22	-4	596	-16

Financial Commentary:

- There is currently an expected underspend on the Worcestershire Regulatory Services function for BDC.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

**Worcestershire Regulatory Services
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15**

Capital Budget summary

Capital Project Description	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Profiled budget April - June £'000	Actual spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Projected Variance £'000
BDC share of Regulatory - WETT shared service	0	0	0	0	19	0
Total	0	0	0	0	19	0

Financial Commentary:

- The expenditure for a new IT System is jointly funded by all partners in accordance with the business case. The £19k represents the financial cost for Bromsgrove and it is expected to be fully spent by the end of the financial year.

**Customer Access & Financial Support
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15**

Revenue Budget summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Customer service centre	0	103	117	14	12	12
Financial Support	0	14	14	0	0	0
Revenues & Benefits	951	-863	-871	-9	944	-7
Valuation Services	0	4	4	0	0	0
Grand Total	951	-742	-736	6	956	5

Financial Commentary:

- The projected outturn variance for Customer Services is due to the reduction of income being received for the Worcestershire Hub which has been offset by savings within Revenues & Benefits.
- A review of Benefits & Fraud has been undertaken and further savings will be identified at Qtr 2.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

**Finance and Resources
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15**

Revenue Budget summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Accounts & Financial Management	0	101	101	0	0	0
Central Overheads	0	0	0	0	0	0
Grand Total	0	101	101	0	0	0

Financial Commentary:

- There are no significant variances to report this quarter.

**Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15**

Revenue Budget Summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Democratic Services & Member Support	1,137	96	96	0	1,137	0
Election & Electoral Services	242	16	15	-1	242	0
Professional Legal Advice & Services	7	83	82	-1	7	0
Land Charges	-56	-19	-18	1	-56	0
Grand Total	1,330	176	174	-2	1,330	0

Financial commentary:

- There are no significant variances to report this quarter.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

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**Business Transformation
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15**

Revenue Budget summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
ICT	95	481	486	4	94	-1
Human Resources	0	76	46	-30	-38	-38
Transformation	0	4	6	3	0	0
Equalities	34	8	10	2	32	-1
Policy	-19	20	10	-10	-21	-2
Grand Total	110	569	558	-31	68	-42

Financial Commentary:

- There are a couple of posts within the HR department that are currently vacant and maternity leave cover is being provided internally. One of the posts has been filled and therefore the savings will not be as significant at the end of the financial year.

Capital Budget summary

Capital Project Description	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Profiled budget April - June £'000	Actual spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Projected Variance £'000
Infrastructure refresh and PSN	9	9	9	0	9	0
Total	9	9	9	0	9	0

Financial Commentary:

No significant variances at this quarter.

Overview & Scrutiny Board

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Corporate Services
Quarter 1 (April - June) 2014/15

Revenue Budget summary

Service Area	Revised Budget 2014-15 £'000	Budget April - June £'000	Actual Spend April - June £'000	Variance to date £'000	Projected Outturn 2014-15 £'000	Sum of Projected Variance £'000
Corporate Resources	1,832	496	486	-11	1,818	-14
Corporate Admin/ central post & printing	0	70	72	2	1	1
Grand Total	1,832	566	557	-9	1,818	-14

Financial Commentary:

- Communications have a projected saving of £14k on various budgets relating to marketing/promotion.

4. TREASURY MANAGEMENT

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

	31st March 2014 £000	30th June 2014 £000
Deposits with Banks/Building Societies	10,000	13,000
Total	10,000	13,000

Overview & Scrutiny Board

24 SEPTEMBER 2014

Income from investments and other interest

- 4.5 An investment income target of £58k has been set for 2014/15 using a projected return rate of 0.5%. During the past financial year bank base rates have remained 0.5% and current indications are projecting minimal upward movement for the short term.
- 4.6 In the 3 months to 30 June the Council received income from investments of £14k.

5. REVENUE BALANCES

5.1 Revenue Balances

The revenue balances brought forward at 1 April 2014 were £3.74m (subject to audit). Excluding the impact of any projected over or under spends it is anticipated that £124k will be transferred to balances during 2014/15.

Legal Implications

None.

Service/Operational Implications

All included in financial implications.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

None as a direct result of this report

7. RISK MANAGEMENT

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

8. APPENDICES

None

9. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Available from Financial Services

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Overview & Scrutiny Board

15th September 2014

QUARTERLY MONITORING OF WRITE OFFS 1ST APRIL 2014 – 30TH JUNE 2014

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

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report summarises the write off of debts during the first quarter of 2014/15 along with the profile and level of outstanding debt.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

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

3. KEY ISSUES

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

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

	£
NDR	224,907
Ctax	214,937
Sundry Debtors	<u>31,493</u>
Total	471,337

Financial Implications

- 3.3 Details of written off debts during the period for Council Tax, Non Domestic Rates, and Sundry Debts, including a break down of the number of debtors, and Overpaid Housing Benefit are attached at Appendix 1. A total of £64,966 of unrecoverable debt was written off during this quarter.

- 3.4 An age profile of the outstanding sundry debts at the end of each quarter is attached at Appendix 2. The data for the same periods in 2013/14 are provided for comparative purposes. The outstanding debt at the end of the first quarter is higher than in the following quarter due to the timing of the garden waste collection service invoicing. The comparative data shows that we have higher outstanding debt than at the same point last year. Having reviewed the details behind this there are a variety of reasons. There is no evidence to suggest that recovery processes are

Overview & Scrutiny Board

15th September 2014

not working, rather that arrangements and terms for some of the debts have altered and therefore a direct comparison cannot be made.

- 3.6 An analysis of Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates arrears is attached at Appendix 3. This shows the current outstanding debt against each of those years which we continue to pursue. As shown the debt for this financial year is significant. This is because all Council Tax and NDR becomes due on 1st April but is brought down by each month as instalments are paid. Arrangements are in place for much of the outstanding debt from recent previous years. Older debt tends to be in varying stages of recovery. We do not write off any debt until we have exhausted all possible avenues to recover.

Legal Implications

- 3.7 There are no legal implications.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.8 No direct implications.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.9. No direct implications.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 No specific risks identified.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1- Write offs 1st April – 30th June 2014

Appendix 2- Aged Debt Profile for Sundry Debts Arrears as at 30th June 2014

Appendix 3 - Council Tax and Non Domestic Rates Arrears Analysis

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

There are no background papers to this report.

AUTHORS OF REPORT

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Overview & Scrutiny Board

15th September 2014

Appendix 1

Write Offs 1st April 2014 – 30th June 2014

Council Tax	Amount (£)	Number of Accounts
Gone away	16,292.85	44
Deceased no funds in estate	506.15	4
Bankruptcy	57.00	1
Write Of Credit	-492.23	17
Statue Barred	4,040.46	10
Uneconomical to pursue	399.09	12
Other	171.38	2
Costs written off	2,736.46	43
Total	23,831.14	136

NDR	Amount (£)	Number of Accounts
Gone away	29,256.79	13
Bankruptcy	396.77	1
Liquidation	1601.98	2
In Administration	458.00	1
Costs written off	880.00	10
Total	32,593.54	27

Sundry Debts	Amount (£)	Number of Invoices
No further Action due to value	60	1
Part Paid advised write off	20	15
Auto write off under £5.00	3	5
Advised Write Off	126	1
Overpaid (Credits)	-769	36
Total	-560	58

Housing Benefit Write Offs	Amount (£0)	No. of cases
Reason		
Deceased	189	2
Uneconomical to recover	2,885	11
Cannot trace	2,066	4
Old debt-recovery options ex	3,962	6
TOTAL	9,102	23

Overview & Scrutiny Board

15th September 2014

Appendix 2

Aged Debt profile for Sundry Debts - 1st April 2014 – 30th June 2014

Age	As at 30 th June 2014	As at 30 th June 2013
1 – 30 days	375,255	325,588
31 - 60 days	246,968	111,331
61 – 90 days	18,367	7,621
90 days +	148,842	160,769
Total	789,432	605,309

Appendix 3

Council Tax Arrears

Council Tax Arrears Analysis					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Annual debit
Year	£	£			£
1999/00	9869.03				25,836,407
2000/01	14,722.72				26,419,700
2001/02	23,350.36				29,487,929
2002/03	35,427.20				35,962,692
2003/04	32,054.31				40,922,548
2004/05	34,384.86				41,770,011
2005/06	68,403.58				44,059,868
2006/07	88,198.00				46,683,333
2007/08	79,731.62				49,061,780
2008/09	87,063.83				51,592,006
2009/10	92,186.06				53,577,097
2010/11	149,444.01				55,298,276
2011/12	187,955.74				55,399,069
2012/13	291,776.21				55,882,474
2013/14	636,847.28				56,565,040
2014/15	37,372,725.49				57,832,715
Total	39,200,023.54				725,350,945

Non Domestic Rates Arrears

Non Domestic Rates Arrears Analysis					
	Q1	Q2	Q3	Q4	
	Total	Total	Total	Total	Annual Debit
Year	£	£			£
2000/01	-1,442.12				17,415,978
2001/02	656.81				17,232,868
2002/03	-1,665.72				17,175,162
2003/04	211.80				17,345,890
2004/05	-331.53				17,854,642
2005/06	5,633.06				18,803,202
2006/07	3,562.52				19,823,744
2007/08	3,026.97				20,822,010
2008/09	23,528.11				23,586,234
2009/10`	56,573.05				23,829,603
2010/11	55,886.01				23,233,864
2011/12	88,683.27				25,205,206
2012/13	131,380.32				26,984,821
2013/14	208,162.79				27,558,863
2014/15	18,890,661.55				28,185,165
Totals	19,464,526.89				325,057,252

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD 25th SEPTEMBER 2014

Youth Provision Task Group Report 12 Month Review

Background

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

The Task Group held a total of 18 meetings, which included 6 site visits and interviews with numerous internal and external witnesses. The Task Group also considered written evidence from a number of sources and considered information provided by both Ward Councillors and Parish Councils. The initial meeting of the Task Group took place on 5th December when Members considered the Terms of Reference and discussed in detail how it would carry out its investigation, from the early stages Members were keen to visit facilities for young people within the District in order to find out what was available to them. The penultimate meeting of the Task Group took place on 29th May 2013 when Members formulated the recommendations which are detailed below and the final meeting took place on 17th June to discuss the draft report before submitting it to the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meeting held on 15th July 2013.

The Final Report was then submitted to Cabinet and the report and recommendations were discussed at its meeting on 4th September 2013, with a response being provided to the Board at its meeting held on 14th October 2013. For purpose of ease – the Cabinet Responses are detailed in **Green** below.

Recommendation 1

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.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

Councillor M. J. A. Webb indicated he was happy to attend a future meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board when the Cabinet response was discussed by the Board. There was concern that Positive Activities would suffer as a result of County Council budget cuts. The Leader indicated he had been discussing this with the Leader of the County Council in order to understand the extent of potential cuts so that alternative budget provision could be considered by this Council.

12 Month Review - Update

Completed – meetings held as and when required.

Recommendation 2

That Bromsgrove District Council writes 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 services provided by EPIC in the Rubery Ward.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

Members were concerned that little progress appeared to have been made by the County Council in identifying alternative accommodation. Whilst there was Youth provision at Longbridge and cross boundary working should help to alleviate the situation it was important there was provision within this District.

12 Month Review - Update

This matter has now been resolved.

Recommendation 3

That Worcestershire County Council ensure that the activities, which should focus on the Town Centre and provided by the £15,000 from Sandwell Leisure Trust, are commissioned through the Positive Activities process to ensure that no further delays occur.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

The Cabinet queried however whether the County Council had in fact provided the £15,000 funding rather than Sandwell Leisure Trust and also what the situation would be if the money was not spent within the year i.e. would it be carried over to the following year.

12 Month Review - Update

This was clarified for the Cabinet and WCC have used the funds to commission appropriate activities.

Recommendation 4

That Bromsgrove District Councillors familiarise themselves with all facilities for young people within their Ward and build relationships with local providers where appropriate.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

The Cabinet felt however that it was for Group Leaders to deal with this recommendation rather than the Leader.

12 Month Review - Update

As Cabinet felt this was more appropriate for Group Leaders to deal with this matter Officers are unaware as to whether any action has taken place.

Recommendation 5

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.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

12 Month Review - Update

Positive Activities is a standing item on all LSP Balanced Communities Theme Group agendas. All WCC commissioned Positive Activities Providers in Bromsgrove District were invited to join Theme Group and the WCC

Commissioning Manager for Youth (Paul Finnemore) also attends the meetings.

Recommendation 6

That the Chairman of the Task Group (supported by Democratic Services Officers) gives a presentation of the Task Group's findings to the County Association of Local Councils in order to encourage Parish Councils to support local Youth Groups.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed

12 Month Review - Update

To date, this has not taken place.

Recommendation 7

That Bromsgrove District Council launches a Twitter campaign to promote activities for young people across the District.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

The Cabinet did request however that it be confirmed that there would be no cost implications in respect of this recommendation.

12 Month Review - Update

It was the Communications Manager understanding that this was superseded by VIPA and then the Council was working with them to do retweets and they retweeted our activ8s and Go4Fun activity news. VIPA continues to communicate with children and young people through this communication process.

Recommendation 8

That Bromsgrove District Council uses active young people to help with and schedule the Twitter campaign including creating the # tag.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

The Cabinet did request however that it be confirmed that there would be no cost implications in respect of this recommendation.

12 Month Review - Update

As per recommendation 7 above.

Recommendation 9

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.

Cabinet Response

This was agreed.

The Cabinet did request however that it be confirmed that there would be no cost implications in respect of this recommendation.

12 Month Review - Update

As per recommendation 7above.

Recommendation 10

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.

Cabinet Response

Cabinet that this was a matter for the Overview and Scrutiny Board to determine as part of their future work programme.

12 Month Review - Update

This has been included on the O&S Board's Work Programme, for its consideration if they so wish.

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OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

25th September 2015

Task Group/Inquiry Procedure Guidelines

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor M. A. Sherrey
Relevant Portfolio Holder Consulted	Not at this stage
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton – Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Non-Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 At the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 14th July 2014 Members were informed that the Procedure Guidelines had been in place since March 2011 and that following discussion with the Chairman it had been agreed that the Board would be given the opportunity to review these and make any changes which would improve the process.
- 1.2 Following discussions the Board made a number of suggestions which could improve the process, particularly for Task Groups. These included reviewing the Topic Proposal Form, the Membership of Task Groups, updating the Board on progress of investigations and how a final report was presented to both the Board and Cabinet. Officers were tasked with making the necessary amendments and it was agreed that these would be brought back to the Board for further consideration at a future meeting.
- 1.3 This report presents the revised guidelines for Overview and Scrutiny Task Groups and Inquiries for consideration by the Board.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 That the revised Overview and Scrutiny Task Group and Inquiry guidelines are noted and endorsed; and
- 2.2 That the Task Group and Inquiry Procedure Guidelines are included within the Council's Constitution.

3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 Task Group guidelines were removed from the Constitution during a review in early 2011. The Overview and Scrutiny Board adopted new guidelines which covered both Task Groups and Short Sharp inquiries at its meeting on 1st March 2011. It is good practice to review such guidelines at regular intervals and following discussion with the Chairman it was agreed that a review would take place at the Board's meeting on 14th July 2014.

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

25th September 2015

3.2 Following that meeting Officers were tasked with incorporating a number of changes, which had been discussed, into the Task Group/Short Sharp Inquiry Guidelines. These changes covered the following areas:

- Topic Proposal Form/Scoping Check List – combine into one document.
- Appointment of a Chairman for a Task Group and how the Membership was decided, including the number of Members.
- How an investigation is carried out and timescales.
- The format in which a final report was presented, to both the Board and Cabinet.

Financial Implications

There are no financial implications directly relating to this report.

Service/Operational Implications

There are no legal implications directly relating to this report.

Customer/Equalities and Diversity Implications

There are no policy implications arising from this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

None

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Revised Task Group/Inquiry Procedure Guidelines

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

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Overview and Scrutiny Board –

Task Group/Short, Sharp Inquiry Procedure Guidelines

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

Task Group

The first, 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.

Chairman of a Task Group

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 (assisted by the Democratic Services Officer) is required to provide an written 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 (the terms of reference will be included within this update to ensure that they continue to be met).

Membership of a Task Group

4. If the Topic Proposal Form was completed by a Councillor (who is not a Member of the Cabinet) they will automatically have the right to be on the Task Group.
5. 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 asked to complete a short "application form" (*Appendix 2*) detailing why

they are interested in the topic and what skills they could bring to the Group. The completed form should be returned to the Democratic Services Officer within the timescale specified.

6. Membership of task groups must be at least 4 but no more than 7 Members (including the Chairman).
7. 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.
8. If interest is in excess of 7 Members then the Chairman of the Task Group together with the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board will consider the “application forms” and put forward a proposal to the next meeting of the Board for approval.

The Investigation Process

9. The Head of the relevant Service will attend the initial meetings (maximum of 2) of the task group when the details of the topic proposal will be discussed. This will include:
 - a) Whether the topic can contribute towards the Council’s strategic purposes and assist in improving the service being investigated.
 - b) How the Head of Service and his team can support the Task Group.
 - c) Agreeing who the task group wish to interview,
 - d) What evidence they wish to receive and how this will be gathered.
10. The task group may appoint people as non-voting co-optees if they so wish and with agreement of the Board.
11. Following the initial meetings (maximum of 2) and before any further meetings are held, the Chairman of the task group, supported by the Democratic Services Officer, will provide a written update to the next convenient meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board. This report will include the terms of reference in order for the Board to then discuss:
 - a) Whether or not there is a need for the Group to continue the investigation.
 - b) If the Group is to continue then the terms of reference will be reviewed and revised if necessary.
 - c) A timescale for completion of the investigation will also be set (usually 3-5 months from the date of the first meeting).

The Final Report

12. The Democratic 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.
13. The Chairman of the Task Group will take a lead in giving a short presentation containing a summary of the task group's findings and recommendations for consideration by the Overview and Scrutiny Board. Support will be provided by the Democratic Services Officer where required.
14. If approved by the Overview and Scrutiny Board the Chairman of the task group (accompanied by the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board) will then give a similar presentation when the final report is being considered at Cabinet. Support from the Democratic Services Officer will also be provided where required.
15. The Portfolio Holder will then present the Cabinet response to the next Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.
16. The 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.
17. After 12 months the Democratic Services Officer will review the final report to ensure that those recommendations approved by Cabinet have been implemented. If any remain outstanding the Head of Service will be contacted to discuss any further actions which may be necessary to move those recommendations forward.
18. The Democratic 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.

Short, Sharp Inquiry

The second, 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 Cabinet Work Programme 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 Board or Cabinet’s Work Programme but which Members feel would merit inclusion and further investigation.

The guidelines below should 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, Democratic Services Officer and relevant Head of Service (if necessary) will then meet, as quickly as possible after that meeting to complete a Topic Proposal Form (*Appendix 1*).
5. At the first meeting of the Inquiry, the Terms of Reference will be confirmed, 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 Democratic 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 Overview and Scrutiny Board will then give a short presentation when the final report is being considered at Cabinet. Support from the Democratic Services Officer will also be provided where required.

Agenda Item 8

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 Democratic Services Officer will review the final report to ensure that those recommendations approved by Cabinet have been implemented. If any remain outstanding the Head of Service will be contacted to discuss any further actions which may be necessary to move those recommendations forward. .
12. The Democratic Services Officer will compile a report for the 12 month review of the inquiry, for presentation at the relevant Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting.

Appendix 1



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TOPIC PROPOSAL

This form can be used for either a Task Group or a Short Sharp Review topic proposal.

Completed forms should be returned to scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk – Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council.

Name of Proposer:	
Tel No:	Email:
Date:	

Title of Proposed Topic (including specific subject areas to be investigate)	
Background to the Proposal (Including reasons why this topic should be investigated and evidence to support the need for the investigation.)	
Links to national, regional and local priorities (including the Council's strategic purposes)	
Possible Key Objectives (these should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely)	
Anticipated Timescale for completion of the work.	

Agenda Item 8

Would it be appropriate to hold a Short Sharp Review or a Task Group? (please tick relevant box)	Task Group		Short Sharp Review	
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OFFICE USE ONLY - TO BE COMPLETED WHEN THE TOPIC PROPOSAL IS ACCEPTED

Evidence	
Key documents, data, reports	
Possible Site Visits	
Is a general press release required asking for general comments/suggestions from the public?	
Is a period of public consultation required?	
Witnesses	
Officers	
Councillors (including Portfolio Holder)	
Any External Witnesses	

Agenda Item 8

Appendix 2



Bromsgrove
District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY TASK GROUP MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

Please complete and return to scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk or Democratic Services Officers by the deadline (*date and time to be included*)

Task Group Title					
Councillor Name					
Contact Details					
Date					
Availability	Mon	Tues	Wed	Thurs	Fri
(please stipulate morning, afternoon, evening)					
Why are you interested in joining this task group?					
What skills could you bring to this task group?					

- 1 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 15th September 2014

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
<p>Item 6 – Development Control</p> <p align="center">Page 53</p>	<p>The Head of Planning and Regeneration provided Members with an update on the Transformation work taking place within the Development Control team.</p>	<p>(a) Additional information in respect of monitoring data. (b) The actual overspend figures for the service. (c) A list of the current contact details for all Planning Case Officers. (d) Quarterly reports on the Planning backlog. (e) When the removal of overtime payments and the car allowance scheme came into effect.</p>	<p>Head of Planning and Regeneration.</p>	<p>As soon as possible.</p>	<p>(d) Included on the Board's Work Programme for January and April 2015.</p>
<p>WRS Strategic Partner</p>	<p>Presentation from the Head of Regulatory Services</p>	<p>Members requested a copy of the presentation.</p>	<p>Democratic Services Officer</p>	<p>As soon as possible.</p>	<p>Emailed to all Board Members 16/09/14</p>
<p>Budget Scrutiny Arrangements</p>	<p>Presentation from the Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>	<p>(a) Members requested a copy of the presentation. (b) The Executive Director, Finance and Resources to consider the practicalities of</p>	<p>Democratic Services Officer Executive Director, Finance and Resources</p>	<p>As soon as possible.</p>	<p>Emailed to all Board Members 16/09/14</p>

- 2 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 15th September 2014

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
		consulting with residents on the budget.			
<p>Cabinet Work Programme</p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Page 54</p>	Members considered the Cabinet Work Programme.	(a) A copy of the report in respect of the Ward Members' Fund be provided to all Board Members as soon as it is available. (b) An update on position of the Playing Pitch Strategy	Executive Director, Finance and Resources. Head of Leisure and Cultural Services	As soon as possible.	Report emailed to all Board Members 16/09/14
Outstanding Actions 14th July 2014					
<p>Cabinet Work Programme</p>	Members considered the Cabinet Work Programme.	Disposal of Council-owned land Aintree Close, Catshill – Members questioned whether this was valued at over £50,000 and therefore the subject of a key decision.	Housing Strategy Manager	As soon as possible.	Now noted on Cabinet Work Programme as potential key decision.
Outstanding Actions – 16th June 2014					
<p>Item 6 – Summary of Results of Staff Survey</p>	Members received a presentation	(a) The Board to be provided with a	Head of Business Transformation and	Autumn 2014	

- 3 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 15th September 2014

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
		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.	Organisational Development.		
Item 3 – Write Off of Debts Quarter 4 Report Page 55	Members considered the Write Off of Debts Quarter 4 Report.	(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 within future reports.. (c) A more detailed explanation and possible revision of the format in reporting outstanding arrears analysis.	Executive Director, Finance and Resources		

- 4 - ACTION SHEET: BROMSGROVE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD 15th September 2014

ITEM	GENERAL COMMENTS	ACTION	OFFICER DEALING	DATE REQUIRED BY	RESPONSE PROVIDED AND DATE PROVIDED
Outstanding Actions – 14th April 2014					
<p>Item 10 – Cabinet Work Programme</p> <p align="center">Page 56</p>	<p>Members considered the Cabinet Work Programme for the period 1st May to 31st August 2014.</p>	<p>(a) Key decision items to be marked clearly on the Work Programme.</p> <p>(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.</p>	<p>Democratic Services Manager</p>	<p>As soon as possible.</p> <p>Verbal request made to Democratic Services Manager 15/04/14.</p> <p>Email follow up sent 17/06/14.</p> <p>Further email follow up sent 25/07/14.</p>	

OVERVIEW & SCRUTINY BOARD

WORK PROGRAMME

2014-15

RECOMMENDATION:

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

ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

Date of Meeting	Subject	Additional Information
25th September 2014	Presentation on Town Centre	Requested 14/07/14
	Youth Provision Task Group 12 month Review	
	Making Experiences Count Quarter 1 Customer Service Report	
	Finance Monitoring Quarter 1 Report	
	Write Off of Debts Quarter 1 Report	
	Task Group Procedure Guidelines - Review	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
13th October 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Overview of Budget • Current Budget Spend Linked to Strategic Purposes • Select Areas for Further Scrutiny 	
	Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
17th November 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Pressures/initial savings/additional scrutiny • Fees and Charges • Capital Budget 	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Leisure Provision Task Group Final Report	

Date of Meeting	Subject	Additional Information
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
15th December 2014	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Budget Position – pressures/savings • Areas for further Scrutiny 	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
19th January 2015	Budget Scrutiny Report	
	Planning Applications – Quarterly Backlog Data	Requested at meeting held on 15 th Sept3mber 2014.
	Quarterly Recommendation Tracker	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
16th February 2015	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
16th March 2015	Scrutiny of Crime and Disorder Partnerships – Update North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership	
	Summary of Environmental Enforcement	
	WCC Health Overview & Scrutiny Committee – Update	
	Cabinet Work Programme	
	Action List	
	O&S Work Programme	
13th April 2015	Planning Applications – Quarterly Backlog Data (to Review further need for this information.)	Requested at meeting held on 15 th Sept3mber 2014.
	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
Making Experiences Count

Reports to be Received by the Board Annually

Summary of Environmental Enforcement (October 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. This will be discussed at the meeting to be held on 13th October 2014.

Topics to be considered (as recommended by Task Groups)

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

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

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

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

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

Our Strategic Purposes for Bromsgrove



Help me to live my life independently

Help me to be financially independent

Keep my place safe & looking good

Help me find somewhere to live in my locality

Provide good things for me to see, do & visit

Help me run a successful business

Support services enable us to deliver our purposes

Bromsgrove District Council
www.bromsgrove.gov.uk

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