



## **BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

### **MEETING OF THE CABINET**

**WEDNESDAY 6TH APRIL 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.**

### **PARKSIDE SUITE - PARKSIDE**

**MEMBERS:** Councillors M. A. Sherrey (Leader), C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader), G. N. Denaro, R. L. Dent, R. J. Laight and P. J. Whittaker

### **AGENDA**

1. To receive apologies for absence
2. Declarations of Interest  
  
To invite Councillors to declare any Disclosable Pecuniary Interests or Other Disclosable Interests they may have in items on the agenda, and to confirm the nature of those interests.
3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 24th February 2016 and 2nd March 2016 (Pages 1 - 8)
4. Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 29th February 2016 (Pages 9 - 14)
  - (a) To receive and note the minutes
  - (b) To consider any recommendations contained within the minutes
5. Recommendations from the Meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 21st March 2016 (Pages 15 - 18)  
  
To consider an extract from the Minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 21st March 2016, in relation to the Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group.
6. Report of the Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group (Pages 19 - 56)

7. Asset of Community Value Application - The Cross Inn, Finstall (Pages 57 - 74)
8. Asset of Community Value Application - Blackwell Methodist Church Hall, Greenhill, Blackwell (Pages 75 - 86)
9. To consider any other business, details of which have been notified to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services prior to the commencement of the meeting and which the Chairman, by reason of special circumstances, considers to be of so urgent a nature that it cannot wait until the next meeting

K. DICKS  
Chief Executive

Parkside  
Market Street  
BROMSGROVE  
Worcestershire  
B61 8DA

24th March 2016

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE CABINET

24TH FEBRUARY 2016 AT 4.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. A. Sherrey (Leader), C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader),  
G. N. Denaro, R. L. Dent, R. J. Laight and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillors H. J. Jones and C. A. Hotham

Officers: Mr K. Dicks, Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs C. Felton, Mrs S. Sellers, Mrs  
S. Jones and Ms R. Cole

84/15 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

85/15 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no Declarations of Interest on this occasion.

86/15 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd February 2016 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 3rd February 2016 be approved as a correct record.

87/15 **REPORT AND RECOMMENDATIONS OF THE INDEPENDENT REMUNERATION PANEL**

The Cabinet considered the report and recommendations of the Independent Remuneration Panel. Cabinet were requested to recommend acceptance or otherwise of the IRP report to Council and similarly to recommend a Members' Allowances Scheme for 2016-17 arising from this.

The Portfolio Holder for Finance referred to the work of the IRP in producing their report and expressed thanks to the Panel for this.

Having had regard to the report and recommendations of the IRP it was

**RECOMMENDED:**

- (1) that the recommended basic allowance of £4250 be not agreed and this Council continue to pay a basic allowance of £4326;

- (2) that the multipliers recommended by the IRP for Special Responsibility Allowances be agreed, with the exception of :
  - the Deputy Leader's Allowance remains at 2;
  - the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny Board remains at 1.3;
  - the Chairman of Planning Committee remains at 1.3
- (3) that the IRP's recommendations relating to travel, subsistence and dependent carer's allowances be agreed;
- (4) that the Council's Members' Allowances Scheme be updated to take account of the decisions at (i), (ii) and (iii) above;
- (5) that the IRP's recommendation relating to allowances for Parish Councils be noted.

88/15

## **MEDIUM TERM FINANCIAL PLAN 2016/17 - 2018/19**

Members considered revisions to the Medium Term Financial Plan 2016/17 – 2018/19 in respect of that which had been previously reported to Cabinet on 3rd February 2016.

The Executive Director Finance and Resources referred to the final grant allocation which had been notified to the Council on 9th February 2016. This now included a transitional grant allocation of £118k for 2016/17 and £114k for 2017/18 to partially offset the impact of the reduction in Revenue Support Grant. It was noted that it was proposed that this funding be used to reduce the amount required from reserves to support the budget shortfall in 2016/17.

The Executive Director Finance and Resources also drew attention to the flexibility given to Shire District Councils to increase Council Tax by £5 per Band D equivalent property without the requirement to hold a referendum. The income generated from the £5 charge would be approximately £43k. It was proposed that this is implemented for 2016/17 and the additional income used to reduce the amount required from reserves to support the budget shortfall in 2016/17.

Attention was also drawn to the further information which was likely to be available later in the year in relation to the Business Rates Retention Scheme. In addition there was a consultation paper on potential changes to the New Homes Bonus Scheme.

The revised recommendations to Council would bring together the recommendations from Cabinet on 3rd February (amended where appropriate) and the latest recommendations including the Council Tax resolutions and the Council's Pay Policy.

The Executive Director Finance and Resources drew Members' attention to amended Schedules 1 and 2 to the Council Tax Resolutions Report.

Following discussion it was

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24th February 2016

## **RECOMMENDED:**

- (1) that the fees and charges for 2016/17 (and garden waste for 2017/18) as detailed in appendix 1 (to the report to Cabinet on 3rd February 2016 ) be approved;
- (2) that the savings and additional income for 2016/17 of £401k as detailed in appendix 3 (to the report to Cabinet on 3rd February 2016 ) be approved;
- (3) that the unavoidable pressures for 2016/17 of £507k as detailed in appendix 4 to the report to Cabinet on 3rd February 2016) be approved;
- (4) that the Capital bids for 2016/17 of £280k as detailed in appendix 5 (to the report to Cabinet on 3rd February 2016) be approved;
- (5) that the payment of the Parish Council grant for 2016/17 of £13,800 be approved;
- (6) that the release from reserves of £849k in 2016/17 be approved;\*
- (7) that the increase in Council tax by £5 (2.5%) per Band D equivalent for 2016/17 be approved;\*
- (8) that the Pay Policy (attached as appendix 1 to the report to 24th February 2016) be approved; and
- (9) that the Council Tax Resolutions included at appendix 2 (to the report to Cabinet on 24th February 2016) be approved.

\*Recommendations from 3rd February 2016 Cabinet meeting which are changed by the report to 24th February 2016.

The meeting closed at 4.22 p.m.

Chairman

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## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE CABINET

2ND MARCH 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors M. A. Sherrey (Leader), C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader),  
G. N. Denaro, R. L. Dent, R. J. Laight and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillors M. Glass and P.L. Thomas

Officers: Mr K. Dicks, Ms S. Hanley, Ms S. Morgan, Mrs S. Sellers, Mr D.  
Allen, Mr D. Riley and Ms R. Cole

89/15 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

90/15 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest on this occasion.

91/15 **RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD  
MEETING ON 29TH FEBRUARY 2016**

It was noted that there were no recommendations from the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting on 29th February 2016 for consideration by Cabinet. The minutes would be included on the next Cabinet agenda.

92/15 **LOCAL COUNCIL TAX SUPPORT SCHEME 2017/18**

The Cabinet considered a report on a range of options which could be included in a public consultation on the Council Tax Support Scheme for 2017/18. The outcome of the consultation would help to inform the development of a draft scheme for 2017/18. The report set out the background to the requirement for each Council to design its own Council Tax Support Scheme which replaced Council Tax Benefit in 2013. The Council was under a duty to undertake consultation on proposed changes to the Scheme and this was a pre-requisite of the Scheme being changed.

Members were reminded that with effect from April 2015 support had been capped at 80% of Council Tax liability for all working age claimants. The Council had implemented a Hardship Fund in order to support the most vulnerable and to provide transitional support where there was exceptional hardship as a result of the changes. As at 31st January 2016, a total of £12,141 had been awarded from the fund and 345 customers provided with additional support through the Hardship Assessment Scheme.

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2nd March 2016

It was noted that the full cost of the administration of the Council Tax Support Scheme were carried by this Council and therefore there was an incentive to lower the costs of administering the Scheme as far as possible. The proposals being put forward for consultation were not intended to reduce the overall cost of support provided to residents but to bring the scheme into line with national changes to welfare support and to reduce the administrative burden wherever possible.

Members considered the areas contained in the proposals for consultation and raised a number of issues including:

- the importance of the Scheme remaining “in line” with other benefits such as Universal Credit;
- the demographics of the customers who had received support to date;
- the response level in respect of previous consultations and the importance of ensuring there was full consultation;
- the timetable for the consultation;
- the importance of “uprating” various allowances that are taken into account in assessing support in line with the Secretary of State’s annual announcement;
- the issue of Child Maintenance Disregards and the duty to mitigate against child poverty.

Members were mindful of the Council’s Strategic Purposes, particularly in relation to financial inclusion. The Chief Executive referred to potential workshop sessions for Members to help with the understanding of what the data was showing, which together with results of the consultation would help to inform discussion.

## **RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the options as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be included in the public consultation in order to inform potential changes to the Council’s Council tax Support Scheme for 2017/18 and/or later years;
- (b) that the Head of Customer Access and Support be authorised to consult on the options set out in Appendix 1 to the report;
- (c) that the Head of Customer Access and Support be requested to report back to the Cabinet on the outcome of the consultation and any proposals for changes to the scheme , for further consideration and resolution by the Cabinet, to consult on a draft scheme;
- (d) that further to the outcome of the Cabinet’s decision on the draft regulations, the Head of Customer Access and Financial Support be authorised to carry out the statutory consultation required on the draft scheme; and
- (e) that the final scheme be submitted to Cabinet to make recommendations to Council to allow for the necessary regulations to be published by 31st January 2017.



93/15

## **HOMELESSNESS GRANT FUNDING APPROVAL FOR HOMELESSNESS PREVENTION AND TO SUPPORT HOMELESS FAMILIES FOR 2016/17**

The Cabinet considered a report on proposals to award Homelessness Grant to specific schemes to support homeless families and prevent homelessness within the District in 2016/17.

Members were aware that funding reductions made by the County Council to housing related support were now having an impact on financial position of local service providers.

The Strategic Housing Manager reported that discussions had been held with partners and they had been made aware that funding was likely to be reducing for the forthcoming financial year. The discussions had been largely constructive with partners understanding the changes in the financial picture and looking at alternative ways in which services can be delivered.

It was noted that the table at 3.5 which set out the proposed allocations for 2016/17, also contained an unallocated sum of £16,258.

Members were aware of the recent decision of the Council's Overview and Scrutiny Board to undertake a short sharp review entitled "Preventing Homelessness in Bromsgrove." It was noted that it may be that recommendations which required some funding to implement could arise from that review which the Council would wish to support.

In addition the cessation of County Council funding for the Emergency Living Fund, would mean the fund was supported only by the District Council (at a cost of £30k). There may prove to be a need therefore to provide additional resources or services to enable customers of all tenures to avoid homelessness.

### **RESOLVED:**

- (a) that the grant funded initiatives of £108,742 set out in section 3.5 of the report, as recommended by the Strategic Housing Manager, be approved to receive funding from the Homelessness Grant for 2016/17; and
- (b) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Community Services following consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Strategic Housing to use £16,258 unallocated Homelessness Grant during the year, or make further adjustments as necessary, to ensure full utilisation of the Homelessness Grant for 2016/17 in support of existing or new schemes.

94/15

## **FINANCE MONITORING REPORT - QUARTER 3 2015/16**

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's financial position for Revenue and Capital for the period April – December 2015.

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2nd March 2016

In relation to the Revenue budget it was noted that there was an overall underspend of £239k with a increase in this projected to the end of the financial year. It was reported that this was due to a number of factors including additional income generation, vacancy management and a planned reduction in non essential spend to support the financial pressures facing the Council.

In relation to the Capital budget it was reported that the significant projected underspend was due mainly to the deferment of the vehicle replacement programme until the Place Team implementation was stabilised and to the Dolphin Centre which was originally anticipated to be undertaken in 2015/16. It was intended to carry forward the underspend to 2016/17.

The Financial Services Manager drew the attention of Members to the detailed figures contained in appendix 1 to the report.

Members discussed car parking income/costs , including a renegotiation of the contract with Wychavon District Council and issues relating to the cesspool service which had lead to a variance in the budget.

Following discussion it was

**RESOLVED** that the current financial position on Revenue and Capital as detailed in the report be noted.

The meeting closed at 6.42 p.m.

Chairman

## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

29<sup>TH</sup> FEBRUARY 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors L. C. R. Mallett (Chairman), K.J. May (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, C. J. Bloore, S. R. Colella, R. J. Deeming, M. Glass and S. A. Webb

Observers: Councillor C. B. Taylor

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mrs. R. Bamford, Ms. D. Poole, Ms L Wood, Ms P. Smith, Ms. A. Scarce and Ms. J. Bayley

#### 104/15 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE AND NAMED SUBSTITUTES

Apologies for absence were received on behalf of Councillors S. J. Baxter, B. T. Cooper, R. D. Smith and P. L. Thomas. The Board was advised that Councillor S. Webb was attending as a substitute for Councillor Cooper.

#### 105/15 DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST AND WHIPPING ARRANGEMENTS

There were no declarations of interest or whipping arrangements.

#### 106/15 MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on Monday 18th January 2016 were submitted.

**RESOLVED** that the minutes of the Overview and Scrutiny Board meeting held on 18th January 2016 be approved as a correct record.

#### 107/15 STAFF SURVEY - UPDATE

The Training and Development Advisor presented an update on the staff survey. During the delivery of this presentation the following matters were highlighted for Members' consideration:

- A new edition of the staff survey was due to be issued in April.
- The majority of the questions remained the same (with a small number being amended to allow easier interpretation of the data) as those which had featured in the previous survey to enable the Human Resources team to compare the data from the responses.

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- Lessons had been learned from the previous survey and a separate survey focusing on mental health, about how to maximise the number of completed questionnaires received.
- There had been some problems experienced with the previous survey in terms of encouraging staff to complete paper copies. To address this personalised letters would be sent to those staff in receipt of a paper copy.
- Staff had been updated in respect of the actions that had been taken in response to various concerns raised in the survey.
- The responses provided to the new survey would enable the Human Resources team to assess the impact that various actions had had in terms of addressing staff concerns.
- It was anticipated that the data would be reviewed more quickly than previously and support would be provided by the Policy Team which had expertise in respect of recording and analysing data.
- Once the feedback had been analysed a communications plan would be devised to ensure that the outcomes were reported back to staff in an appropriate manner.

Following presentation of the report a number of matters were discussed in further detail:

- The need for both qualitative and quantitative data to be analysed in completed surveys in a constructive manner.
- The reasons for the delays in issuing a second survey to staff. Members were advised that initially there had been an intention to include questions about mental health and equalities issues and, whilst these would not now be included in the final version, this had caused some delays.
- The Board sought assurance that the data arising from completed surveys would be shared with Members in a timely manner. Officers confirmed that it would be possible, but some detail would need to remain restricted in order not to compromise staff confidentiality.
- The action that would be taken to encourage more staff to complete the survey than the previous version. Members were advised that Human resources would be liaising directly with service managers in order to encourage staff to complete the surveys.
- It was noted that a one third response rate for a staff survey was good.
- The role of Human Resources in developing and administering the survey. Members were assured that external consultants would not be involved.
- The potential to make completion of a survey compulsory for staff. The Board was informed that ideally voluntary participation was preferable.
- The improvements that had been made in terms of communicating with staff over IT problems.
- The use of an IT dashboard to inform staff about the number of IT technicians available at any one time to resolve IT problems.

- The number of staff who regularly accessed and used the data recorded on the measures dashboard.
- The continuing development of the skills matrix and the likely timeframes in which use of the matrix would be extended across all teams. The Board was advised that the matrix was being piloted in Customer Access and Financial Support Services. In the long-term the aim would be to use the matrix to develop a training programme which addressed gaps in staff skills.
- The time taken to develop an induction process for new staff.
- The extent to which Human Resources worked with other local authorities to share ideas in terms of staff training. The Board was informed that the Council worked closely with other local authorities, particularly other Councils in the West Midlands.
- The progress that had been made in terms of enabling staff to report concerns about the working environment.

**RESOLVED** that the report be noted.

108/15

## **PLANNING BACKLOG DATA**

The Head of Planning and Regeneration presented a brief report updating the status with regard to the backlog of major planning applications covering the period 1st January 2014 to 31st December 2015. Members were advised that significant progress had been made as a result of a lot of hard work by Planning Officers. Consequently the Council's Planning Department was no longer under designation.

Following presentation of the report the following matters were discussed:

- The number of major applications anticipated in the foreseeable future and what impact this might have on the backlog.
- The likelihood that a planning application for 2,800 homes to be built in Foxlydiate (on the borders with Redditch) would be received shortly with the need to process this application in 6 weeks.
- The appropriate frequency for update reports on the planning application backlog data, following the removal of the Council's designation status.
- The amount of time required to produce the report. Members were advised that the data contained within the report had to be provided to the government on a quarterly basis so could be easily generated for Members' consideration.
- The value of officer time being allocated to presenting the report at meetings of the Board.
- The potential to continue to receive the reports on a quarterly basis with officers only invited to attend meetings where Members requested additional clarification.

**RESOLVED** that

- (a) The Planning Backlog Data report continue to be provided for the consideration of the Board on a quarterly basis; and
- (b) Officers only be invited to attend meetings of the Board to speak on these reports as and when Members identify that further information is required.

109/15

## **HOMELESSNESS IN BROMSGROVE - SHORT SHARP REVIEW**

The Board considered a report outlining the proposed terms of reference for the Homelessness in Bromsgrove Short, Sharp Review. These terms of reference had been discussed and endorsed by the group at its first meeting. Members were advised that the group was aiming to complete their review within 3 months. As there was no scheduled meeting due to take place in May 2016 the final report would be presented for the consideration of the Board on 27th June.

**RESOLVED** that the terms of reference for the Homelessness in Bromsgrove Short Sharp Review be noted.

110/15

## **EVENING & WEEKEND CAR PARKING TASK GROUP - VERBAL UPDATE**

Councillor K. J. May, Chairman of the Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group, provided a verbal update on the progress of the review. Members were advised that the group had conducted a survey which had involved consulting with 51 shops located on the High Street about car parking and the implications for the economic vitality of the town. Further interviews had been held with relevant Officers and the group had concluded their evidence gathering. An initial draft of the group's final report had been produced and this remained on track to be presented for the Board's consideration in March 2016. Councillor May expressed her thanks to the other members of the group, as well as the two Democratic Services Officers with lead responsibility for scrutiny, for their hard work on this review.

111/15

## **ACTION LIST**

The Board was reminded that a number of updates relating to items detailed in the Actions List had been circulated for Members' consideration since publication of the agenda. Further information on a number of points had been received that day and would be circulated electronically for Members' consideration. It was confirmed that the update on the Dolphin Centre would be provided at the meeting of the Board in April.

The Executive Director of Finance and Corporate Resources explained that the High Street Refurbishment Phase 2 report, scheduled on the Cabinet Work Programme for consideration on 2nd March, had been postponed. A new date for consideration of this report by the Cabinet would be scheduled so as to involve the Board through the pre-scrutiny process.

112/15 **CABINET WORK PROGRAMME**

Members considered the content of the Cabinet Work Programme for the period 1st March to 30th June 2016. No additional items, beyond those matters identified at previous meetings, were proposed as being suitable for pre-scrutiny.

113/15 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD WORK PROGRAMME**

The following matters were discussed during consideration of the Board's Work Programme:

a) Increasing Physical Activities in Worcestershire Task Group

Members were informed that it was unlikely that the group's final report would be available to view until June 2016 at the earliest. It was understood that no meetings of the group had taken place since December 2015 and therefore no updates could be provided on the progress of the review. However, following the previous meeting the Chairman of the Task Group, Councillor R. Udall, had confirmed he would be willing to attend a meeting of the Board to present the group's final report.

b) Reports to be Received Annually by the Board

Officers advised that there were 4 reports received annually by the Board which had not been considered by Members in 2015/16:

- Sickness Absence Performance.
- Making Experiences Count.
- Summary of Environmental Enforcement.
- Write Off of Debts.

Due to the length of time that had passed since the Board had previously received an update on sickness absence Members agreed that this report should be prioritised for consideration in April 2016. Members concurred that the other three items would be suitable to consider in June.

c) March 2016

The Chairman confirmed that he would not be present at the following meeting of the Board. He thanked the Vice Chairman, Councillor May, in advance for committing to chair in his absence.

The meeting closed at 6.44 p.m.

# Agenda Item 4

Overview and Scrutiny Board  
29th February 2016

Chairman



## BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

### MEETING OF THE OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD

21<sup>ST</sup> MARCH 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors K.J. May (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, S. J. Baxter, C. J. Bloore, B. T. Cooper, M. Glass, P.L. Thomas, M. Thompson and S. A. Webb

Observers: Councillor S. P. Shannon and Councillor M. A. Sherrey

Officers: Ms. J. Pickering, Mr. G. Revans, Ms. B. Houghton, Mr D. Rischmiller, Ms. J. Bayley and Ms. A. Scarce

### MINUTE EXTRACT

118/15

### EVENING & WEEKEND CAR PARKING TASK GROUP - FINAL REPORT

Councillor K. J. May, Chairman of the Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group, delivered a presentation outlining the findings of the review. During this presentation she highlighted the following matters for Members' consideration:

- The first scrutiny review of car parking had taken place in 2007. Since that date 10 further reviews of the subject had been undertaken.
- The group had interviewed a range of expert witnesses including 51 retailers, the Town Centre Forum, relevant Portfolio Holders and appropriate Officers.
- Members had discovered that 92 per cent of retailers were not aware that free evening car parking was available in the town.
- Car parking charges had often been regarded as a useful source of Council revenue.
- However, the group had come to the conclusion at an early stage that a key role of car parking was to contribute to the economic development of the town.
- For this reason at the end of 2015 the group had asked to extend their deadline to provide time to explore weekend parking options alongside evening car parking arrangements.
- Members had discovered that there was no joined up thinking in respect of car parking.
- The group was proposing that in order to address this and to enhance the contribution of car parking to economic development in the town the Council needed to formulate a clear economic development strategy.

# Agenda Item 5

Overview and Scrutiny Board  
21st March 2016

- The witnesses consulted by the group were keen for a strategy to be developed and for partners to be engaged in the development of this plan.
- Whilst the strategy was being developed the group was suggesting that free evening car parking should be retained.

Following the presentation of the report Members discussed a number of points in detail:

- The contribution that external consultants could make in terms of identifying the long-term strategic parking needs of the town.
- The extent to which the Council could afford to pay external consultants and whether this could be met from existing budgets.
- The role of the Economic Development Unit in formulating a clear Economic Development Strategy. Officers advised that this work would be undertaken by Council staff rather than consultants.
- The potential loss of 130 car parking spaces in the town as a result of development work and the impact that this might have on the local economy.
- The costs of providing free evening car parking, with £60,000 per annum allocated in the budget for this purpose.
- The potential for further businesses to open on Sundays and the extent to which changes to car parking arrangements could incentivise more retailers to open on this day.
- The lack of sufficient data or a business case to enable Members to determine whether the free evening car parking trial had been value for money.
- The need for data to be gathered and a clear business case to be developed in advance of any future trials being undertaken.
- The fact that many local authorities had developed car parking and economic development strategies.
- The age of the car parking machines used by the Council and the need to replace these with machines that would have a longer lifespan.
- The potential to extend pay on foot arrangements as proposed during previous car parking reviews.
- The potential for the proposed Economic Development Strategy to help the Council to support the strategic purpose: help me to run a successful business.

Prior to the vote the Board discussed the order in which the first 2 recommendations detailed in the group's report should be implemented. There was general consensus that car parking arrangements needed to support the Economic Development Strategy for the town centre. Members therefore suggested that the external consultants should only be invited to review this role once the strategy had been finalised. For this reason the wording of recommendation 2 was altered to begin "Having formulated the Economic Development Strategy it is recommended that an external expert be engaged by the Council..."

**RECOMMENDED** that

- (1) The Council needs to formulate a clear Economic Development Strategy that includes car parking as soon as possible, whilst considering the following key features of any such strategy:
  - (a) Ensuring that car parking arrangements are managed in accordance with the interests of the local economy;
  - (b) Working with partners in business and retail to develop the Economic Development Strategy that includes parking options and tariffs that encourage customers to visit Bromsgrove; and
  - (c) Ensure car parking arrangements support the Council's Economic Development Strategy.
  
- (2) Having formulated the Economic Development Strategy it is recommended that an external expert be engaged by the Council, with a clear remit of what the Council wishes to achieve, it is suggested that such a consultant would need to consult with the following Council officers/Members:
  - (a) Economic Development Team
  - (b) Environmental Services Team
  - (d) Relevant Portfolio Holders
  - (e) Members of the Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group
  - (f) Local businesses and retailers.
  
- (3) Prior to any further trials (of any nature) being agreed and carried out any necessary data should be collected in order to have appropriate comparative data and information available to ensure that any such trial can be measured successfully.
  
- (4) Until the introduction of a strategy the current parking charges and concessions should be maintained (including the continuation of free evening car parking).

The meeting closed at 7.07 p.m.

Chairman

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### CABINET

6th April 2016

#### EVENING AND WEEKEND CAR PARKING TASK GROUP

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Peter Whittaker
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Councillor Whittaker was consulted during the review, though was not consulted about the content of this covering report.
Relevant Head of Service for Overview and Scrutiny	Claire Felton – Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Ward Councillor Consulted	All Ward Councillors were invited to join the Task Group.
Non-Key Decision	

#### 1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

The purpose of this report is to allow Cabinet to consider the findings and recommendations of the attached Overview and Scrutiny Board report.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

##### 2.1 The Cabinet is requested to:

- (a) consider the attached Overview and Scrutiny Board report (Appendix 1) and the recommendations contained within it;
- (b) to either agree, amend or reject each of the recommendations contained in the report;
- (c) provide an Executive Response to the Overview and Scrutiny Board report and recommendations, which may include an Action Plan to summarise how and when each of the agreed recommendations will be implemented.
- (d) request the relevant Portfolio Holder in consultation with appropriate officers to indicate the expected implementation dates, as appropriate.

#### 3. KEY ISSUES

##### Financial Implications

- 3.1 The estimated Financial and Resource implications of the recommendations are detailed in the Summary of Recommendations of the appended report.

##### Legal Implications

- 3.2 These are detailed within the attached report.

## **CABINET**

6th April 2016

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### **Service/Operation Implications**

- 3.3 The Overview and Scrutiny Board agreed to launch a short sharp review of Evening Car Parking in August 2015. At the agreement of the Board the scope of the review was extended to encompass weekend car parking arrangements in November 2015.
- 3.4 Full details of the Task Group's investigations are detailed in the attached report.
- 3.5 The report and recommendations were agreed by the Overview and Scrutiny Board at its meeting on 21<sup>st</sup> March 2015 and referred to Cabinet for consideration.

### **Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

3.6 N/A

## **4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

N/A

## **5. APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group final report

## **6. BACKGROUND PAPERS**

See attached report for details.

### **AUTHOR OF REPORT**

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# **EVENING & WEEKEND CAR PARKING TASK GROUP FINAL REPORT**



**March 2016**



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District Council  
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## **MEMBERSHIP OF THE TASK GROUP**



**Councillor Karen May (Chairman)**



Cllr Margaret Buxton



Cllr Malcolm Glass



Cllr Sean Shannon



Cllr Shirley Webb

### **SUPPORTING OFFICER DETAILS**

Amanda Scarce – Democratic Services Officer  
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## **Foreword from the Chairman**

The Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group, established on 30<sup>th</sup> September 2015, has held fifteen meetings at which they have interviewed both internal and external witnesses; in addition to this, Members of the Task Group have attended a Town Team Meeting and visited fifty one retail Outlets in the Town Centre.

I would like to formally thank everyone that has participated in this process; your input has been highly valued. I also extend my thanks to Councillors Margaret Buxton, Malcolm Glass, Sean Shannon and Shirley Webb for their hard work and commitment to this Task Group.

I would like to express special thanks to Amanda Scarce, Democratic Services Officer, for her administrative support and efficiency throughout the Task Group's investigations and Jess Bayley for her administrative support.

I hope that the information provided and the recommendations made will enable the Cabinet to develop a clear strategy for Car Parking in Bromsgrove that aids the Economic development of our Town.

**Councillor Karen May**  
**Chairman of the Evening & Weekend Car Parking Task Group**

## Summary of Recommendations

After consideration of the evidence available and interviewing witnesses the Task Group have proposed the following recommendations, supporting evidence can be found under the relevant chapters within the main body of this report.

### Chapter 1

<p><b>Recommendation 1</b></p> <p><i>The Council needs to formulate a clear Economic Development strategy that includes car parking as soon as possible, whilst considering the following key features of any such strategy:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) Ensuring that car parking arrangements are managed in accordance with the interests of the local economy.</i></li> <li><i>b) Working with partners in business and retail to develop the Economic Development Strategy that includes car parking options and tariffs that encourage customers to visit Bromsgrove.</i></li> <li><i>c) Ensure car parking arrangements support the Council's Economic Development Strategy.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Recommendation 2</b></p> <p><i>Having formulated the Economic Development Strategy it is recommended that an external expert be engaged by the Council, with a clear remit of what the Council wishes to achieve, it is suggested that such a consultant would need to consult with the following Council officers/Members:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li><i>a) Economic Development Team</i></li> <li><i>b) Environmental Services Team</i></li> <li><i>c) Relevant Portfolio Holders</i></li> <li><i>d) Members of the Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group</i></li> <li><i>e) Local businesses and retailers.</i></li> </ul>
<p><b>Financial Implications for recommendations 1 &amp; 2:</b>            Cost of external consultant, together with any costs (currently unquantifiable) dependent upon the implementation of a strategy.</p>
<p><b>Legal Implications for recommendations 1&amp; 2:</b>            None - save that any changes to the operation of Council run car parks resulting from this recommendation would be likely to require the Car Parking Order to be updated.</p>
<p><b>Resource Implications 1 &amp; 2:</b>            Support from the Economic Development Unit and Wychavon District Council who administer the Council's car parks.</p>

## Chapter 2

### **Recommendation 3**

*Prior to any further trials (of any nature) being agreed and carried out any necessary data should be collected in order to have appropriate comparative data and information available to ensure that any such trial can be measured successfully.*

#### **Financial Implications:**

None

#### **Legal Implications:**

None

#### **Resource Implications:**

Any additional resources would be met from within existing resources/officer time.

## Chapter 4

### **Recommendation 4**

*Until the introduction of a strategy the current parking charges and concessions should be maintained (including the continuation of free evening car parking).*

#### **Financial Implications:**

The estimated cost of free evening car park is £60k and this amount has already been accounted for within the budget process for the forthcoming year.

#### **Legal Implications:**

None, although Members should note that the first 12 months of free evening parking arose from a Member decision to implement this as a “trial”. On the basis that the arrangement was a “trial” the car parking order was not amended to remove evening fees. A member decision to extend the trial would provide clarity as regards the car parking order.

#### **Resource Implications:**

Any additional resources would be met from within existing resources/officer time.

## **Background Information**

At its meeting held on 24<sup>th</sup> August 2015 the Overview and Scrutiny Board considered a topic proposal entitled Review of Evening Car Parking which had been submitted by Councillors Karen May and Luke Mallett, the aim of investigation was to assist officers in evaluating the success of the trial of free evening car parking which had been implemented in February 2015, with the possibility of recommendations being made for future car parking arrangements.

During discussions at that meeting Members were advised that a Task Group review of evening car parking would investigate use of the car parks during the evenings and the impact that this had had on the night time economy. It was envisaged that Members would consult with both local businesses and residents to ascertain the impact that free parking had had on the local economy and whether this free parking provision represented value for money for local tax payers. A review would also explore the potential for alternative parking arrangements to be introduced in the town. Following discussion the Board agreed that a Task Group review of this subject would provide information which could help the Cabinet when reviewing the outcomes of the trial and it was on this basis that Members agreed that the Task Group should be launched. It was also agreed that a report would be brought back to the Board in January 2016 before being presented to the Cabinet at its February 2016 meeting, which would be in time for the final budget setting process to be completed.

Currently, the Council has 1,238 car parking spaces (plus 81 disabled spaces), available with various types of payment methods and systems. The Task Group concentrated its investigations on the pay and display car parks within the Town Centre, where the free evening car parking after 7.00 pm was applied.

The Task Group held its first meeting on 30<sup>th</sup> September when it discussed how best to carry out its investigations. A number of key witnesses were identified together with data which was requested from the appropriate sources. It quickly became apparent from the work already carried out at the early stages of the investigations that an assessment of the success of the introduction of the free evening car parking was difficult to measure and any recommendations would have to be based on assumptions and anecdotal evidence.

This led the Members of the Group to unanimously agree that car parking as a whole needed to be reviewed in order to widen the area of benefit to residents and contribute to economic growth for the local traders and the district as a whole. The Task Group was mindful that part of the regeneration of the Town Centre will impact on car parking provision and believe that it would be prudent to undertake a full review at this time in order to ensure

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that going forward the Council's car parks meet the needs of both visitors to the Town Centre and the traders.

The Task Group therefore requested, at the Overview & Scrutiny Board meeting on 23<sup>rd</sup> November, an amendment to its terms of reference together with an extension of the time to complete its work. Following discussion the Board agreed to amend the Task Group's remit to cover Evening and Weekend Car Parking and to extend its timescale for completion to March 2016, with an interim report being produced in January 2016.

This report follows on from that interim report and contains the Group's recommendations together with supporting evidence and areas which the Group would like to be noted for consideration in the future.

The Group have held 15 meetings where they have interviewed both internal and external witnesses. They have also been provided with a vast amount of data, including comparative data from other local authorities, which they have considered during a number of meetings.

## Chapter 1

### **What is the Council's Strategic Approach to its Car Parks?**

At an early stage of its investigation the Task Group asked the question what was the Council's strategic approach to its car parks. From all those witnesses interviewed, who were also asked this question, there was no definitive answer. It therefore quickly became clear to the Task Group that this was something which needed to be addressed in order for the Council to move forward in a number of areas. The Task Group all agreed that there were two elements to the purpose of car parks within Bromsgrove – an income stream, which was important in the current financial climate and when difficult decisions needed to be made following the continued budget cuts all local authorities received from Central Government, but also there was an opportunity for car parks to play a part in the economic development of the Town Centre.

It was these two areas which the Task Group concentrated on during its investigation and whilst questioning a number of witnesses. Each witness was asked what they felt was the role of car parks and what they believed was the Council's strategic approach to car parking. The Task Group received a unanimous response which clearly showed that there was not a strategic approach and that this was something which needed to be addressed. From those discussions with Officers and Portfolio Holders in particular, the Task Group have concluded that a strategy needs to be put in place which supports both the economic development of the town centre, but also continues to provide the Council with a source of income, although it should be noted that this may not be at the current level.

Once the Task Group had recognised the need for a strategy it considered a number of strategies which were already in place at other local authorities. The 2 main ones considered were Lichfield and Stafford, second and twelfth in the list of the Council's "nearest neighbours" (from the CIPFA website who provide performance information for public services) which are selected based on a number of indicators including population, output area density, tax-base per head of population and retail premises per 1,000 population to name but a few. Lichfield was particularly useful as it was in draft form and had recently been considered by its Overview and Scrutiny Committee. Each strategy had key features which ranged from achieving an overall reduction in traffic level to reinforcing business and visitor confidence.

The Task Group also considered a document entitled "Re-Think! Parking on the High Street". This had been prepared by the Association of Town and City Management in conjunction with a number of other organisations including the British Parking Association, which covered a number of key areas including whether there was a link between town centre prosperity and car parking provision. This particular section of the report highlighted a number of areas which could influence the success of a town centre. With reference to car parking, it also highlighted the importance of robust data



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being available. This is an area which the Task Group have made particular reference to in the Chapter 2 of this report as it came up against significant problems in being provided with accurate information in respect of both financial and usage data.

From the information obtained during the Task Group's investigation it is clear that the formulation of a Car Parking Strategy needs to be given careful consideration to ensure that the document provides both clear guidance as to the purpose of the car parks and meets the needs of the Council. In order for this to be done the Task Group have detailed in recommendation 1 the main areas which it believes this strategy should cover. This is not a definitive list and is something which the Cabinet would need to give careful consideration to before taking this forward. With the passage of time it is likely that those key priorities will need to be reviewed and the Task Group discussed other areas which could be included, for example encouraging the use of sustainable transport, infrastructure improvements and addressing the adverse effects of car pollution on the environment (it has been documented in previous Task Group investigations that Bromsgrove has four Air Quality Management Areas (AQMAs).

Recommendation 2 suggests that the use of an external consultant may be the most appropriate way forward, as the link between car parking and the economic development of a town centre is a complicated, specialist area. This would also ensure that the strategy it produced was based on sound supportive evidence. However, the recommendation comes with a caveat as it is important that when engaging consultants the Council gives a clear steer as to the purpose of the work it wishes the consultants to carry out and what it wishes to achieve. The inclusion of a number of people that should be consulted is again not exhaustive but merely a steer towards the areas which need to be included. The suggestion that the Task Group Members should be consulted is due to the amount of work they have carried out during this investigation and the substantial amount of knowledge which has been gained.

In the last few months Cabinet have already considered two reports in respect of the town centre, the first was in respect of the Council's future economic priorities and the Task Group agreed that to some extent car parking could help support a number of these. The second report which was considered in November 2015 was in respect of Bromsgrove centres management and the involvement of the North Worcestershire Economic Development and Regeneration (NWEDR) in hosting a new Bromsgrove Centres Management function on behalf of the Council that would cover the Town Centre and outlying centres and villages. This included the appointment of a Town Centre Manager. The Task Group believe this role will be pivotal in taking forward the economic development of the Town Centre and the Council's priorities for it, with the support of the Car parking Team.

Finally, and probably one of the most important areas which has come to the attention of the Task Group is that there needs to be co-ordination and "joined up" thinking between the Car Parking Team and the Economic Development

Team. It is essential that the two teams work together in order for the car parks to be fit for purpose going forward. There are a significant number of changes which will take place over the coming months and years which will impact on the number of car parking spaces within the town centre and it is important that the Council ensures that the quality of spaces and the cost of parking meet the needs of an ever changing town centre and assists with the growth of its economic development.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

## **Recommendation 1**

*The Council needs to formulate a clear Economic Development strategy that includes car parking as soon as possible, whilst considering the following key features of any such strategy:*

- a) Ensuring that car parking arrangements are managed in accordance with the interests of the local economy.*
- b) Working with partners in business and retail to develop the Economic Development Strategy that includes car parking options and tariffs that encourage customers to visit Bromsgrove.*
- c) Ensure car parking arrangements support the Council's Economic Development Strategy.*

## **Recommendation 2**

*Whilst formulating such a strategy it is recommended that an external expert be engaged by the Council, with a clear remit of what the Council wishes to achieve, it is suggested that such a consultant would need to consult with the following Council officers/Members:*

- a) Economic Development Team*
- b) Environmental Services Team*
- c) Relevant Portfolio Holders*
- d) Members of the Evening and Weekend Car Parking Task Group*
- e) Local businesses and retailers.*

## Chapter 2

### **Financial Information and Usage Data**

Whilst this Chapter appears to be relatively short, the information provided in it is vitally important moving forward.

The Task Group received information from a number of officers and Portfolio Holders and was clear in the information, both financial and statistically, which it would need in order to be able to evaluate whether the free evening car parking had been a success and more importantly, be able to establish whether it had been value for money. Unfortunately, it soon became clear that it would be nigh on impossible to establish either of these critical points. From the information received it was clear that the introduction of the free evening car parking had been taken prior to any work being carried out which would enable it to be monitored or its success measured. The difficulty in monitoring it had been highlighted in the Cabinet report and officers had attempted in the following months to gauge whether there was increased use of car parking simply by asking the parking enforcement officers to count the number of vehicles at a set team one evening a week. The Task Group received these figures, but do not believe that this data is sufficient to measure the success of the scheme.

The Task Group believe that it would have been possible to calculate the number of vehicles which had used the car parks for free after 7 p.m. if the machines had been calibrated to produce a ticket when no fee had been charged. This would have gone some way to producing some solid evidence that would have shown, if compared to the previous year's ticket sales, whether the car park usage had increased.

Furthermore, the ticket machines currently used are of an age (some five years old) where the Council may wish to consider replacing them, this was highlighted during the recent move of the Council's IT server, as since September 2015 there has been ongoing problems with the linkage of software to that server. Due to the age of the machines, the manufacturers will no longer support them with a maintenance agreement, which has possibly led to the problems continuing to be unresolved when the Task Group last meet with officers in early February 2016. Without these added problems, the extraction of data remains a lengthy process, following changes which the Council put in place a number of years ago. This was following a number of complaints from residents about the machines not giving change; the machines were configured to add on a time credit in 10 minute blocks. To clarify, you therefore need to run the appropriate programme at 10 minute intervals over the period you wish to measure, in order to extrapolate specific data. This is a lengthy and time consuming process.

The Task Group have received data in respect of the financial impact to the Council, this has also been conflicting and the Task Group does not feel that it is able to use it as evidence within its report as it remains uncertain as to the

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exact cost to the Council. It is hoped that this will become clear at the end of the financial year, but the Task Group wish to highlight that this should not be the case and accurate information should be available for any particular area throughout the financial year.

Following its findings, the Task Group therefore strongly believe that any future trials that the Council undertake, should not be put in place until the appropriate data is available to allow for comparative data from previous years to be used and a mechanism put in place to allow the trial to be monitored as part of the ongoing process.

The Task Group therefore recommends the following:

<b>Recommendation 3</b>
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<i>Prior to any further trials (of any nature) being agreed and carried out any necessary data should be collected in order to have appropriate comparative data and information available to ensure that any such trial can be measured successfully.</i>
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## Chapter 3

### Summary of Consultations

At its first meeting the Task Group agreed that it was important to get feedback from both residents and traders in an attempt to gauge whether the introduction of free evening car parking had been a success. Initially a press release was issued, followed by an online questionnaire; there were two versions of this, one for residents and one for traders to complete. This was publicised through the Council's website and the Together Bromsgrove magazine, with a further press release being issued. However, when checking the local press it was found that a survey was also being carried out by the Bromsgrove High Street Forum. Members were not aware of this group and therefore made enquiries and invited a representative to a meeting to discuss their work and the aim of the questionnaire.

The Task Group also contacted and interviewed representatives from the Older People's Forum as they had in the past put forward topic proposals in respect of car parking on a number of occasions and had a keen interest in the topic. During the discussions a number of valid points were raised and given further consideration during the course of the Task Group's investigation.

The Task Group also made contact with the Town Team, a group of traders who met on a regular basis. Following a number of unsuccessful attempts to get a member of this group to attend a Task Group meeting, the Task Group attended a meeting of the Town Team in the Asda meeting rooms. This meeting was also attended by the Portfolio Holder for the Town Centre, who regularly met with the traders. The Task Group were disappointed with the number of traders who were in attendance at the particular meeting they attended and with the limited responses which were received from traders to its questionnaire. This led the Task Group to take to the streets and visit a number of traders to get their views on car parking and whether the free evening car parking had had a positive impact on trade.

This gave a total of three surveys (with a total number of responses from both traders and residents of 641) which were undertaken and the full results of each are details at Appendix 4. However, the Task Group would like to make the following observations:

### Results from the Task Group's Online Consultation

The Task Group were disappointed with the number of responses it received to this, particular from the local traders, but felt that this may have been due to the issue of the High Street Forum's survey, which had received considerable more publicity through both the press and a Facebook page the Forum uses. However it was interesting to see from the results that 71.26% of those residents who responded said that free evening car parking had brought them into the town centre more often. In respect of one of the subsidiary questions

it was noted bringing this forward to 6.00 p.m. would have been more popular. From its investigations of other authorities which provided free evening car parking, it was noted that in all cases free car parking commenced at 6.00 p.m. The introduction of a contactless payment system was also something which residents had highlighted and this will be discussed in more detail within the Charges and Concessions section of the report.

Traders felt the free evening car parking had little impact on them as it was mainly retail traders who had responded and it did not affect them. When asked about the option of free or concessionary Sunday car parking and whether this would encourage them to open the response was that people did not shop on a Sunday as there were few shops open and a 7 day trading week was not possible for small businesses.

## Results from Members Sample Survey of Shops

Members visited 51 traders from a number of different retail types, with nearly 30% of them being open on a Sunday. The two most interesting results from this survey were that just over 92% of those traders visited were not aware of free evening car parking and that some sort of concessionary car parking on a Sunday would not entice nearly 53% of them to consider opening on a Sunday.

## Analysis of the data received from the Bromsgrove High Street Forum's Online Survey

The Bromsgrove High Street Forum's survey received over 470 responses and the Task Group thank them for both their time in attending a meeting and providing the results for use within this report.

The survey contained 11 questions in total and the Task Group have used 8 in particular, which it felt most reflected the work it was carrying out. The questions provided multiple choice responses, which although useful the Task Group felt in some cases were particularly leading, for example when asked "what do you think about the cost of parking in Bromsgrove" one option was "it's too expensive" and not surprisingly over 65% felt that this was the case. It should be noted that the responses to questions 2 and 3 (see appendix 3) have also been grouped in line with the Task Group's questionnaire responses, so may be slightly different to those published by the Bromsgrove High Street Forum.

Again, the Task Group was both surprised and disappointed to see that nearly 41% of those responding were not aware of the availability of free evening car parking. A further point which was highlighted in this survey, and which will be discussed in more detail under the Charges and Concessions section of this report, was the use of contactless payment for car parking, which nearly 56% of respondents were interested in using.

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A number of the points raised from all these survey results will be discussed in more detail in the conclusion of this report which suggests areas that the Council may wish to give consideration to when making any decisions in respect of car parking in the future.

## Chapter 4

### Charges and Concessions

Charges and concessions were considered in detail by the Task Group. Information was obtained from the Environmental Services Team and the Task Group spoke to the Portfolio Holders for Finance, Environmental Services and the Economic Development, in order to get their views on this and a number of other issues which have been discussed in earlier in this report.

The Task Group also received comparative data which officers had prepared once again using the Council's Nearest Neighbours list. This allowed it to see charging policies from a wider variety of local authorities and to compare them with those made by the Council.

Free evening car parking was something which was available at a number of other authorities, however it was noted that in the majority of cases this commenced at 6.00 p.m. rather than the 7.00 p.m. start time chosen by the Council. If free evening car parking was not available then authorities often took the option of making a nominal charge of £1 for the whole evening again, taking effect from 6.00 p.m.

The Task Group also considered the option of either free or a concessionary charge for Sunday parking as this again, was something which a large number of other authorities provided, often charging £1 for all day Sunday parking. This was something which Members of the Task Group discussed when visiting traders and asked whether this would encourage them to open on a Sunday, as Members believed that the Council need to work together with the traders and get a commitment from them to support such a move. As detailed in the survey results, this was not particularly supported by the traders and the Task Group understood that many smaller businesses would need to see an increase in the footfall in the town centre before making such a commitment, however the footfall would not increase merely by reducing the car parking charges, as the residents would need to see a wider variety of shops open before they would come into the town centre. This is something which needs to be considered in more detail moving forward and which will be discussed in further detail within the conclusion to this report.

The finally two areas which Members considered in respect of charges and concessions were actually how residents paid for parking. It was clear from the survey results that pay on foot was a popular form of car parking. The Council currently has one car park which uses this form of parking and is controlled by a barrier system. Previous car parking task groups have suggested that pay on foot was the way forward and have made specific recommendations around this. Those recommendations have previously been turned down by Cabinet, stating that the other car parks are not suitable for this type of car park. However, the Task Group have now been made aware that with the use of new technology this form of car parking no longer



needs to be enclosed and controlled by a barrier. It can be controlled by the use of registration recognition cameras or for example a system called “check in check out” where the user must insert a credit or debit card in order to obtain a ticket and on return, the ticket is re-inserted and the appropriate charge made against that credit/debit card.

The Task Group were also aware that from the survey results and in respect of pay and display car parks, users were keen to be able to “top up” their car parking when out and about by phone or indeed simply pay for parking by phone. It was understood that this system was currently being trialled by Wychavon District Council who administer the Council’s car parks and Members were keen for this to be taken forward if at all possible.

In light of the survey results, and in respect of the high percentage of people who had not even been aware of the introduction of free evening car parking, the Task Group feel that any future changes made needed to be communicated in a more thorough manner in order for residents to benefit from any concessions which may be on offer. At the present time the Task Group do not think it would be appropriate for any further changes to be made to the car parking charges and concession, until a car parking strategy has been put in place, nor would it be appropriate to remove the concession of free evening car parking, as that strategy may suggest that further changes be made.

When the strategy is in place (as recommended in Chapter 1, then the Council may wish to think about whether its charges should stay the same, increase or decrease. During its investigations the Task Group has considered a number of options which the Council may wish to look at in more detail:

- If the charges are increased then consideration could be given to the instruction of a free half hour slot, which was something highlighted within the surveys carried out.
- The re-introduction of free parking for the disabled or free parking for a set time such as 2 hours (this was something which was available at a number of other authorities).
- Re-consider the pricing structure for annual parking passes and make a significant reduction in order to make it a realistic option for those using the town centre on a daily basis.

The Task Group is therefore making the following recommendation:

<b>Recommendation 4</b>
<i>Until the introduction of a strategy the current parking charges and concessions should be maintained (including the continuation of free evening car parking).</i>

## Chapter 5

### **Observations and Conclusion**

The overarching conclusion of the Task Group is that there is no way of establishing whether the introduction of free car parking after 7.00 p.m. has been a success and therefore the Council needs to formulate a car parking strategy prior to it making any further changes to the current car parking arrangements, this includes leaving in place the concession of free evening car parking after 7.00 p.m.

The question could also be asked as to what the Council's objective was from introducing free evening car parking.

The Task Group would also like to highlight the following observations which the Cabinet may wish to consider when making future decisions in respect of car parking in the future:

#### Potential Loss of Parking Spaces

With the current re-development of sites in the town centre underway, there was the potential that over 130 of the Council's 1,319 car parking spaces would be lost in the near future. Whilst the impact from this may not be substantial at the moment, the Council should be mindful that as the town centre redevelopments bring improvement to the town centre then the footfall will also hopefully gather momentum. That increase could potentially bring about the situation where the Council does not have sufficient car parking spaces to meet the needs of an ever growing town centre.

The Task Group would therefore suggest that this is something which the newly appointed Town Centre Manager may wish to investigate further in order to establish basic baseline information as a starting point, as detailed in Chapter 1 of this report. The implications of this would not only impact on the availability of car parking spaces but on potential income for the Council.

#### Car Parks and Ticket Machines

From the responses received to all the surveys carried out the Task Group noted a number of comments in respect of lighting around the car parks and the machines themselves.

It is likely that sometime in the not too distant future the ticket machines will need to be replaced. Consideration of replacing the machines, should not take place until the car park strategy as highlighted in Chapter 1 is in place. The investment in new machines should not be taken lightly and should include consideration being given to whether the ticket machines are disabled friendly. Anecdotally, Members were aware that the current machines were at a height which made it difficult for wheelchair users to access them without the aid of a passer-by. It may also be useful to consider the location of any

disabled parking spaces within the Council's car parks to ensure that they are appropriately placed for easy access to the ticket machines in future.

The Task Group also noted from the survey responses that the lighting around some of the machines was not particularly good and that this was something which the Council may wish to consider reviewing when replacing the ticket machines.

## Changes to Car Parking Charges and Concessions

As previously highlighted in the main body of this report the Task Group were surprised to see that nearly 41% of those who responded to the survey were not aware of the trial for free evening car parking. The Task Group would therefore strongly suggest that any future changes/trials for car parking are clearly communicated to residents in as many ways as possible to ensure maximum coverage. This should include for example wider press releases as the Task Group were aware that some of the outlying parts of the District are not covered by the local free papers and also communicating through the Parish Councils (noticeboards for Parish Councils' are an old fashioned but good way of communicating). It was commented that communicating through parishes may also bring in residents from the outlying areas, who may not otherwise visited the town centre on a regular basis.

## Appendix 1



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### OVERVIEW AND 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](mailto:scrutiny@bromsgrove.gov.uk) – Democratic Services, Bromsgrove District Council.

<b>Name of Proposer: Councillors Luke Mallett &amp; Karen May</b>	
Tel No:	Email: <a href="mailto:l.mallett@bromsgrove.gov.uk">l.mallett@bromsgrove.gov.uk</a> <a href="mailto:k.may@bromsgrove.gov.uk">k.may@bromsgrove.gov.uk</a>
Date: 07/08/15	

<b>Title of Proposed Topic</b>  (including specific subject areas to be investigate)	Review of Evening Car Parking
<b>Background to the Proposal</b>  (Including reasons why this topic should be investigated and evidence to support the need for the investigation.)	<p>A report was presented to Cabinet on 7<sup>th</sup> January 2015 which covered a twelve month trial of Pay and Display Car Parks within Bromsgrove being offered free parking from 7 pm each evening. The trial was put in place from February 2015 to February 2016.</p> <p>The Overview &amp; Scrutiny Board have done a number of investigations over the years in respect of various aspects of car parking in the district and has a wealth of knowledge on the subject.</p> <p>The investigation would assist officers in evaluating the success of the trial together with any possible recommendations for future car parking arrangements.</p>

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<p><b>Links to national, regional and local priorities</b></p> <p>(including the Council's strategic purposes)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Provide good things for me to see, do and visit.</li> <li>• Help me run a successful business</li> </ul>			
<p><b>Possible Key Objectives</b></p> <p>(these should be SMART – specific, measurable, achievable, relevant and timely)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has free parking during the evening made a difference to the night time economy? If so, to what extent.</li> <li>• Does the free parking offer value for money to the public?</li> <li>• What alternative options are available and how do these compare to free evening parking for both the customer and the traders in Bromsgrove.</li> </ul>			
<p>Anticipated Timescale for completion of the work.</p>	<p>4 – 6 months with the final report being presented to Cabinet in February 2016.</p>			
<p>Would it be appropriate to hold a Short Sharp Inquiry or a Task Group? (please tick relevant box)</p>	<p>Task Group</p>	<p>Yes</p>	<p>Short Sharp Inquiry</p>	

## **Appendix 2**

### **Declarations of Interest**

It was agreed by Members at the initial meeting of the Task Group that a general declaration would be included within the report advising that all Members used the Council's car park facilities from time to time.

## Appendix 3

### WORK PROGRAMME

Date of Meeting	Subject
30/09/15	Discuss terms of reference and agree future meetings dates and expertise witnesses.
19/10/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Kevin Hirons &amp; Martin Ashcroft.</li> <li>• Press release</li> <li>• Questionnaire for residents &amp; traders together with distribution ideas.</li> </ul>
28/10/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview representative from Older People's Forum (Carol Tipping &amp; Charlie Bateman)</li> <li>• Interview representative from Town Centre Group</li> </ul>
16/11/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Further discussions with Kevin Hirons and Martin Ashcroft</li> <li>• Interview with representative from Town Centre Group</li> <li>• Responses from press release/ Questionnaire.</li> <li>• Review Terms of Reference and Scoping Document.</li> </ul>
30/11/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Cllr G Denaro</li> </ul>
02/12/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Representative from the Bromsgrove High Street Improvement Forum (Residents' Group)</li> <li>• Responses to Questionnaires</li> <li>• Review of Terms of Reference</li> <li>• Consider any further work needed</li> </ul>
16/12/15	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Interview with Cllr Peter Whittaker</li> <li>• Draft Recommendations and/or areas to be included within the interim report</li> </ul>

# Agenda Item 6

04/01/16	Review interim report prior to inclusion on Overview & Scrutiny Board agenda.
14/01/16 Asda Meeting Room 5.30 pm	Town Team Meeting – Members invited to attend. Followed by de-brief at Parkside Committee Room.
18/01/16 (Overview & Scrutiny Board)	<i>Draft Interim Report to be presented to Overview &amp; Scrutiny Board.</i>
25/01/16	Jayne Pickering – Executive Director, Finance and Resources
26/01/16	Councillor Rita Dent – Economic Development
10/02/16	Survey of High Street Shops
11/02/16	Guy Revans – Head of Environmental Services Kevin Hiron – Environmental Services Manager
18/02/16	Review of evidence and areas to be covered by final report
23/02/16	Interview with Dean Piper – Head of Economic Development & Regeneration - North Worcs
03/03/16	Discussion – Final report and recommendations.
21/03/16	<i>Final Draft Report and recommendations presented to Overview &amp; Scrutiny Board.</i>
23/03/16	<i>Final Report considered by Leaders Group</i>
06/04/16	<i>Final Report considered by Cabinet</i>



## Appendix 4

### **RESULTS FROM THE ONLINE CONSULTATION**

The online questionnaires were available from early November 2015 to 15<sup>th</sup> January 2016 and split into 2 categories. These could be accessed through the Council's website and was initially featured on the main page. The consultation was also promoted through the Together Bromsgrove Magazine which was distributed to residents in early November, with a press release also being issued.

**87 responses were received from Residents either by email or post.**

Question 1 – Have you made use of the free car parking and if so, on what days?

No	Various	Weekend	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday
16	37	24	5	2	3
18.39%	42.53%	27.59%	5.75%	2.30%	3.45%

Question 2 - Has free evening car parking brought you in to the town centre more often?

Yes	No	Not Aware
62	23	2
71.26%	26.45%	2.30%

Questions 2a - If no, what would? (Top 6 responses)

- Better entertainment opportunities.
- Better if free evening car parking started from 5 or 6.00 pm.
- Free Sunday car parking.
- Better facilities and greater variety of shops.
- Offer free parking during special events in the town centre, such as Christmas markets/lights switch on.
- Free 30 mins/hour during the day e.g. between 9 and 10.00 am or first hour free.

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Question 3 - What changes, if any, would you suggest to improve the car parking facilities within the Town Centre? (Top 6 Responses)

- Make all car parks pay on exit (Pay on Foot)
- Free evening after 6.00 pm.
- Make car parking free.
- Short term free parking e.g. 30 mins/hour.
- Free parking for disabled badge users.
- Pay by mobile

Question 4 – Which of the following do you think are best for car parks (Pay and Display, Pay on Foot, Free Evening, Free Sunday, No discount car parking but fees invested in better parking, Other)

All	Free Evening & Sunday	Free Evening	Free Sunday	Pay on Foot	Pay on Foot, Free Evening & Free Sunday	Pay & Display, Free Evening & Free Sunday	Other
3	21	3	2	6	39	11	2
3.45%	24.14%	3.45%	2.30%	6.90%	44.83%	12.64%	2.30%

Comments arising from Question 4 (Top 6 Responses)

- Parking permits for over 60s
  - Pay on foot
  - Flat fee or free Sunday car parking.
  - Free from 6.00 pm.
  - Free one hour parking during the day.
  - No charges at all.
- 

## 5 responses received from Traders to the first online questionnaire

Question 1 - Have you noticed an increase in the footfall to your business since February 2015?

Yes	No
0	5

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## Question 2 - What do you think would encourage people to come into the Town Centre more?

- Free parking for 3 hours on certain days, so they have time to spend looking at the shops instead of rushing off before their ticket runs out. Rates lowered too many charity shops as they are the only ones that can afford the discounted rates they have to pay, not much choice in Bromsgrove, it could be amazing if the Council were more accountable.
- Option to top up car park through their phones
- Better variety of shops. Lights to come on earlier in winter months (as we type this its 4 pm getting dark and no lights are on). More obvious parking and pay at the end of parking.
- The quietest day of the week is usually a Wednesday afternoon. It would be great to have free parking for one afternoon a week when the shops are open!
- Free parking in the day not at night. More well known shops. A clean High Street. Regular interesting markets.

## Question 3 - Are you open on a Sunday?

- a) If no – please provide details as to why not.
- b) What would encourage you to open on a Sunday?

Yes	No
1	4

- I have no problem opening Sunday but people will not shop in Bromsgrove when they can get free parking and more choice in other towns.
- Yes, but don't get much trade. Free parking on Sundays would massively help to increase trade and it would encourage other traders to open on Sundays.
- We are a business rather than a shop so we have no need to trade on a Sunday.
- We only open on a Sunday in December on the run up to Christmas. There would need to be a market on a Sunday for us to open up on a regular basis throughout the year.
- Because Bromsgrove is dead on a Sunday and a 7 day trading week is not possible we are a small business.

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Question 4 - Which of the following options do you think are best for car park users (Pay and Display, Pay on Foot, Free Evening, Free Sunday, No discount car parking but fees invested in better parking, Other)

- Discounted or free on certain days or the first two/three hours free. When Bromsgrove do free days leading up to Christmas the town is buzzing.
- Pay on Foot and free Sunday parking.
- Pay of Foot car parks and free evening car parking.
- Pay and Display car parks.
- Free parking for the entire week and at least for 3 hours. Free parking in the evenings benefits the restaurants but the traders with normal working hours will not see an increase in footfall since the car parking is fully charged during our hours of opening.

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## **RESULTS FROM MEMBERS' SAMPLE SURVEY**

A total of 51 traders were visited

<b>Types of Traders Visited</b>	Charity Shops	6	11.76%
	Retail (Clothes/Shoes/phones)	14	27.45%
	Stationery/Cards	3	5.88%
	Commercial (bank, estate agent, recruitment, travel)	6	11.76%
	Commercial (computer, electrical, pawnbrokers)	6	11.76%
	Fast Food/Public Houses/Amusements	6	11.76%
	Hairdresser/chemist/optician	7	13.72%
	Grocery/Flowers	3	5.88%

### **Shops Open on a Sunday**

<b>High Street</b>	Argos	
	Timpsons	Only during January/February
	Milletts	
	Red Lion	
	Card Factory	
	Shipleys Amusements	
	Burttons/Dorothy Perkins	
	M&Co	April to December
	Specsavers	
	Subway	
	Dominos	
<b>Mill Lane</b>	Iceland	
<b>Market Street</b>	Knights Chemist	
	Just for Pets	
<b>The Strand</b>	Queens Head	
	Strand Barbers	
	MidlandWaterlife	
<b>15 opened regularly (17 in total)</b>		29.41%

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Has free evening car parking had an impact on trade for you?

No	47	92.16%
Not aware	3	5.88%
Yes	1	1.96%

Would you consider opening if there was some sort of Sunday car parking concession?

Yes	7	13.72%
No	27	52.94%
Already open	2	3.92%
Tried it	12	23.53%
Not sure	3	5.88%

## **ANALYSIS OF DATA RECEIVED FROM THE HIGH STREET FORUM'S ONLINE SURVEY**

High Street Forum's online survey was carried out from September to December 2015 with 471 responses being analysed.

<b>1 Which mode of transport do you prefer to use to travel to Bromsgrove town centre?</b>		
Car	316	67.09%
Walk/Run	126	25.75%
Bicycle/Motorbike	6	1.27%
Public (Train, Taxi, Bus etc )	16	3.40%
Various (mix of above)	7	1.49%

<b>2 Choose the main reason that you travel to Bromsgrove Town Centre</b>		
Work	35	7.43%
Shopping Retail(including market)	169	35.88%
Food & Drink Daytime (inc Leisure Centre)	22	4.67%
Food & Drink Evening	48	10.19%
Window Shopping	135	28.66%
Various (incl Post Office, Bank, Health)	62	13.16%

<b>3 When do you travel to Bromsgrove Town centre? (Tick as many as apply)</b>		
Various	182	38.64%
Weekend	203	43.10%
Tuesday	7	1.47%
Wednesday	14	2.97%
Thursday	12	2.55%
All	53	11.25%

<b>4 What do you think about the cost of parking in Bromsgrove?</b>		
It's too expensive	307	65.18%
The cost is just right	37	7.85%
No Comment	15	3.18%
It depends on which car park you use and how long you want to stay	112	23.87%

<b>5 What do you think about the ease of paying for parking in the town centre car parks (pay on foot)?</b>		
It's easy	183	38.85%
It's ok but I often don't have change for the ticket machine	248	52.65%
It's difficult	25	5.31%
No Comment	15	3.18%

<b>6 What do you think about the convenience of paying for car parking (pay and display)?</b>		
It's easy	143	30.36%
It's ok but I often don't have change for the ticket machine	275	58.39%
it's difficult	40	8.49%
No Comment	13	2.76%

<b>7 Have you benefited from free parking after 7pm on most town centre car parks?</b>		
Yes - knew about free parking and took advantage of it	132	28.02%
No - I knew about, but didn't take advantage of it.	119	25.26%
I didn't know there was free parking after 7 pm	192	40.76%
No Comment	28	5.94%

<b>8 Would you be interested in contact-less car parking payment (using your debit or credit card over a scanner in the car-park?)</b>		
Yes	262	55.63%
No	204	43.31%
No comment	5	1.06%



## Appendix 4

### **ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

The Task Group wishes to thank the Democratic Services Officer, Amanda Scarce for her support throughout the Task Group's investigations, together with the Environmental Services Manager, Kevin Hirons, who had provided data and supported the Task Group throughout its investigations.

The Task Group would also like to thank all those traders and residents who took the time to complete the online questionnaire.

### **WITNESSES**

The Task Group considered evidence from the following sources before making its recommendations:

#### **Internal Witnesses:**

Kevin Hirons – Environmental Services Manager  
Guy Revans – Head of Environmental Services  
Jayne Pickering – Executive Director, Finance and Resources  
Martin Ashcroft – Partnerships & Projects Manager  
Dean Piper - Head of Economic Development & Regeneration - North Worcs

#### **Councillors:**

Councillor Geoff Denaro – Finance and Resources  
Councillor Peter Whittaker – Environmental Services  
Councillor Rita Dent – Economic Development

#### **External Witnesses:**

Representatives from the Older People's Forum  
Representative from the Bromsgrove High Street Improvement Forum  
Members of the Town Team.

### **BACKGROUND PAPERS**

Scrutiny Report – Car Parking	(March 2007)
Recreation Road South Car Park Task Group Final Report	(August 2011)
BDC Parking Review & Presentation	(December 2013)
BDC Parking Usage Review	(October 2014)
Car Parking Short Sharp Review	(January 2015)

**Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services**

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

Telephone: (01527) 881288

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

## CABINET

6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2016

### NOMINATION OF AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford – Head of Planning & Regeneration
Wards Affected	
Key Decision – N/A	

#### 1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To consider a request to list The Cross Inn , Finstall, Bromsgrove as an Asset of Community Value.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Cabinet consider the contents of the report and decides to either:-**

- (a) Support the listing of The Cross, Finstall as an Asset of Community Value; or**
- (b) Not support the listing of The Cross, Finstall as an Asset of Community Value**

#### 3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 As Members are aware from previous reports the Localism Act included the 'Community Right to Bid' which gave communities a right to identify a building or other land that they believe to be of importance to their community's social well-being so that if it comes up for sale there is a six month period within which they can prepare their bid to buy the asset. The property in question can then be sold on the open market. Community groups have the same rights as any other bidders but there is no preference given to the local community bid.
- 3.2 In November 2013 Cabinet did not support the nomination from CAMRA of the listing of the Cross Inn, Finstall, as an asset of community value. This recommendation was also not supported by the Head of Planning and Regeneration and therefore the nomination was rejected. The main reasons for the rejection was due to the pub having limited community use and there being other public houses in the vicinity. Officers have received a further nomination for the pub and therefore, within the current Council policy, members are asked to consider the nomination again. The nomination has been made by CAMRA (Campaign for Real Ale) , Bromsgrove and Redditch Branch. CAMRA has requested that the asset be nominated to give the ability

## CABINET

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for it to remain as a community asset in the future. The nomination is attached at Appendix 1.

- 3.3 Enterprise Breweries and the local ward Councillors have been consulted as part of the process. There have been no responses received from the owners during the consultation period. The Ward Councillor is supportive of the application. It is worth noting that any sale of a going concern business would be exempt from the legislation relating to assets of community value. Therefore if the pub was to be sold on as a going concern the 6 month moratorium would not apply.
- 3.4 The nomination from CAMRA supports the inclusion of the asset due to the fact that The Cross Inn provides a number of services that they believe further the social wellbeing and interests of the local community. These are detailed in the nomination form attached at Appendix 1 and include:
- The only pub in the village of Finstall
  - Local Beer Festival
  - Local Community Groups meet regularly – Sports teams
  - Good transport links
  - Advertising for local events
  - Fundraising events
- 3.5 CAMRA have provided officers with the constitution of the organisation.
- 3.6 Members are reminded that under the new process for assets of community value introduced in November 2012 the final decision regarding whether to list an asset rests with the Head of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration.

### **Financial Implications**

- 3.7 Property owners who believe they have incurred costs as a result of complying with these procedures can apply for compensation from the Council. As previously reported to Council, Government recognises this as a potential risk to local authorities and will provide a safety net whereby any verified claims of over £20,000 will be met by Government. The owners also have a right to appeal the decision made by the Council in agreeing that the building be included on the Assets of Community Value.

### **Legal Implications**

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3.8 The Localism Act 2011 made provision for a new system of listing of assets of community value, giving community groups the right to make nominations, and requiring local authorities to maintain local registers. Further more detailed rules around the operation of assets of community value are set out in the Assets of Community Value Regulations 2012.

3.9 The test for listing an Asset of Community Value as set out in Section 88 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 is as follows:-

“A building or other land in a Local Authority’s area is land of community value if in the opinion of the authority:-

(a) an actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary user furthers the social well-being or social interests of the local community, and

(b) it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social well-being or social interests of the local community.”

3.10 The legislation and guidance are silent on the issue of repeat applications. Research by officers has established that some Councils specifically limit the ability of unsuccessful applicants to re-apply, for example by not allowing a repeat application within a specified period of time, or unless there have been significant changes. However the Bromsgrove policy does not include any such restrictions.

#### **Service/Operational Implications**

3.11 There are no specific operational implications for the District. The list of nominated assets will be maintained by Land Charges officers and will be available on the Councils Website.

#### **Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications**

3.12 The approval of the nomination of The Cross Inn will ensure that should the property be declared for sale any community group would be able to express an interest in purchasing the asset. This would result in up to 6 months of moratorium whereby any sale could only be to a community group. Following this the owner can sell to any purchaser. This excludes the sale as a going concern.

#### **4. RISK MANAGEMENT**

## **CABINET**

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- 4.1 The register will be maintained to ensure that all assets nominated are included to mitigate any risks associated with assets not being included on the register. Consideration by officers and members will be undertaken at each nomination to ensure a consistent approach is taken.

### **APPENDICES**

Appendix 1 – Current Nomination Form

Appendix 2 – November 2013 Nomination Form

### **AUTHOR OF REPORT**

Name: Ruth Bamford  
E Mail: [r.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:r.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)  
Tel: (01527) 881202

## Section 1: Your personal details

Please provide your personal details so we are able to process your information

- 1. Your Title: Mr**
- 2. Your Full Name: Richard Wood**
- 3. Your Address including postcode: B60 1LJ**
- 4. Your Contact Email Address:**
- 5. Your Contact Telephone:**
- 6. Your CAMRA Membership Number 319561**

## Section 2: Nomination Body Details

CAMRA is providing advice and support to local CAMRA branches to nominate pubs as Assets of Community Value. If nominating on behalf of your branch, please ensure you have permission from the Chairman of the branch before completing this section of the questionnaire.

If you have any further questions or if you are wishing to nominate your pub on behalf of another local group, please email [acv@camra.org.uk](mailto:acv@camra.org.uk)

- 7. Please provide the name of the CAMRA Branch you wish to nominate on behalf of Redditch and Bromsgrove CAMRA**
- 8. What is your position within the Branch? Member**
- 9. Do you have agreement from the Chairman to nominate pubs on behalf of the branch? Yes**

## Nomination Body Details: Proving a local connection

As part of your nomination, you are required to prove your local connection to the asset you are nominating. This just means that you must be able to demonstrate that your branch activity is wholly or partly concerned with the area.

In addition we can also supply you with the number of members in your branch area to support this section. Please tick the elements below which apply to you:

### **10. Please tick any of the below which apply to the branch:**

- The CAMRA Branch hosts a beer festival in the local area
- The Branch hosts meetings in the local pub and the local area
- The Branch nominates a local pub of the year in this area
- The Branch presents awards to pubs in the area
- The Branch runs campaigns to save local pubs in the area
- The Branch writes a local newsletter about pubs and campaigns in the area

## About the pub you want to nominate

**11. Pub Name: The Cross Inn, Fininstall, Bromsgrove**

**12. Pub Address including postcode: B60 1EW**

**13. Is the pub currently open? Yes**

(Answer this section ONLY if you answered no to question 13). If the answer was yes, skip to the next section. Nominating a closed pub

We do know of some cases where closed pubs have been listed as ACVs. This is because the Council decided that the pub fulfilled the criteria of having been community assets in the recent past, and there is a realistic prospect of it being of community value during the next five years.

For your pub to be considered for your local councils register, you will need to prove that there is still potential that the pub could further the social wellbeing of the community.

If the pub has been closed for more than five years, your local Council may reject the application on this basis.

**14. Please provide us with the date the pub closed:**

**15. Please use this section to state what the current use of the pub is, and any relevant evidence. This may include:**

- History of use
- Number of people making use of the facility when open
- A brief overview of why the pub closed
- Why the pub would be used and valued if it re-opened

## Information on your local pub



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In order for your Local Authority to accept your nomination, you will need to set out why it is of community value. Please tick from the options below which applies to your local pub.

There will also be an opportunity on the next page to add in any additional information you feel is relevant to your application.

## 16. Please click all of the following which apply to your local pub to demonstrate that it furthers the social wellbeing and social interests of the local community.

- Live music events are often hosted at the pub
- The pub hosts advertising for local events
- The pub adjoins a sports field and users share the pub's facilities
- There is a beer garden attached to the pub which is used and enjoyed by local people
- A children's play area for local families is also available at the pub
- There are televisions screening sporting events enjoyed by patrons
- The pub has a great food menu enjoyed by the local community
- The pub hosts regular quiz nights which bring the community together
- Free wifi is available for customers
- A local beer festival offering a range of local beers is hosted at the pub
- The local neighborhood watch scheme is coordinated by the pub
- There is free parking available which is accessed by the wider community
- This pub is a member of CAMRA's LocAle scheme, committed to serving locally produced real ales and meeting consumer demands for local produce
- This is the only pub in the village
- There are good transport links available to/from the pub
- Local sport teams meet in this pub
- The pub sponsors a team which represents it in sports leagues
- The Pub has been included in a tourist or local pub guide
- There is good access for disabled people at the pub

## 17. The pub has special value to local heritage and culture which should be protected

- Yes
- No

## 18. Meeting spaces are available for local community groups and charities to use

- Yes
- No

## 19. Local sports teams meet in the pub

- Yes  
 No

**20. The pub provides other important local services to the community including:**

- A Cash Point  
 A Community Phone  
 Access to free local newspapers  
 Employment opportunities for young people  
 A Post Office  
 A Library  
 A Local Shop

**21. The pub offers**

- A Dart Board  
 A Quiz Machine  
 Pool Tables  
 Board Games

## Additional Information

Please use this section of the form to provide us with any additional information that may support your application.

Relevant evidence which may be included:

- Types of activities that take place at the pub
- Involvement by the local community in running/managing it
- Identify the impact of the pub on other local groups. Is there a group which meets regularly at the pub?
- Does the pub host fundraising nights for charity?
- Evidence of support e.g. petitions

**22. Any other relevant information to your application:**

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The Cross Inn is being nominated as an asset of community value for the following reasons:

- 1) There is no other pub in the village so without this asset it would seriously affect the local community spirit and wellbeing
- 2) In addition to being a Public House it offers a library to the public with the donations going to a local charity (Primrose Hospice)
- 3) It sells fresh local produce to the public
- 4) It provides a meeting place for several local organisations including;
  - a. Bromsgrove Lions;
  - b. Redditch and Bromsgrove Mountaineering Club;
  - c. Canine Society;
  - d. Badminton Club
  - e. Redditch and Bromsgrove CAMRA branch
  - f. Neighbourhood watch
  - g. Bromsgrove Court Leet Ale tasting
  - h. Domino's League
- 5) There is no other pub in the village so without this asset it would seriously affect the local community spirit and wellbeing

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE – THE COMMUNITY  
RIGHT TO BID**

**NOMINATION FORM**

**Section A: About your organisation**

**A1 Organisation's name and address**

Name of organisation* CAMRA, Campaign for Real Ale Redditch and Bromsgrove branch
Address including postcode 230 Hatfield Road St Albans AL1 4LW

*\*full name as written in your constitution or rules (if appropriate)*

**A2 Contact details**

Name Richard Wood
Position in organisation Member of CAMRA
Address including postcode:  9 Pikes Pool Lane, Burcot, Bromsgrove, Worcestershire, B60 1LJ
Daytime telephone no. 07917 232673
Email address richwood@gmail.com
How and when can we contact you?* Email preferred

*\*by email or phone, and days of the week and/or times of day you would prefer*

**A3 Type of organisation**

Description	Put a cross against all those that apply	Registration number of charity and/or company (if applicable)
Neighbourhood forum	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Parish Council	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Charity	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Community interest company	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Unincorporated body	✓	
Company limited by guarantee	<input type="checkbox"/>	
Industrial and provident society	<input type="checkbox"/>	

**A4 Number of members registered to vote locally (unincorporated bodies only)**

In the case of an unincorporated body, at least 21 of its members must be registered to vote in the Bromsgrove District . If relevant, please confirm the number of such members. If they are registered to vote in the area of a neighbouring local authority, rather than in Bromsgrove , please confirm which area that is.

**22 in the Bromsgrove district, please see attached voting form**

**A5 Local connection**

Your organisation must have a local connection, which means that its activities are wholly or partly concerned with the administrative area of Bromsgrove District Council or a neighbouring local authority. In some cases this will be obvious, eg. a parish council in Bromsgrove, or an organisation whose activities are confined to the district. If your connection may not be obvious to us please explain what your organisation's local connection is.

Redditch and Bromsgrove CAMRA organisation was set up in the local area nearly 40 years ago. The local community have supported the Cross Inn of Finstall who use this public house as a community meeting point.

The attached document of signatures demonstrates that at least 21 people live local to the premises and within the Bromsgrove catchment area.

**A6 Distribution of surplus funds** (certain types of organisation only)

If your organisation is an unincorporated body, a company limited by guarantee, or an industrial and provident society, its rules must provide that surplus funds are not distributed to members, but are applied wholly or partly for the benefit of the local area (ie. within the administrative area of Bromsgrove or a neighbouring local authority). If relevant, please confirm that this is the case, and specifically which area this applies to.

CAMRA's Policy is for no members to benefit financially from surplus funds.

**A7 More about your organisation**

What are the main aims and activities of your organisation?

**CAMRA, the Campaign for Real Ale** is an independent, voluntary organisation campaigning for real ale, community pubs and consumer rights.

CAMRA is financed by membership subscriptions, sales of books and merchandise and proceeds from national and local beer festivals. CAMRA is a not for profit company, limited by guarantee.

**A8 Your organisation's rules**

<b>Please send us a copy of the relevant type of document for your organisation, and put a cross in the next column to indicate which one this is</b>	<b>X</b>
Memorandum and Articles of Association (for a company)	
Trust Deed (for a trust)	
Constitution and/or rules (for other organisations)	X

## Part B: About the land or building(s) you are nominating

### B1 Description and address

What it is (eg. pub, local shop) Public House
Name of premises (eg. Post office , Community Centre) The Cross Inn, Finstall
Address including postcode (if known) 34, Alcester Road Finstall Bromsgrove, B60 1EW

### B2 Sketch plan

Please include (here or on a separate sheet) a sketch plan of the land. This should show:-

- The boundaries of the land that you are nominating
- The approximate size and position of any building(s) on the land.
- Any roads bordering the site.



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## **B3 Owners and others with an interest in the building or land**

*You should supply the following information, if possible. If any information is not known to you, please say so.*

	<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Address(es)</b>
Names of all current occupants of the land	Dave Neal	<i>Same as B1.</i>
Names and current or last known addresses of all those owning the freehold of the land (ie. owner, head landlord, head lessor)	Enterprise Brewery	Enterprise Inns Plc 3 Monkspath Hall Road Solihull West Midlands B90 4SJ
Names and current or last known addresses of all those having a leasehold interest in the land (ie. tenant, intermediate landlord, intermediate lessor)	Not known	

## **B4 Why you think the building or land is of community value**

*Note that the following are not able to be assets of community value:-*

- *A building wholly used as a residence, together with land "connected with" that residence. This means adjoining land in the same ownership. Land is treated as adjoining if it is separated only by a road, railway, river or canal.*
- *A caravan site.*
- *Operational land. This is generally land belonging to the former utilities and other statutory operators.*

Does it currently further the social wellbeing or social interests\* of the local community, or has it done so in the recent past? If so, how?

The Cross Inn is being nominated as an asset of community value for the following reasons:

- 1) In addition to being a Public House it offers a library to the public with the donations going to a local charity (Primrose Hospice)
- 2) It sells fresh local produce to the public
- 3) It provides a meeting place for several organisations; Bromsgrove Lions; Redditch and Bromsgrove Mountaineering Club; Canine Society; Badminton Club

Could it in future further the social wellbeing or social interests\* of the local community? If so, how? (This could be different from its current or past use.)

Yes, it is an ideal meeting place for organisations to hold their monthly and AGM meetings in the rear room.

*\*These could be cultural, recreational and/or sporting interests, so please say which one(s) apply.*

## Section C: Submitting this nomination

### C1 What to include

- The rules of your organisation (question A8).
- Your sketch plan (question B2).

### C2 Signature

*By signing your name here (if submitting by post) or typing it (if submitting by email) you are confirming that the contents of this form are correct, to the best of your knowledge.*

Signature 30/8/13

A black rectangular redaction box covering the signature of the person who submitted the nomination.

### C3 Where to send this form

You can submit this nomination:-

- **By post to:** Jayne Pickering , Executive Director Finance and Resources, Bromsgrove District Council , Council House , Bromsgrove B60 1AA
- **By email to:** [j.pickering@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:j.pickering@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

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## CABINET

6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2016

### NOMINATION OF AN ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Ruth Bamford – Head of Planning & Regeneration
Wards Affected	
Key Decision – N/A	

#### 1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

To consider a request to list The Methodist Church Hall, Blackwell, Bromsgrove as an Asset of Community Value.

#### 2. RECOMMENDATIONS

**That Cabinet consider the contents of the report and decides to either:-**

- (a) Support the listing of The Methodist Church Hall, Blackwell, as an Asset of Community Value; or**
- (b) Not support the listing of The Methodist Church Hall, Blackwell, as an Asset of Community Value**

#### 3. KEY ISSUES

- 3.1 As Members are aware from previous reports the Localism Act included the 'Community Right to Bid' which gave communities a right to identify a building or other land that they believe to be of importance to their community's social well-being so that if it comes up for sale there is a six month period within which they can prepare their bid to buy the asset. The property in question can then be sold on the open market. Community groups have the same rights as any other bidders but there is no preference given to the local community bid.
- 3.2 Officers have received a nomination for the Methodist Church Hall in Blackwell from the Lickey and Blackwell Parish Council. The Parish Council has requested that the asset be nominated to give the ability for it to remain as a community asset in the future. The nomination is attached at Appendix 1.
- 3.3 The Methodist Property Office and the local ward Councillors have been consulted as part of the process. There have been no responses received from the owners during the consultation period. The ward Councillor is in support of the nomination.
- 3.4 The nomination from the Parish supports the inclusion of the asset due to the fact that hall provides a number of services that they believe

## **CABINET**

6<sup>TH</sup> APRIL 2016

further the social wellbeing and interests of the local community. These are detailed in the nomination form attached at Appendix 1 and include:

- Children's nursery operates on a weekly basis from the hall
- Childrens parties are held in the hall
- Yoga classes
- Table Tennis Club

- 3.5 Members are reminded that under the new process for assets of community value introduced in November 2012 the final decision regarding whether to list an asset rests with the Head of Planning and Regeneration in consultation with the Portfolio Holder for Planning and Regeneration.

### **Financial Implications**

- 3.6 Property owners who believe they have incurred costs as a result of complying with these procedures can apply for compensation from the Council. As previously reported to Council, Government recognises this as a potential risk to local authorities and will provide a safety net whereby any verified claims of over £20,000 will be met by Government. The owners also have a right to appeal the decision made by the Council in agreeing that the building be included on the Assets of Community Value.

### **Legal Implications**

- 3.7 The Localism Act 2011 made provision for a new system of listing of assets of community value, giving community groups the right to make nominations, and requiring local authorities to maintain local registers. Further more detailed rules around the operation of assets of community value are set out in the Assets of Community Value Regulations 2012.

- 3.8 The test for listing an Asset of Community Value as set out in Section 88 (1) of the Localism Act 2011 is as follows:-

"A building or other land in a Local Authority's area is land of community value if in the opinion of the authority:-

- (a) an actual current use of the building or other land that is not an ancillary user furthers the social well-being or social interests of the local community, and

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(b) it is realistic to think that there can continue to be non-ancillary use of the building or other land which will further (whether or not in the same way) the social well-being or social interests of the local community.”

### Service/Operational Implications

- 3.9 There are no specific operational implications for the District. The list of nominated assets will be maintained by Land Charges officers and will be available on the Councils Website.

### Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 The approval of the nomination of The Methodist Hall will ensure that should the property be declared for sale any community group would be able to express an interest in purchasing the asset. This would result in up to 6 months of moratorium whereby any sale could only be to a community group. Following this the owner can sell to any purchaser.

## 4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The register will be maintained to ensure that all assets nominated are included to mitigate any risks associated with assets not being included on the register. Consideration by officers and members will be undertaken at each nomination to ensure a consistent approach is taken.

## APPENDICES

Appendix 1 – Nomination Form

## AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Ruth Bamford  
E Mail: [r.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:r.bamford@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)  
Tel: (01527) 881202

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**BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL**

**ASSETS OF COMMUNITY VALUE – THE COMMUNITY  
RIGHT TO BID**

**NOMINATION FORM**

**Section A: About your organisation**

**A1 Organisation's name and address**

Name of organisation* LICKEY & BLACKWELL PARISH COUNCIL
Address including postcode 27 Blackwell Road Barnt Green Birmingham B45 8BT

*\*full name as written in your constitution or rules (if appropriate)*

**A2 Contact details**

Name Helen Doherty
Position in organisation Executive Officer
Address including postcode  27 Blackwell Road Barnt Green Birmingham B45 8BT
Daytime telephone no. <u>07748 301008</u>
Email address eo@lickeyandblackwellpc.org
How and when can we contact you?*
Anytime by e mail

*\*by email or phone, and days of the week and/or times of day you would prefer*

**A3 Type of organisation**

Description	Put a cross against all those that apply	Registration number of charity and/or company (if applicable)
Neighbourhood forum	Page 79	
Parish Council	X	

Charity		
Community interest company		
Unincorporated body		
Company limited by guarantee		
Industrial and provident society		

**A4 Number of members registered to vote locally** (unincorporated bodies only)

In the case of an unincorporated body, at least 21 of its members must be registered to vote in the Bromsgrove District . If relevant, please confirm the number of such members. If they are registered to vote in the area of a neighbouring local authority, rather than in Bromsgrove , please confirm which area that is.

**A5 Local connection**

Your organisation must have a local connection, which means that its activities are wholly or partly concerned with the administrative area of Bromsgrove District Council or a neighbouring local authority. In some cases this will be obvious, eg. a parish council in Bromsgrove, or an organisation whose activities are confined to the district. If your connection may not be obvious to us please explain what your organisation's local connection is.

Parish Council

**A6 Distribution of surplus funds** (certain types of organisation only)

If your organisation is an unincorporated body, a company limited by guarantee, or an industrial and provident society, its rules must provide that surplus funds are not distributed to members, but are applied wholly or partly for the benefit of the local area (ie. within the administrative area of Bromsgrove or a neighbouring local authority). If relevant, please confirm that this is the case, and specifically which area this applies to.

## A7 More about your organisation

What are the main aims and activities of your organisation?

## A8 Your organisation's rules

<b>Please send us a copy of the relevant type of document for your organisation, and put a cross in the next column to indicate which one this is</b>	<b>X</b>
Memorandum and Articles of Association (for a company)	
Trust Deed (for a trust)	
Constitution and/or rules (for other organisations)	Standing Orders X

## Part B: About the land or building(s) you are nominating

### B1 Description and address

What it is (eg. pub, local shop) Church hall
Name of premises (eg. Post office , Community Centre) Methodist Church Hall
Address including postcode (if known) Greenhill, Blackwell B60 1BL

### B2 Sketch plan

Please include (here or on a separate sheet) a sketch plan of the land. This should show:-

- The boundaries of the land that you are nominating
- The approximate size and position of any building(s) on the

- land.
- Any roads bordering the site.

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*See attached sketch*

**B3 Owners and others with an interest in the building or land**

*You should supply the following information, if possible. If any information is not known to you, please say so.*

	<b>Name(s)</b>	<b>Address(es)</b>
Names of all current occupants of the land	Methodist Church	Same as B 1.
Names and current or last known addresses of all those owning the freehold of the land (ie. owner, head landlord, head lessor)	Methodist Church	Methodist Property Office Central Buildings Oldham Street Manchester M1 1JQ  OWN FREEHOLD – NO LEASEHOLD INTERESTS
Names and current or last known addresses of all those having a leasehold interest in the land (ie. tenant, intermediate landlord, intermediate lessor)		

**B4 Why you think the building or land is of community value**

*Note that the following are not able to be assets of community value:-*

- *A building wholly used as a residence, together with land “connected with” that residence. This means adjoining land in the same ownership. Land is treated as adjoining if it is separated only by a road, railway, river or canal.*
- *A caravan site.*
- *Operational land. This is generally land belonging to the former utilities and other statutory operators.*

Does it currently further the social wellbeing or social interests\* of the local community, or has it done so in the recent past? If so, how?

The hall houses a thriving Montessori Nursery every week day along with Yoga classes and Blackwell Table Tennis club. These groups could not be accommodated elsewhere in Blackwell as the other available hall, The Wheel, is neither large enough nor suitable.

In addition the Methodist hall is available for private hire for children’s parties etc

Could it in future further the social wellbeing or social interests\* of the local community? If so, how? (This could be different from its current or past use.)

The hall would continue to be used as above, and the Parish Council would consider providing outdoor exercise equipment in the land to the rear of the building for use by all residents

The Parish Council could also decide to have an office there, and hold Parish Council meetings

*\*These could be cultural, recreational and/or sporting interests, so please say which one(s) apply.*

**Section C: Submitting this nomination**

- The rules of your organisation (question A8).
- Your sketch plan (question B2).

## Agenda Item 8

### C2 Signature

*By signing your name here (if submitting by post) or typing it (if submitting by email) you are confirming that the contents of this form are correct, to the best of your knowledge.*

Signature

*Handwritten signature* Executive Officer

### C3 Where to send this form

You can submit this nomination:-

- **By post to:** Jayne Pickering , Executive Director Finance and Resources, Bromsgrove District Council , Council House , Bromsgrove B60 1AA
- **By email to:** [j.pickering@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk](mailto:j.pickering@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk)

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## Part B: About the land or building(s) you are nominating

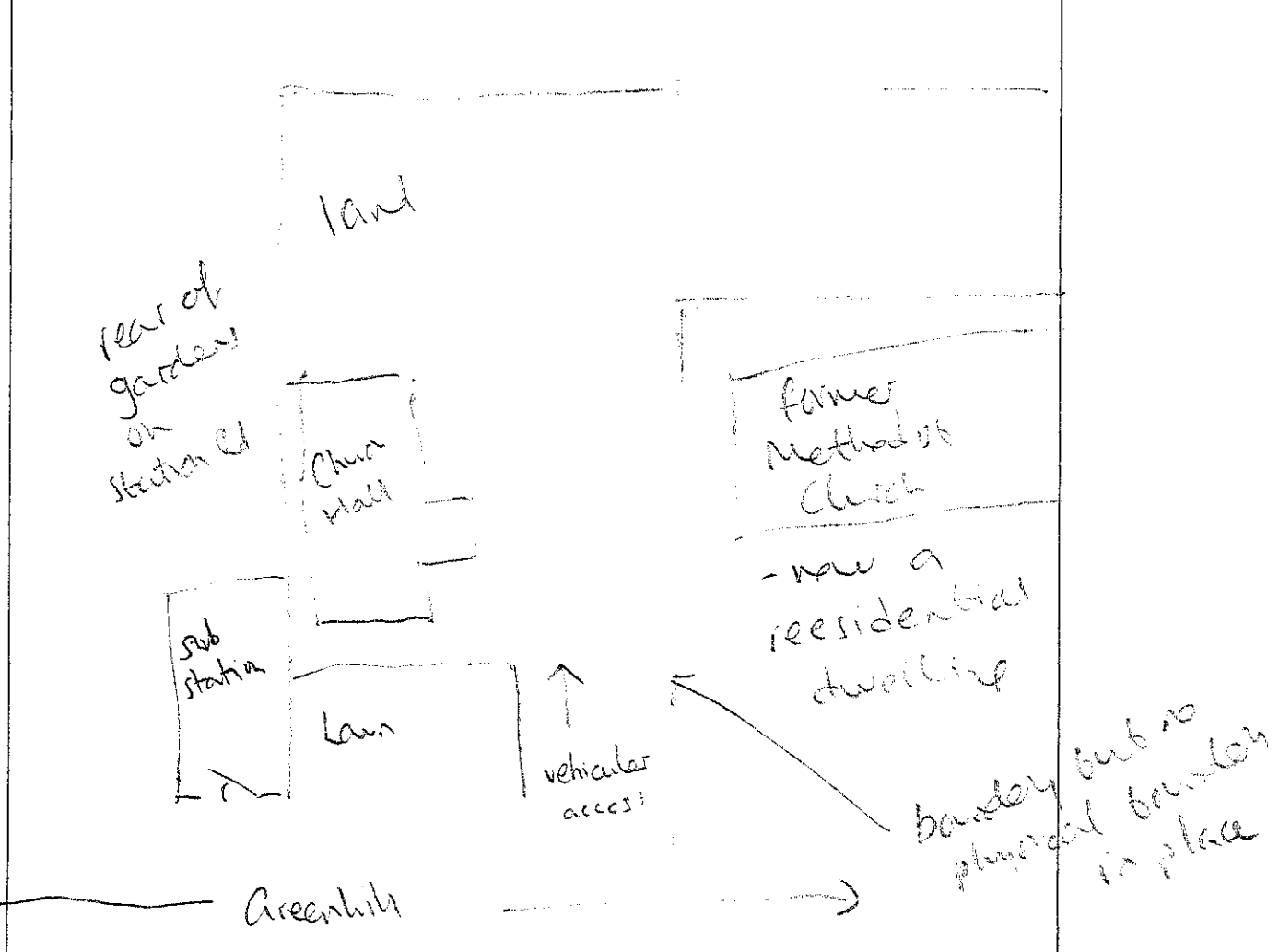
### B1 Description and address

What it is (eg. pub, local shop) Church hall
Name of premises (eg. Post office , Community Centre) Methodist Church Hall
Address including postcode (if known) Greenhill, Blackwell B60 1BL

### B2 Sketch plan

Please include (here or on a separate sheet) a sketch plan of the land. This should show:-

- The boundaries of the land that you are nominating
- The approximate size and position of any building(s) on the land.
- Any roads bordering the site.



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