



BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

YOU ARE HEREBY SUMMONED to attend a MEETING of BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL to be held in the Council Chamber at Parkside Suite - Parkside at 6.00 p.m. on Wednesday 21st September 2016, when the business referred to below will be brought under consideration:-

The formal business will be preceded by a prayer.

1. To receive apologies for absence

2. Declarations of Interest

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

3. To confirm the accuracy of the minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 20th July 2016 (Pages 1 - 12)

4. To receive any announcements from the Chairman and/or Head of Paid Service

5. To receive any announcements from the Leader

6. To receive comments, questions or petitions from members of the public

A period of up to 15 minutes is allowed for members of the public to make a comment, ask questions or present petitions. Each member of the public has up to 3 minutes to do this. A councillor may also present a petition on behalf of a member of the public.

7. Audit Findings Report 2015/16 - to consider recommendations from the Audit, Governance and Standards Committee held on 15th September 2016 (Background Reports have been previously circulated - recommendations to follow)

8. **Recommendations from the Cabinet** (Pages 13 - 14)

To consider the recommendations from the meeting of the Cabinet held on 7th September 2016:

- ICT Infrastructure Resource
- Bromsgrove Energy Efficiency Fund and Scheme
- Efficiency Plan

(The associated Cabinet reports are included at the back of the Council Book)

9. **To receive the minutes of the meetings of the Cabinet held on 7th September 2016** (Pages 15 - 22)

10. **To receive and consider a report from the Portfolio Holder for Finance, ICT, HR and Enabling Services** (Pages 23 - 30)

Up to 30 minutes is allowed for this item; no longer than 10 minutes for presentation of the report and then up to 3 minutes for each question to be put and answered.

11. **Appointments to Outside Bodies** (Pages 31 - 32)

To consider the report of the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services

12. **Membership of Committees**

To note the following changes to membership of Committees:

Planning – Councillor May has replaced Councillor Glass

Overview and Scrutiny Board – Councillor Laight has replaced Councillor Smith and Councillor Thompson replaces Councillor Bloore

Audit, Standards and Governance Committee – Councillor Griffiths has replaced Councillor Smith.

13. **Questions on Notice (To be circulated at the Meeting)**

A period of up to 15 minutes is allocated for the asking and answering of questions. This may be extended at the discretion of the Chairman with the agreement of the majority of those present.

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

14. **Motions on Notice (To follow if any)**

A period of up to one hour is allocated to consider the motions on notice. This may only be extended with the agreement of the Council.

Background Information on Recommendation from the Cabinet on 7th September 2016 - ICT Infrastructure Resource (Pages 33 - 36)

Background information on recommendation from the Cabinet on 7th September 2016 - Bromsgrove Energy Efficiency Fund and Scheme (Pages 37 - 46)

Background Information on recommendation from the Cabinet on 7th September 2016 - Efficiency Plan (Pages 47 - 54)

K. DICKS
Chief Executive

Parkside
Market Street
BROMSGROVE
Worcestershire
B61 8DA

TO ALL MEMBERS OF THE BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE COUNCIL

20TH JULY 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors H. J. Jones (Chairman), M. Glass (Vice-Chairman), C. Allen-Jones, M. T. Buxton, S. R. Colella, B. T. Cooper, R. J. Deeming, G. N. Denaro, R. L. Dent, J. M. L. A. Griffiths, C.A. Hotham, R. J. Laight, P. Lammas, L. C. R. Mallett, C. M. McDonald, P. M. McDonald, S. R. Peters, S. P. Shannon, M. A. Sherrey, R. D. Smith, C. B. Taylor, P.L. Thomas, M. Thompson, L. J. Turner, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker

24\16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

Apologies for absence were received from Councillors S. J. Baxter, C. B. Bloore, R. E. Jenkins, K. J. May and C. J. Spencer.

25\16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

There were no declarations of interest.

26\16 **ELECTION OF LEADER OF THE COUNCIL**

The following Councillors were proposed as Leader of the Council:

Councillor G. N. Denaro – proposed by Councillor C. B. Taylor and seconded by Councillor M. A. Sherrey

Councillor S. J. Baxter - proposed by Councillor S. R. Colella and seconded by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett

Following a show of hands it was

RESOLVED that Councillor G. N. Denaro be elected as Leader of the Council.

27\16 **THANKS TO THE RETIRING LEADER**

Councillor C. B. Taylor paid tribute to the work Councillor M. A. Sherrey had undertaken as Leader and thanked her for her efforts on behalf of the Council. Councillor Taylor also referred to the respect in which

Councillor Sherrey was held by the Leaders and senior officers at other Authorities.

Councillor G. N. Denaro fully supported the comments of Councillor Taylor and commented on the dedication of Councillor Sherrey to her role as Leader together with the significant amount of strategic work which she had initiated.

Councillor L. C. R. Mallett stated that whilst there were obviously political differences between himself and Councillor Sherrey he wanted to pay tribute to her honesty and diligence and thanked her for her work on behalf of the Council.

28\16

MINUTES

The minutes of the meeting of the Council held on 9th June 2016 were submitted.

In relation to Minute 18/16 (The government's Devolution Agenda – West Midland Combined Authority Potential Membership) Councillor L. C. R. Mallett requested that it be recorded that the Chief Executive had made a formal apology in respect of part of the contents of the report which had been submitted to Council.

In relation to Minute 22/16 (Question relating to Parkside) Councillor C. A. Hotham queried whether it was correct that the District Council would acquire 50% of the freehold of the building at the point of completion of the project or whether this should be at the start of the project. Councillor Denaro undertook to check the position and update Councillor Hotham.

RESOLVED that subject to the amendments referred to above, the minutes of the meeting of Council held on 9th June 2016 be approved as a correct record.

29\16

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE CHAIRMAN

The Chairman referred to the Annual Civic Service which would take place at St John's Church on 11th September 2016 at 3.00pm and invited all Members to attend.

30\16

ANNOUNCEMENTS FROM THE LEADER

The Leader referred to the following matters:

- He was in the process of reviewing the membership and roles of Cabinet and would announce details as soon as possible; in response to queries he confirmed that Councillor Taylor remained as Deputy Leader and that Councillor Whittaker had taken on

responsibility for economic development, in addition to the leisure portfolio, on a temporary basis.

- A report that the number of business start ups in Bromsgrove was the highest outside London;
- The completion of phase 1 of the development of the former Market Hall site. The Leader expressed thanks to the Legal team for their work on this. There would be a press release shortly regarding temporary changes to the use of the car park;
- The Leader reported increased foot fall figures and increased use of the Library and the Customer Service Centre at Parkside. In addition informal discussions with staff appeared to show a greater level of satisfaction with the building.

Councillor L. C. R. Mallett congratulated Councillor Denaro on his election as Leader.

Councillor Mallett commented that many of the Business start ups were likely to be underpinned by European Union funding and this may be adversely impacted in future following the recent referendum result that the UK should leave the European Union. The Leader responded that he understood that the District did not receive EU grant funding.

In relation to Parkside, Councillor Mallett commented that the success of the Library was to the benefit of the County Council and that the investment made by the District Council in the building could have been better spent elsewhere.

Councillor C. A. Hotham queried the staffing levels at Parkside and questioned the methodology behind the decision to move from Burcot Lane. Councillor Denaro referred to the reduction in costs.

31\16

QUESTIONS FROM MEMBERS OF THE PUBLIC

The Chairman announced that a question had been received from a member of the public.

Question from Ms Louise Humphreys

There has been no official news on the negotiations with BAM and whether the Council has agreed on a contract to hire the sports hall at North Bromsgrove High School for public use on the weekends and evenings.

However, we have heard unofficially that the Council have managed to secure weekend usage of North Bromsgrove High School sports hall but

that there will be no public access to the hall in the evening. We have also heard that the link that was planned to be built connecting the new leisure centre to North Bromsgrove High School sports hall will no longer be built.

Obviously this is very concerning as it now seems that the sports hall access Bromsgrove residents were promised after the Dolphin Centre sports hall has been knocked down is not going to be delivered. If there is going to be no access in the evenings, there will be nowhere for the badminton, gymnastics, football, martial arts clubs and other groups who currently use the sports hall in the evenings to go.

We know that something has been agreed with BAM as there are groups that have been offered use of North Bromsgrove High School sports hall on the weekend once the Dolphin Centre has been demolished.

Can you clear up any confusion and update us on whether the negotiations with BAM have been completed and if so what has been agreed? If the contracts haven't been completed can you update us on the current situation?

Councillor P. J. Whittaker commented that he as Portfolio Holder and the lead officer on this issue, Mr J. Godwin, had the most up to date information and were always available to answer any queries from members of the public.

Councillor Whittaker confirmed that contractors would be starting on the new site on 15th August. Whilst the design of the link which would allow access between the new Leisure Centre and the North Bromsgrove High School site had been amended slightly, there would still be access to all facilities.

Whilst some preliminary work had been undertaken, at present no-one had been offered any bookings. Some key bookings had been identified in the Contracts documentation and these would be protected. Discussions were still on going with BAM.

32\16

RECOMMENDATIONS FROM THE CABINET

Bromsgrove District Plan 2011-2030 Proposed Main Modifications

The recommendation from the Cabinet was proposed by Councillor C. B. Taylor and seconded by Councillor G. N. Denaro.

In proposing the recommendation Councillor Taylor reminded Members that this was the next stage in putting in place the Bromsgrove District Local Plan. The recommendation related to a public consultation on the modifications proposed by the Inspector. The public consultation had been extended to run for 8 weeks but would relate only to the modifications.

Points of concern expressed by Members included:

- many of the modifications to go out to consultation were those put forward by officers and were technical in nature:
- the modifications did not address the main concerns with the Local Plan which related mainly to the road network within Bromsgrove which was congested and inadequate even at present;
- suggestions for a western bypass which had been included in the 2004 Local Plan had not been included this time;
- there was a lack of transport infrastructure on the western side of Bromsgrove which was where much of the proposed housing development was to be located.

As an amendment it was proposed by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett and seconded by Councillor M. Thompson that no public consultation should commence at present, and that the Head of Planning Services and the Portfolio Holder for Planning write to the Planning Inspectorate expressing severe concerns in relation to the transport infrastructure within Bromsgrove and urging additional modifications to the Plan to address these concerns.

During the debate on the amendment, some Members expressed concern that there was not sufficient understanding at Worcestershire County Council about the traffic difficulties in Bromsgrove District. Also the view was expressed that further housing development would lead to additional pressure on schools and health services.

Councillor Taylor commented that the Draft Plan had already been through two public inquiries and that the Planning Inspectorate were fully aware of the highways issues within the District.

Some Members felt that at present the consultation would not give the public the opportunity to comment on the issues which were most important to them and that there was a danger that the Local Plan would be undeliverable.

On a requisition under Council Procedure Rule 18.3 the following details of the voting on the amendment were recorded:

For the Amendment: Councillors M. T. Buxton, S. R. Colella, C. A. Hotham, L. C. R. Mallett, P. M. McDonald, C. M. McDonald, S. P. Shannon, M. Thompson and L. J. Turner (9)

Against the Amendment: Councillors C. Allen-Jones, B. T. Cooper, R. J. Deeming, G. N. Denaro, R. L. Dent, M. Glass, J. M. L. A. Griffiths, R. L.

Laight, P. Lammas, S. R. Peters, M. A. Sherrey, R. D. Smith, C. B. Taylor P. L. Thomas, S. A. Webb and P. J. Whittaker (16)

The amendment was declared lost.

During the debate on the substantive motion Councillor Taylor offered to arrange a meeting to discuss the highways issues with the Chief Executive of Worcestershire County Council if this was requested.

RESOLVED that the recommended Main Modifications of the Inspector as set out in Appendix 1 of the report be noted and that officers be authorised to proceed with an 8 week consultation on the Main Modifications to run from 27th July 2016 to 21st September 2016. Details of the method of consultation are as set out in paragraphs 3.47 to 3.50 of the report.

Statement of Community Involvement and Local Development Scheme

The recommendations from the Cabinet were proposed by Councillor C. B. Taylor and seconded by Councillor G. N. Denaro.

In proposing the recommendations Councillor Taylor reminded Members that the Council was required to maintain a number of documents in relation to the Local Plan including the Statement of Community Involvement and the Local Development Scheme.

During the debate on this item the following points were raised:

- Neighbourhood Plans and the budget provision for these - Councillor Taylor undertook to give a written answer on this;
- The incorrect address had been included for Wythall Library which had relocated;
- In the list of statutory consultees there was a need for clarification regarding Highways Authority and Highways England;
- Concern regarding the lack of a decision whether or not to introduce a Community Infrastructure Levy;
- A request for a paper copy of documentation to be made available for public inspection at Barnt Green Parish Office.

Councillor Taylor undertook to follow up these matters.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the revised LDS as set out in Appendix 1 to the report be adopted as the Council's LDS;

- (b) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration services in conjunction with the relevant Portfolio Holder to review and publish amended LDS timetables for the publication of the Development Plan Documents;
- (c) that the draft SCI as set out in Appendix 2 to the report be approved for publication as part of a six week period of public consultation during September/October 2016; and
- (d) that delegated authority be granted to the Head of Planning and Regeneration services in conjunction with the relevant Portfolio Holder to consider the response to the public consultation and, subject to no significant issues arising, to amend and adopt the SCI.

Finance Monitoring Report 2015/16

The recommendations from the Cabinet were proposed by Councillor G. N. Denaro and seconded by Councillor C. B. Taylor.

In proposing the recommendations Councillor Denaro referred to the proposal to make amendments to the reserves.

During the debate on this matter Members raised concerns over the Council's financial management which had led to the transfer of £330k to balances. Some Members felt that the funding could have been utilised for the provision of services, or that the need for an increase in Council Tax may have been avoided, had budgetary control been more effective.

There was a query in relation to Capital Expenditure underspends. Councillor Denaro responded that the delay in implementing the vehicle replacement programme was due to the need to for the decisions to be taken in the light of outcomes from the Place Teams. This would ensure the most effective use was made of the budget available.

Councillor Denaro accepted that there was an underspend of £330k and that this was of some concern, however this was a considerable improvement over previous years and he would be continuing to work with officers in order to address issues Members had raised and to further improve budgetary control.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the movements of £63k in existing reserves as included in Appendix 2 to the report which reflects the approval required for April-March 2016 be approved; and
- (b) that the addition of new reserves of £197k as included in Appendix 2 to the report which reflects the approval required for April-March 2016 be approved.

33\16

MINUTES OF THE MEETING OF THE CABINET HELD ON 6TH JULY 2016

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th July 2016 were received for information.

34\16

CHANGES TO THE CONSTITUTION - STATEMENT OF ACCOUNTS

Council considered a report of the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services regarding proposed arrangements for dealing with the Statement of Accounts and Audit Findings.

Councillor G. N. Denaro stated that the report related to the mechanism for bringing the Statement of Accounts and Audit Findings to the Council. The Constitution Working Group had recommended that the Statement of Accounts and Audit Findings be considered by the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee in future rather than by the Cabinet. That Committee would then make recommendations to Council.

The Chairman of the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee, Councillor R. D. Smith reminded Council that all Members had the opportunity to attend the Audit Standards and Governance Committee on 15th September 2016 and to put questions to the Council's external auditors.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the Statement of Accounts and Audit Findings reports be considered each year by the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee with the recommendations being made to the Council;
- (b) that when considering these reports the Committee invites all Councillors to attend;
- (c) that the Cabinet meeting scheduled for 21st September 2016 (immediately before the Council meeting) be cancelled;
- (d) that the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services be authorised to update the constitution accordingly.

35\16

OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD ANNUAL REPORT

As Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor L. C. R. Mallett presented the Board's Annual Report for 2015/16.

In presenting the report Councillor Mallett drew attention to the work of the Board and of various Task Groups during the year. Councillor Mallett thanked Members of the Board and the then Vice-Chairman Councillor K. J. May for their support and thanked officers, in particular Amanda Scarce and Jess Bayley, for their hard work in supporting the Board.

It was noted that a Finance and Budget Scrutiny Working Group and a Working Group to review the Corporate Measures Dashboard were to be established.

36\16

REPORT FROM THE PORTFOLIO HOLDER FOR FINANCE, ICT, HR AND ENABLING SERVICES

Councillor Denaro reported on his recent attendance at the Local Government Association Conference. A number of issues of interest had arisen as part of the Conference activities:

The Minister had now announced there was to be a consultation on Business rates so therefore any clarification on what was to be proposed in respect of the Business Rates system would be delayed. It was clear however that any reform would need to be financially neutral and any increase in Business Rates would be used to fund a range of new responsibilities.

Additional information on the impact of the Business Rates retention scheme would be submitted to the Overview and Scrutiny Finance and Budget Working Group for discussion.

In relation to Asset Realisation and Joint Venture arrangements it was reported that it may be possible to work in tandem with developers on the future of the Burcot Lane site. This may provide additional income rather than just a capital receipt, but may also address some of the shortfall in Social Housing provision figures.

Diversification for Councils had also been a theme at the Conference. Councillor Denaro reported that evaluation was on going regarding the possibility of this Council in conjunction with Redditch Borough Council, creating a non profit company to act as an energy provider which would enable local residents on pre-payment meters to take advantage of lower energy tariffs.

37\16

QUESTIONS ON NOTICE

Question submitted by Councillor M. Thompson

“What actions have been taken since the referendum to assess the impact, on Bromsgrove, of the UK leaving the European Union and what has been identified as the key risks to the District?”

The Leader responded that officers had undertaken a preliminary assessment of the impact on the Council of the referendum decision to leave the European Union. No EU funding attributable to Council Services was included within the Medium Term Financial Plan and there was no direct impact on funding streams.

There had been a discussion with the Council's External Auditors Grant Thornton and information on the types of agreement which may be put in place nationally would be forwarded direct to Members.

It was noted that the impact of the change would not be fully known until the final arrangements had been agreed but in the meantime officers would continue to review issues such as employee arrangements and impact on customers and businesses so that the Council could address any risks associated with the exit plans in the future.

Question submitted by Councillor M. T. Buxton

“Can the Leader or Portfolio Holder for Planning tell me what arrangements have been made to liaise with the Worcestershire Highways about long term road safety improvements in the Churchfields/Recreation Road area, while building work is being done on the Extra Care Village site, for the safety of the current users and the increased elderly population when they take up residence?”

Councillor C. B. Taylor referred to some of the conditions attached to the Planning Consent in respect of the development. A Construction Management Plan and a Traffic Management Plan were in place and he was able to send details to Councillor Buxton if required. If appropriate he was happy to arrange for a discussion on highway safety in the vicinity of the development, with Worcestershire County Council Highways and Councillor Buxton.

Question submitted by Councillor S. P. Shannon

“Discarded hot food takeaway containers and wrappings are a regular unsightly scene on Parkside Car Park. The litter/rubbish is left by large groups of car enthusiasts who gather on the car park regularly throughout the summer evenings. In between driving round their “circuit” of town centre, Worcester Road and the by pass they stop for refreshments on Parkside discarding boxes and wrappings onto the car park.

With the knowledge that WMP officers have handed over responsibility for litter enforcement to local councils as part of the move to decriminalise some offences. Does the Leader agree that it's time that BDC car park enforcement team, with assistance if necessary from BDC CCTV Control Room make an effort to drive the message home to those that choose to spoil our town by dumping their rubbish in public places and start issuing the fixed penalty notices that they are now authorised to issue?”

Councillor P. J. Whittaker responded that he was not aware of any particular issues of this kind in relation to this car park. The Place Team had not reported any increase in such incidents.

This Council did have responsibility under the Environmental Protection Act to deal with litter and could issue Fixed Penalty Notices in some circumstances. Councillor Whittaker urged that any problems also be addressed through better education in schools as all parties had a part to play in tackling the problem of litter.

It would be helpful if any specific instances were brought forward through the Portfolio Holder and the Ward Member.

38\16

MOTIONS ON NOTICE - CONDEMNATION OF HATE CRIMES

Members considered the following motion submitted by Councillor G. N. Denaro:

“We are proud to live in a diverse and tolerant society. Racism, xenophobia and hate crimes have no place in our country. We Bromsgrove District Council condemn racism, xenophobia and hate crimes unequivocally. We will not allow hate to become acceptable.

Councillors and officers of Bromsgrove District Council will continue to work to support local bodies and programmes such as North Worcestershire Hate Incident Partnership, to prevent and tackle racism and xenophobia.

We reassure all people living in Bromsgrove that they are valued members of our community.”

The motion was moved by Councillor Denaro and seconded by Councillor M. Thompson.

In moving the motion Councillor Denaro referred to the work undertaken by the North Worcestershire Community Safety Partnership Team in working with individuals and communities to facilitate the reporting of hate crimes. It was important that all victims of hate crime reported incidents to the Police.

During the debate Members spoke of the importance of addressing hate crimes, and of celebrating diversity.

On being put to the vote the Chairman declared the motion to be carried.

39\16

NOTICE OF MOTION - PERFORMANCE MANAGEMENT

Members considered the following notice of motion submitted by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett:

“Council is concerned regarding the management of performance at Bromsgrove District Council. Council believes this is impacting negatively on local taxpayers. Council calls on the new administration to

Agenda Item 3

Council
20th July 2016

work cross party to review all arrangements for performance management.”

The motion was proposed by Councillor L. C. R. Mallett and seconded by Councillor P. M. McDonald.

In proposing the motion Councillor Mallett spoke about the importance of effective performance management in relation to the delivery of Council services and the subsequent impact on local residents.

It was suggested that the processes of the Council had given rise to failings. Also, at present there was a lack of focus on performance management with the basic elements, including regular appraisals for all staff, not being in place. In addition the Performance Dashboard was not well used.

During the debate the view was expressed that the lack of a Monitoring Board meant there were no structures in place to effectively monitor performance and that it was important that the Council could understand where there were areas of weakness and address them.

In response the Leader confirmed that there was agreement that some processes required revision and that he anticipated working with the Leaders of the opposition groups in relation to this.

The Leader referred to the following specific issues:

- a new dynamic framework would be rolled out for appraisals and assessment of all staff, not just annually but as an on going process. The Chief Executive would be receiving his PDR shortly followed by the Management Team and other staff;
- a skills matrix was being developed to include both generic and specialist skills;
- work was on going on a Corporate Training Plan;
- some Members were trialling access to the performance dashboard via iPads and all staff had access to the dashboard;
- a revised Corporate Performance Strategy and Council Plan would be considered by Members in September.

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

The meeting closed at 8.30 p.m.

Chairman

CABINET

RECOMMENDATIONS TO THE COUNCIL

7TH SEPTEMBER 2016

1. ICT INFRASTRUCTURE RESOURCE

The Cabinet has considered a report on a proposal to address an ongoing problem experienced relating to the recruitment and retention of staff with certain specialised technical skills in respect of the ICT infrastructure.

It is RECOMMENDED

- (a) that the proposal for the functions provided by the ICT infrastructure roles be outsourced to an external provider;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Transformation and organisational Development to undertake a tendering process to identify a suitable supplier to undertake the ICT infrastructure functions; and
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services to finalise and enter into a suitable legal agreement with the supplier identified under (b) above.

2. BROMSGROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND AND SCHEME

The Cabinet has considered a report on a proposal to set up an Energy Efficiency Fund and Scheme which would assist home owners within the District to heat their homes more reliably and at a lower cost. This would involve assistance with heating system improvements and other cost efficient energy measures.

It is RECOMMENDED: that the capital budget of £100,000 previously allocated to disabled facilities grants be transferred to a capital budget for funding the installation of energy efficiency measures and that this be split over 3 years as follows:

2016/2017 - £34,000

2017/2018 - £33,000

2018/2019 - £33,000

3. EFFICIENCY PLAN

The Cabinet has considered a report on the Council's Efficiency Plan 2016/2017/ - 2019/2020.

It is RECOMMENDED that the Efficiency Plan 2016/2017 – 2019/2020 as set out in Appendix A to the report be approved for submission to Central Government to enable a four year financial settlement to be secured.

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

MEETING OF THE CABINET

7TH SEPTEMBER 2016 AT 6.00 P.M.

PRESENT: Councillors G. N. Denaro (Leader), C. B. Taylor (Deputy Leader), K.J. May, R. D. Smith and P. J. Whittaker

Observers: Councillors S. R. Colella, M. Glass, C. A. Hotham, L. C. R. Mallet and P. L. Thomas

Officers: Ms S. Hanley, Ms J. Pickering, Ms D. Poole, Mr J. Godwin, Mrs S. Sellers, Mr M. Hanwell, Ms R. Dunne, Mr S. Shammon, Ms K. Manning and Ms R. Cole.

17/16 **APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE**

There were no apologies for absence.

18/16 **DECLARATIONS OF INTEREST**

Councillor K. J. May referred to an other interest which she had previously declared in respect of item 15 relating to the New Inn, Bournheath.

The Leader indicated that this item was to be withdrawn.

19/16 **MINUTES**

The minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th July 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Cabinet held on 6th July 2016 be approved as a correct record.

20/16 **OVERVIEW AND SCRUTINY BOARD**

The Leader welcomed the Chairman of the Overview and Scrutiny Board, Councillor L. C. R. Mallett to the meeting.

The minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 27th June 2016 and 8th August 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meetings of the Overview and Scrutiny Board held on 27th June 2016 and 8th August 2016 be noted.

21/16

WORCESTERSHIRE REGULATORY SERVICES BOARD

The minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services Board held on 22nd June 2016 were submitted.

RESOLVED that the minutes of the meeting of the Worcestershire Regulatory Services board held on 22nd June 2016 be noted.

22/16

ICT INFRASTRUCTURE RESOURCE

(The Leader reported that this item was no longer considered to be a Confidential or Exempt item and that therefore there was no requirement to exclude the public from the meeting whilst it was considered.)

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposal to address an ongoing problem experienced by the Authority relating to the retention and recruitment of staff with certain specialised technical skills in respect of the ICT infrastructure. It was reported that the staff in these posts performed a key role in maintaining day to day delivery of the Authority's ICT service, including ensuring that the servers and storage enabling business applications to work were operating successfully.

Members noted that the proposed solution was to outsource to an external provider this small section of the ICT Team which involved two posts one of which was currently vacant. This was to address the particular issue described within the report of recruiting and retaining suitable staff. The organisational approach overall would continue to be to share internal resource.

It was reported that at present the cost to the Council of providing the service was currently £34,093 and it was anticipated that following a competitive exercise, the new cost would be approximately £30,000 in the first year. A charge of £225 per month would be made to any supplier retaining members of staff on BDC premises. It was noted that the approach would require the Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment of two posts (one of which was currently vacant).

Following discussion it was

RECOMMENDED:

- (a) that the proposal for the functions provided by the ICT infrastructure roles be outsourced to an external provider;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Transformation and organisational Development to undertake a tendering process to identify a suitable supplier to undertake the ICT infrastructure functions; and
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services to finalise and enter into a suitable legal agreement with the supplier identified under (b) above.

23/16

CABINET APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

The Cabinet considered a report on a review of appointments made by Cabinet to a number of Outside Bodies. The review was required following the change in the Leader of the Council and the subsequent reorganisation of Cabinet portfolios.

RESOLVED that the appointments be made to the bodies as listed in the appendix to the report.

24/16

NEW HOMES BONUS COMMUNITY GRANTS AWARDS

The Cabinet considered the report on the findings and recommendations of the New Homes Bonus Community Grants Panel. The report related to the grants recommended to be made for 2016/17 and also made recommendations in respect of the future allocation of the balance of the unallocated funding from the 2015/16 process and from this year which together totalled £72,328.

In accordance with Cabinet procedure rules and with the agreement of the Leader, Councillor S. R. Colella spoke on this issue.

Councillor Colella referred to the proposed grants awarded within the Hagley area. These comprised £10,000 to Hagley Scouts for a mini bus (which was the full amount requested) and £5,948 to Hagley Football Club for a Community Pavilion (£20,000 requested).

Councillor Colella expressed appreciation for the sums already awarded but requested that consideration be given to increasing the amount in respect of the Hagley Community Pavilion.

In support of this Councillor Colella stated that the pavilion would be used by a number of organisations and groups within Hagley as there was no similar provision at present. The facility would contribute towards this Council's commitment to promote Health and Well Being within the District and would help to address the impact of social isolation particularly in an ageing population. Councillor Colella felt that the scheme met the Council's requirements that projects provided a sustainable legacy which supported the Council's strategic purposes. It was hoped that the project would be completed in 2017 so it would not be possible to submit a further application next year as this would be a retrospective application.

Cabinet noted that the total of £15, 948 awarded to the Hagley Wards was the maximum amount under the 2016/17 scheme which had been drawn up to reflect the number of properties completed during 2014/15 which was the latest year for which the data was available.

Members were however mindful of the resources required to administer the scheme and did not wish to see balances of funding continue to “roll over” from year to year.

The Cabinet expressed thanks to the NHB Community Grants Panel for the work they had undertaken so far but felt that further consideration was required by the Panel particularly in respect of the proposal that further bids be capped at £3,500.

RESOLVED:

- (a) that the grants as detailed in the summary of the NHB Grants Panel recommendations attached as appendix 1 to the report be approved; and
- (b) that the NHB panel be requested to meet to reconsider any additional qualifying bids within the terms of the scheme in respect of the remaining balance of £72,328, taking into consideration the suggestion by Cabinet that the maximum award should not be capped as low as £3,500.

25/16

BROMSGROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND AND SCHEME

The Cabinet considered a report on a proposal to set up an Energy Efficiency Fund and Scheme which would assist home owners within the District to heat their homes more reliably and at a lower cost. This would involve assistance with heating system improvements and other cost efficient energy measures.

It was proposed that the scheme would be delivered by this Council’s energy efficiency advice partner “Act on Energy” who had provided a number of other projects within Worcestershire. The details of funding for the scheme, including the capital funding, were set out in section 3 of the report.

Members noted the details of the proposal as set out within the report. In particular the health benefits arising from warmer homes and the links between an Energy Efficiency scheme and two of the Council’s strategic purposes “Help me to be financially independent” and “Help me to live my life independently”.

Following discussion it was

RESOLVED:

- (a) that an Energy Efficiency Fund and associated Scheme for home owners in Bromsgrove District be launched and delivered from autumn 2016 – 2019;
- (b) that authority be delegated to the Head of Community services to finalise details of the approved scheme and in consultation with the Portfolio for Strategic Housing to make minor amendments to the scheme and review the scheme as required; and
- (c) that authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to agree a legal contract with Act on Energy to deliver the scheme.

RECOMMENDED that the capital budget of £100,000 previously allocated to disabled facilities grants be transferred to a capital budget for funding the installation of energy efficiency measures and that this be split over 3 years as follows:

2016/2017 - £34,000

2017/2018 - £33,000

2018/2019 - £33,000

26/16

ANIMAL WELFARE MATTERS - COUNCIL OWNED LAND

Cabinet considered a report on a proposed policy in respect of Animal, Bird and Fish Welfare at Events on Council Owned land.

It was noted that the policy as revised had arisen from a Notice of Motion from Council earlier in the year and that as a result of this, Councillors M. Thompson and B. T. Cooper had been involved in the process.

Cabinet considered the policy and it was

RESOLVED that that the policy relating to Animal, Bird and Fish Welfare at Events on Council Land be approved and adopted.

27/16

SPONSORSHIP POLICY UPDATE

The Cabinet considered an updated Sponsorship and Advertising policy attached as an appendix to the report. The policy now included a section relating to types of unacceptable sponsorship which had previously been included within the Sponsorship Agreement.

It was noted that the sponsorship process had now also been included within the policy to improve the clarity of the procedures.

RESOLVED that the updated Sponsorship and Advertising Policy be approved and adopted.

28/16

THE COUNCIL PLAN

The Leader requested Cabinet to defer consideration of the draft Council Plan.

The Council Plan was not subject to statutory deadlines and it was felt that whilst it was a very good document there was an opportunity for some additional work to be undertaken before it was formally considered. It was intended this would be before the end of the year.

RESOLVED that consideration of the Council Plan be deferred.

29/16

CORPORATE PERFORMANCE STRATEGY

Members considered a report on the proposed Corporate Performance Strategy, including how performance would be reported across the Council.

Members discussed the importance of the use of the Measures Dashboard which should give live sets of data and would enable officers and Members to be more proactive and to use the Dashboard on a daily basis. Additional training and familiarisation sessions for Members were being arranged.

RESOLVED that the Corporate Performance Strategy attached as an appendix to the report be approved.

30/16

EFFICIENCY PLAN

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's Efficiency Plan 2016/2017 – 2019/2020.

Members were reminded that the submission of an Efficiency Plan to the Secretary of State would provide certainty regarding the financial settlement from Central Government over a four year period. It was noted that the New Homes Bonus funding was the subject of a separate consultation and therefore did not form part of the settlement.

It was reported that there had been no specific guidance from Government regarding what was to be included in the Efficiency Plan. It was anticipated however that the basis would be the Medium Term Financial Plan and information from the Council Plan. This would provide the information to the Government as to how the Council is aiming to deliver its strategic purposes to the community within the reduced funding it will be receiving.

It was noted that the Council did not accept the methodology of "negative grant" and that there was an expectation this would be offset by changes to the Business rate legislation.

The Executive Director Finance and Resources referred to the work undertaken by Directors and Heads of Service in providing best estimates in respect of the savings, efficiencies and additional income which could be achieved to address the budget pressures over the four year period.

RECOMMENDED that the Efficiency Plan 2016/2017 – 2019/2020 as set out in appendix A to the report, be approved for submission to Central Government to enable a four year financial settlement to be secured.

31/16

QUARTER 1 FINANCIAL MONITORING REPORT

The Cabinet considered a report on the Council's financial position for Revenue and Capital for Quarter 1 2016/17.

It was noted that there were some variances including an increase in income from planning fees due to two significant applications and a decrease in car parking income. It was queried whether this was related to the Hanover Street Car Park and information would be sought on this from the Head of Environmental Services.

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

32/16

APPLICATION FOR INCLUSION ON ASSET OF COMMUNITY VALUE REGISTER - THE NEW INN, BOURNHEATH

It was reported that following the need to defer this application at the last Cabinet the application was now out of time and under the relevant regulations it would not be possible for a decision on designation to be made. It would therefore be placed on the unsuccessful register with an explanatory note.

The meeting closed at 7.15 p.m.

Chairman

This page is intentionally left blank

Bromsgrove District Council 21st September 2016

Report of the Portfolio Holder for Finance, ICT, HR, and Enabling Services

Aligned to “Help me to be Financially Independent”

I am pleased to present an update report to the Council about the areas covered by my portfolio. In doing so I would like both to look back over recent events and forward to emerging issues.

FINANCIAL SUPPORT UPDATE

Provision of financial support through Housing Benefits, Council Tax Support (CTS), Discretionary Housing Payments (DHP), and the Essential Living Fund (ELF) is delivered through staff in the Revenues, Benefits and Customer Services team.

The team work with customers to identify their needs and then establish the best approach for helping the customer with their specific issues. Many customers have transactional needs such as ‘collect the right amount of money owed’, ‘process my benefits claim in a timely manner’, ‘if I am entitled to financial support, help me claim the right amount’, and ‘make it easy for me to pay anything I have to pay the Council’.

For these customers the emphasis is on timely and accurate processing of information and claims and providing a wide variety of payment mechanisms.

However, some customers have more complex needs and for these we try to help customers to access a wider range of financial support and advice to address immediate needs as well as try to help improve financial independence and make sustainable choices for the future.

During the last 12 months have implemented the following new initiatives:

- Placed a benefits officer within the BDHT rents team to directly deal with benefits claims and enquiries arising from customers who present to BDHT officers.
- Extended the financial independence team to deal with customers identified as being in financial hardship.
- Carried out a trial in respect of Housing Benefits overpayments to identify how we can maximise recovery.
- Developed a shared ‘compliance’ team who are identifying where both Council Tax and NDR collection rates could be maximised.

- Supporting the DWP Universal Credit roll out through a joint delivery partnership.
- Quality assurance regimes for benefit claims.

The key challenges and up and coming issues in the near future include:

- The introduction of a further benefits cap.
- The next phase of Universal Credit Roll out.
- Implementation of a unified Revenues and Benefits system.
- Implementation of e-benefits.

Officers are starting to work with RSL and other agencies to ensure that those affected by the benefit cap will be supported. The benefit cap will not impact on people in receipt of disability benefits and emphasis is on helping people back into work. Officers will provide advice and support to help customers with transitional arrangements.

We don't currently have a date for the next phase of UC roll out but we know from current experience that this will bring challenges administratively. In particular is the impact on the Council Tax Support Scheme which does no longer mirrors national benefits resulting in increased administrative burdens.

The unified Revenues and Benefits system project plan is progressing on target and the expected go-live date is December 2016. This will bring considerable administrative improvements, streamline processing of straightforward claims and provide customers with easy to access methods of reporting changes in their circumstances. This is a major project and, along with ensuring acceptable service levels on the current system, is the primary focus of the team at present.

The work of the Compliance Team has been of considerable benefit with expected increases in collection of Council Tax as a result. 182 properties which had been empty long term have been bought back into use as a result of the work of this team since February 2016.

ELECTORAL UPDATE

- Polls held in Bromsgrove District Council Area
- Household Enquiry From Canvass
- Promotion

There have been two major polls held in Bromsgrove District Area this year. The Police and Crime Commissioner Election for the West Mercia Region on 5 May and the National Referendum on the European Union held on 23 June. Both polls covered the whole of the District Area but were held on different franchises. The PCC held on a local election franchise and the Referendum on a Parliamentary one.

There were a couple of new polling places used in these polls which the Electoral Matters Committee will be reviewing before the County Council Elections to be held next year.

Police and Crime Commissioner (PCC) Elections

In May, six candidates stood for the Commissioner post (five Party Candidates and one Independent).

A total of 54 polling stations were used during the PCC elections employing 155 polling staff. In addition to those attending the polling station 10,332 chose to vote by post (of which 11 were sent overseas) and there were 28 proxy voters appointed.

Due to the expected lower turnout than in most other elections, it was decided to use the Abbey Stadium in Redditch to count both Redditch and Bromsgrove. Votes were verified on Thursday evening and the Police Area Returning Officer (PARO) gave the direction that the first stage of the Count be completed by 2pm on Friday. The second stage of the count was completed by 3.30pm. After all the second stage counts across the police area were complete the Conservative Candidate was elected, the declaration being made by the PARO in Shrewsbury.

There was an increase in turnout from the 2012 PCC elections from 9,777 votes to 13,110 voting (of an electorate of 72,858).

Referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union

On the 23rd June the Referendum on the UK's membership of the European Union was held. This had been particularly difficult to organise due to the timetable of the PCC election overlapping with it.

There was an increase in the electorate to 74,170 (which did not include the majority of other EU citizens). Postal vote numbers increased to 12,600 (109 of these were for electors overseas) from the previous 10,332 and proxy voters increased to 589 from 11.

Polling stations were very busy, but no significant queues were reported, although extra Poll Clerks needed to be brought in to help with the constant flow of electors at Hagley Community Centre. The 58 polling stations were staffed by 173 Presiding Officers and Poll Clerks.

The count held on the Thursday night was in the Dolphin Centre Sports Hall due to the size of the turnout, which, once all votes were verified, was announced as 79.35%. Out of the 58,855 counted votes 26,252 wished to Remain and 32,563 voted to Leave. 40 ballot papers were rejected.

Household Enquiry Form Canvass

Even though people are required to register individually, the Electoral Registration Officer still has to conduct a canvass of all properties within the District, this needs to be completed by the end of November. Due to having two large polls the start of the canvass was delayed. Forms have now been delivered and are being returned via post, internet, phone or text giving households as much choice as possible. The return for Bromsgrove currently (24 August) stands at 40.1%.

Electoral Registration Promotion

Electoral Services Staff are hoping to work with the Cabinet Office to promote Electoral Registration in the area. This is in addition to staff visiting care homes and working with schools on electoral promotion.

LEGAL UPDATE

The legal team operate as a support service providing advice and guidance to elected Members and officers and doing the legal work associated with Council services. We aim to ensure that the decisions of the Council are legal and proportionate, the actions and decisions of the Council are in the public interest and all Council documentation is robust. From time to time we represent the Council in Civil and Criminal proceedings and we also provide contracted external legal support to other public organisations.

DEMOCRATIC SERVICES UPDATE

Democratic Services have been supporting Councillors in their varied roles through the year. I would like to draw Councillors' attention to a couple of items:

Overview and Scrutiny

Council has received the annual report from the Chairman of Overview and Scrutiny at the last Council meeting reflecting the constructive working relationship that has been developed over the last year or so between O&S and the Cabinet. We have seen proactive, cross party pre-scrutiny of a number of items. Building on this the Finance and Budget working Group and the Performance Dashboard Working Group are looking closely at two important elements of our work programme, to help inform how we approach the difficult decisions awaiting us in preparing the Medium Term Financial Plan and ensuring that members are able to challenge and celebrate as appropriate the performance of services.

The Constitution

As part of our on-going commitment to ensure that the constitution accurately reflects the way that we conduct our business as a Council we have started to review the changes made to the constitution after the elections last year, of which this report is an example. Arising from the Constitution Working Group meeting we have also identified other areas to review and update and will bring forward recommendations in the coming months. As members of this Council we are all responsible for this document and I would urge members to feed into their group leaders any proposed discussion items.

Other Boards and Committees

As a result of recent changes to Board and Committee membership I hope that all Group Leaders will work with me to ensure that the member support programme continues to reflect the things that members need to enable them to work effectively for our residents. As ever this has to be driven by us.

ICT

- Migrated all PC's/Laptops from Windows XP to Windows 7;
- Migrated the majority of servers from Server 2003 to Server 2008/2012;
- Upgraded storage capacity on the corporate network;
- Trialled access for Members to the measures dashboard;
- Gained PSN (Public Services Network) accreditation for 2015/16;
- Gained SOCITM (Society for IT managers) Insight accreditation for BDC and RBC websites;
- Continued Business Transformation of the ICT helpdesk.

HR & OD

- Supporting services reviews including WRS, Environmental Services etc;
- TUPE – Burt Buses, Trading Standards;
- Rolled out trial for self-service access for managers to the HR technical system - HR21;
- Supported Time to Talk initiative;
- Continued to develop organisation wide support for apprenticeships – has resulted in 9 placements so far;
- Currently working with DWP to extend our work experience placements;
- Reviewed Occupational Health and Employee Assistance Programme Scheme;
- Transformation trial undertaken to improve our approach to recruitment and sickness reporting/monitoring;
- Currently undertaking a trial in the use of a corporate skills matrix. This links into the System Performance Framework and annual appraisal process that is being developed;

- Continued implementation of recommendations from the H&S Audit including formal approval of 7 H&S Policies.

POLICY

- Carried out a review of the measures dashboard to streamline the technical design and to develop a more focused set of measures with the officers responsible;
- Ongoing work with service areas to develop operational measures which meet their service requirements;
- Continued support for the rebranded 'Bromsgrove Engagement & Equalities Forum' (formerly Bromsgrove Equality & Diversity Forum), which now meet at Parkside;
- Launched successful new Equalities Grants process in Bromsgrove, supporting 17 different projects during the pilot, ranging from events such as Diwali to targeted activities for bereaved young people and individuals experiencing isolation:
 - First round of the 2016/17 Grants has been positive with members of the Forum scoring the applications.
- Successful celebration of LGB&T History Month across Bromsgrove.

TRANSFORMATION

- Put together "System Performance Framework" – guide to support managers and team members to get the most out of one to ones, annual appraisals and general day to day activities. This has been trialled in a number of service areas with positive feedback and will be rolled out to the wider organisation by the end of the year;
- Facilitated and supported a trial in Parks services – where Leisure & Environmental operatives have worked together to remove duplication in contacts from the public as well as working practices;
- Established CMTs & fourth tier Managers principles which have been combined to formulate a set of corporate wide principles for improving practices and behaviours;
- Supported the scope/set up and commencement of the Connecting Families project;
- Supported a recruitment trial in HR to improve the way people are recruited to the organisation;
- Supported a trial in HR relating to sickness to improve the reporting and management of sickness at a dept. level. This also includes an upgrade to the current HR software application used for the administration of sickness data and reporting;
- Setup and currently supporting a trial in Payments to look at ways of improving the service.

FINANCE

Assessing the impact of the continued financial pressures facing the Council have been the focus for the finance team in ensuring that funding is available to meet our strategic purposes and that any consultation responses detail in full the impact to the District. This has included the financial settlement, whereby, in working with the other 14 Councils most affected by the negative grant, we were successful in securing transitional grant for 2 years. In addition the Government removed the negative grant for 2017/18 and 2018/19 - however this still stands for 2019/20 and therefore continued pressure on delivering savings and growth are the key to sustainability in the future. Proposed changes to the business rate system of allocation are currently under consultation and review and the Efficiency Plan to 2019/20 is presented to this meeting for Members' consideration.

The focus over the last few months for the accountancy team has been closedown of the 2015/16 accounts which were presented to our external auditors within the prescribed deadline of 30th June. At the time of preparing this report, I can confirm that the Audit has gone smoothly and the External Auditors opinion on the accounts will be presented to this Council meeting having been considered by the Audit, Standards and Governance Committee. The finance team are now focusing on the preparation of the updated Medium Term Financial Plan to ensure that we have a robust budget for the next 4 years.

Other projects currently being undertaken are the roll out of the online functionality of the finance system to enable managers to view and interrogate their accounts and a pilot of changes to the payments system to make the process more efficient for both officers and contractors.

EMERGENCY PLANNING

The Council continues to build its resilience and preparedness over the last few months. There has been a particular focus on the Duty Incident Response Officers receiving seasonal briefings in order to prepare them for the incidents traditionally experienced over the coming months, alongside broader potential incidents, and exercising documented contingency arrangements. There has also been significant activity with regards to reviewing internal team business continuity arrangements, which is assisting the progression towards Corporate preparedness.

This page is intentionally left blank

APPOINTMENTS TO OUTSIDE BODIES

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr Denaro
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Claire Felton, Head of Legal, Equalities and Democratic Services
Ward(s) Affected	All
Ward Councillor(s) Consulted	N/A
Key Decision / Non-Key Decision	Non-key

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report sets out the details of vacancies in appointments to some outside bodies and seeks nominations to these.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

It is recommended that that the Council nominates to the following bodies:

- (a) Shared Services Board – 2 councillors;
- (b) West Mercia Police and Crime Panel – 1 councillor from the majority party;
- (c) Bromsgrove Arts Development Trust (Holding Trust) – 1 nominee for the remainder of the term of office until June 2019.

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 There are no financial implications arising directly from this report.

Legal Implications

- 3.2 No specific legislation governs the appointment or nomination of members to outside bodies by the Council. Depending on the nature of the relationship the Council has with the organisation, the legal status of the organisation, its corporate, charity or other status and its constitution, there are differing legal implications for the members sitting on these bodies.
- 3.3 The Local Authorities (Indemnities for Members and Officers) Order 2004 governs the Council's ability to indemnify members sitting on outside bodies.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.4 A number of bodies ask the Council to make appointments to them for terms of office which vary from one year upwards.

3.5 There are vacancies in the following bodies:

- (a) Shared Services Board – this is a meeting held with representatives of Redditch Borough Council to review proposals for shared services. The next meeting is planned for 4th October and there are 2 Councillor vacancies outstanding since appointments were made in June 2016;
- (b) West Mercia Police and Crime Panel – there is 1 vacancy on the Panel following the resignation of Councillor Sherrey. The constitution of the Panel requires that the Council’s representatives are drawn from the controlling political group. The appointment is reviewed annually;
- (c) Bromsgrove Arts Development Trust – Councillor Denaro has resigned from this. The constitution of the Trust allows the Council’s nominee to be a councillor or a member of the public. The remaining term of office is until June 2019.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

3.6 There are no specific customer or equalities implications arising from this report.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

4.1 There would be risks arising if the Council failed to make appointments to the Outside Bodies listed in this report; the nature of the risk would vary depending on the type of body in question. The Council needs to participate in certain Outside Bodies to ensure that existing governance arrangements can be complied with. On other bodies the risk would be less severe but non-participation would detract from the Councils ability to shape and influence policies and activities which affect the residents of Bromsgrove.

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

Terms of reference and governing documents of organisations are held by Democratic services

7. KEY

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Sheena Jones

email: sheena.jones@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel.: 01527 548240

CABINET7th September 2016**ICT Infrastructure Resource**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Cllr G Denaro
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Deb Poole, Head of Transformation & OD
Wards Affected	N/A
Ward Councillor Consulted	N/A
Non Key Decision	

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSAL

- 1.1 For several years ICT has had an ongoing problem retaining and recruiting staff with certain specialised technical skills. Following the recent resignation of a member of staff, this problem has been highlighted again. The recruitment campaign to fill this vacant post has attracted few applicants with the required skills and experience. This report proposes a different approach to solving the problem by outsourcing a small part of the ICT team rather than just repeatedly going through a recruitment process.
- 1.2 If agreed, this approach will require the TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment) of two posts to an outsource company. Currently, one of the posts is filled whilst the other is vacant.
- 1.3 This proposal presents a solution to correct a particular ongoing issue in the service due to the problem of recruiting staff with these types of skills. Overall the organisational approach remains that of sharing internal resource where ever possible.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

Cabinet is requested to **RECOMMEND**:

- 2.1 That Members approve the proposal for the functions provided by the ICT infrastructure roles be outsourced to an external provider.
- 2.2 That Members delegate authority to the Head of Transformation and Organisational Development to undertake a tendering process to identify a suitable supplier to take on the ICT infrastructure functions.
- 2.3. That Members delegate to the Head of Legal Equalities and Democratic Service the responsibility for finalising and entering into a suitable legal agreement with the supplier identified under recommendation 2

CABINET

7th September 2016

3. KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

- 3.1 The current cost to Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) for providing the service is £34,093. This includes the salary and on-costs for the two posts effected.
- 3.2 Whilst final costs for delivering this part of the service externally will not be known until a competitive exercise is completed, it is estimated that the costs will be approximately £30,000 to BDC in the first year, with larger savings estimated for any additional years.
- 3.3 Other public sector organisations will be permitted to bid for the contract alongside any private companies.
- 3.4 Bromsgrove District Council will charge £225 per month, per person, to any supplier delivering the outsource contract who wishes to retain members of staff on our premises. This is to cover the costs of providing office space, desks, electricity, phones etc.

Legal Implications

- 3.5 If the outsourcing to an external provider proceeds this will constitute a relevant transfer for the purposes of the TUPE (Transfer of Undertakings, Protection of Employment) Regulations. The rules provide that where in house services are transferred to external providers existing members of staff TUPE across to the new contractor. As referred to above, this will affect one member of staff. Any issues in this regard will be managed as part of the process in accordance with usual HR procedures going forward.
- 3.6 An appropriate competitive tendering exercise based on the value of the contract will be undertaken to identify a suitable supplier to take on the ICT infrastructure functions. It will be necessary to enter into a contract with the new supplier. The contract will include a clearly defined schedule of the works to be undertaken and clauses to cover any issues with under performance.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.7 During the past five years the ICT Infrastructure role has been advertised five times. During these recruitment campaigns, the council has had to advertise and re-advertise numerous times to find a suitable

CABINET

7th September 2016

candidate. In 2015 a new infrastructure post was created that required additional skills and consequently offered a higher grade. After running two advertising and interviewing campaigns the post was finally recruited to in mid-2015. However, by June 2016 this post was vacant again when the incumbent officer resigned. Following adverts on a number of recruitment websites including the WM Jobs site, only eleven applications were received. Shortlisting resulted in five applicants being invited for interview. Of the five only one applicant attended for interview. This candidate scored just over 50% on the interview questions and was not considered suitable for this role.

- 3.8 The ICT Infrastructure Officer and ICT Infrastructure & Network Officer posts play a key role in maintaining day to day delivery of the ICT service to the Authority. Their main function is to ensure that the servers and storage which enable the business applications to work, are operating successfully. This includes the servers for Emails, Finance, Payroll, Revs & Bens, Elections etc.
- 3.9 In addition the team have been involved in several 'power off' situations at both Parkside and Redditch Town Hall and are key to closing down services correctly and returning them to a working state. Further power off situations may occur at both sites and currently only 1 person is available with the correct skillset to cover this task.
- 3.10 Senior managers are aware that the current lack of resource is having a detrimental effect on the remaining personnel and that this issue needs to be resolved as soon as possible to maintain staff morale and avoid absence.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.11 There are no customer / equalities and diversity implications.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 There is a risk that the external provider will not deliver the service to the level provided by the current internal team. This risk will be addressed through using a robust selection process, and ensuring as far as possible that there are appropriate contractual obligations imposed on the external provider to pick up under performance and provide for a change of supplier in the event that this should ever become necessary

CABINET

7th September 2016

- 4.2 The impact of outsourcing could inadvertently increase pressure in the short term, on existing members of ICT whilst the new service is procured and then implemented. The result of increased pressure could lead to additional sick leave but this has been mitigated by securing additional temporary resource from external companies.
- 4.3 To be balanced against the risks outlined above, is the risk that if no action to pursue outsourcing is taken then the Council is likely to continue to encounter recruitment problems which over a period of time may undermine the ability for the service to be provided.

5. APPENDICES

None

6. BACKGROUND PAPERS

None

AUTHORS OF REPORT

Name: Deb Poole
E Mail: d.poole@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881256

Name: Mark Hanwell
E Mail: m.hanwell@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: 01527 881248

CABINET7th September 2016**BROMSGROVE ENERGY EFFICIENCY FUND AND SCHEME**

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Councillor Kit Taylor
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Judith Willis
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	No
Key Decision	Yes

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 This report summarises proposals to launch an Energy Efficiency Fund and Scheme to help home-owners in Bromsgrove heat their homes more affordably and reliably by assisting them with heating system improvements and other cost effective energy efficiency measures.
- 1.2 The scheme will be delivered by Act on Energy, the Council's energy efficiency advice partner. Along with other local councils, including all Worcestershire councils, we have a longstanding partnership with Act on Energy, which has included the delivery of several energy efficiency projects.
- 1.3 Background

Cold homes contribute to poor health and wellbeing. Living in a cold home brings increased risk of cardiovascular disease, respiratory illness and stroke (King's Fund, 2013). Cold homes also increase the likelihood of falls (Department of Health Factsheet on Health and Winter Warmth, 2007). Both strokes and falls are areas of concern for Bromsgrove in the March 2016 Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board (HWB) Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA) profile for Bromsgrove.

Excess winter deaths are the number of additional deaths occurring in winter above the number of deaths in the non-winter period. The Worcestershire JSNA Briefing on Fuel Poverty states that there is strong evidence that a large number of these deaths are preventable and that elderly people are vulnerable. The excess winter death index for Bromsgrove is 26.5%, higher than the Worcestershire average at 25.6%. It is not adjusted for age, so the older age profile in Bromsgrove is likely to be a strong factor in this. Although people over the age of 60 are significantly less likely to be fuel poor than the national average, those who are fuel poor within this group may be particularly at risk of severe morbidity and mortality compared to other groups.

The JSNA profile for Bromsgrove adds that 'for younger age groups, cold housing can have significant negative effects for: • childrens' health in terms of infant weight gain, hospital admission rates, developmental status, and asthma. • adolescent mental health • adult physical health, wellbeing and self-assessed general health particularly for vulnerable adults and those with existing health conditions'.

Fuel poverty increases the likelihood of cold homes and occurs when low income households face high costs of keeping warm. As well as health impacts due to cold, other

CABINET

7th September 2016

effects can include anxiety about financial issues, using less rooms in order to reduce heating costs (with potential for overcrowding and psychological effects) and educational underperformance of children. It is driven by three main factors: income, current cost of energy and energy efficiency of the home (Public Health England, 2014). 3507 of 38675 households in Bromsgrove (9.1%) are estimated to be in fuel poverty.

Act on Energy already work with the Council and other partners to address these issues for Bromsgrove residents, for example by running a Freephone advice line and energy advice surgeries. They signpost people to funding for energy efficiency measures, help people to reduce their current cost of energy by assisting them to switch to better energy tariffs and liaise with the Council's financial inclusion team and Age UK to help people maximise their income. However, current funding for energy efficiency measures (primarily from energy companies) has constraints in terms of scope of works, eligibility and ability to respond promptly. That there is demand for more flexible funding to complement the existing funding has been demonstrated by the current Warmer Worcestershire partnership 'boilers on prescription' pilot, involving Public Health, Worcestershire County Council and district councils. This scheme helps low income owner occupiers with cold-related health conditions to replace energy inefficient boilers and install first time central heating systems. It was fully subscribed in Bromsgrove as soon as it opened.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

2.1 Cabinet is asked to RESOLVE that:

1) An Energy Efficiency Fund and associated Scheme for homeowners in Bromsgrove be launched and delivered from autumn 2016 – 2019.

2) That authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to finalise details of the approved scheme and, in consultation with the Portfolio Holders for Housing, to make minor amendments to the scheme and review the scheme as required.

3) That authority be delegated to the Head of Community Services to agree a legal contract with Act on Energy to deliver the scheme.

2.2 The Committee is asked to RECOMMEND:

1) That authorisation is given for £100,000 capital budget previously allocated to disabled facilities grants to be transferred to a capital budget for funding installation of energy efficiency measures, split over 3 years as follows:

2016/17 £34k, 2017/18 £33k and 2018/19 £33k.

CABINET

7th September 2016

KEY ISSUES

Financial Implications

3.1 It is proposed to create an Energy Efficiency Fund (EEF) to provide a scheme comprising three complementary categories of assistance that will subsidise cost effective measures:

- (i) fuel poverty alleviation
- (ii) incentivising replacement of energy inefficient heating systems
- (iii) funding boiler repairs and servicing for vulnerable homeowners

(Please see Appendix 1 for more detail.)

The proposal is to run the scheme over three years to give continuity and stability, with any underspends being carried forward where appropriate.

3.2 Funding for capital elements of the scheme, 3.1 (i) and (ii), has been identified from the capital budget previously allocated to disabled facility grants. A recent increase in central government funding for disabled facilities has resulted in funding being available for other projects in the District to support residents in 2016-17. This is explained in more detail in Appendix 2.

3.3 Funding for revenue elements of the scheme, 3.1 (i) energy performance certificates and (iii), has been identified from existing revenue resources.

3.4 The cost of delivering the scheme is already covered within the existing Service Level Agreement (SLA) that Bromsgrove District Council have with Act on Energy.

3.5 Where residents could benefit from existing ECO or other funding streams, Act on Energy will help them to access such assistance. The Council's energy efficiency scheme would provide support only when other funding streams were not appropriate, to fill gaps in funding provision.

3.6 A household financial contribution of £250 would apply towards the costs of works for the fuel poverty alleviation group. Introducing a financial contribution requirement to the scheme would ensure that the Council's scheme mirrors the approach undertaken within the Affordable Warmth element of the Energy Company Obligation (ECO), where a minimum £250 contribution is currently required for broken boilers. The Head of Community Services would have discretion to consider applications which fell outside of the normal criteria where 'exceptional circumstances' applied.

3.7 Act on Energy will pay the contractor on behalf of the householder, on receipt of an invoice from the contractor with proof of completion of works. This will be from an annual lump sum transferred to the energy advice service and ring-fenced for this purpose. See also section 3.10.

3.8 Through helping people at risk of cold exacerbated health conditions to keep their house at a healthier temperature, cost savings may be achieved for health and social care services.

CABINET

7th September 2016

The district council could negotiate as to whether they may consider using some of this saving to fund actions which will produce savings for the district council.

Legal Implications

- 3.9 Although the Council is not legally obliged to provide an Energy Efficiency Fund it does have a broader agenda around improving energy efficiency, especially for households on low incomes, and around reducing carbon emissions under international agreements, EU Law and the Climate Change Act. The general power of competence in s1 of the Localism Act 2011 empowers the council to undertake such a project.
- 3.10 Bromsgrove District Council has an existing SLA with Act on Energy to deliver energy advice services, including delivering special projects such as community schemes. Delegation is sought for the Head of Community Services to agree a legal contract with Act on Energy on behalf of the council regarding details of the scheme including financial arrangements.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.11 Energy efficiency links to the following council purposes;
- Help me to be financially independent
 - Help me to live my life independently
- 3.12 Act on Energy will be the point of contact to access the scheme, and will undertake administration including grant payments. In addition to administering the application process, they will also provide home visits and referrals to other agencies where appropriate.
- 3.13 For the fuel poverty alleviation group, Act on Energy will complete energy performance certificates after work is complete, to better quantify the energy efficiency improvement achieved; this also gives an opportunity for issues to be identified and advice to be given about using the new installations.
- 3.14 Critically, Act on Energy will undertake follow-up arrangements one year after work is completed, to offer further advice and encourage regular servicing of the heating system. Encouraging regular servicing is a core objective as it improves boiler lifetime, efficiency and safety.
- 3.15 The benefits of delivery by Act on Energy include:
- minimising the Council officer time required to undertake these activities
 - Act on Energy have experience in taking a holistic approach, particularly in relation to vulnerable residents, which can help the council and partners to deliver a joined up, more effective service for those residents.

Customer / Equalities and Diversity Implications

- 3.16 Energy efficiency plays a role in good mental and physical health. Cold homes are detrimental to health, especially for those with cold related health conditions. Worry about

CABINET

7th September 2016

energy bills can also have an impact. The Energy Efficiency Fund aims to have a preventative impact, by focussing on helping to prevent a crisis as well as assisting when difficulties do occur.

- 3.17 Act on Energy will assist the applicant with the process as required, aiming for equality of access. The aim is also to inform and empower applicants regarding maintenance, repair and replacement of heating and managing their energy usage and bills.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 Some of the measures available within the fund must be undertaken by suitably qualified tradespersons – for example, the installation, servicing and repair of boilers. The proposed scheme has safeguards to ensure this is adhered to at all times. Any application for grant monies will only be accepted after the contractor provides evidence of appropriate accreditation and current public liability insurance.
- 4.2 Any liability regarding the contract remains between the homeowner and the contractor, but the energy advice agency will advise the homeowner if issues arise.
- 4.3 Act on Energy will collect data to enable auditing of the effectiveness of the programme, including home and health benefits to the resident from the intervention. The scheme will be monitored by the Council's Climate Change and Energy Efficiency Officer. Act on Energy will liaise for advice regarding any cases that are not straightforward, as well as providing regular reports on the scheme.

5. APPENDICES

Appendix 1 Energy Efficiency Funding

Appendix 2 Disabled Facility Grants Funding

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Kath Manning, Climate Change and Energy Efficiency Officer

E Mail: Kath.Manning@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel: 01527 587094

Name: Steve Shammon, Private Sector Housing Team Leader

E Mail: steve.shammon@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk

Tel: (01527) 64252 ext 3630

This page is intentionally left blank

Appendix 1 Energy Efficiency Fund

The fund will only be available to Bromsgrove owner occupiers and where the property concerned is their only and principle home. The fund will only be made available when there are no other funding streams available to resolve the homeowner's difficulties. Each household only receive one grant for each of boiler replacement, boiler repair and boiler servicing.

The Head of Community Services will have discretion to consider applications which fall outside of the normal criteria but in respect of which 'exceptional circumstances' apply.

The measures and eligibility are set out below:

Table 1

<u>Fund amount (£)</u>	<u>Eligibility</u>	<u>Measure</u>	<u>Financial Support available</u>	<u>Additional support</u>
<p>Fuel poverty alleviation</p> <p>e.g.</p> <p>£24,000 allocation first year, £23,000 subsequent years</p> <p>For an average cost of £1250 per household, over fifteen households could be helped per year.</p>	<p>In receipt of qualifying benefit or below qualifying income threshold*</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condensing boilers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to replace low efficiency boilers (F or G rated) ○ to replace boilers broken beyond economic repair ○ associated works • Wet central heating systems where these are not already present • Heating controls • Heating system insulation (cylinder, pipes) • Cavity wall insulation • Loft insulation • Draught proofing • Carbon monoxide alarm to be included with all works 	<p>Grant covering cost of works up to a total of £5000;</p> <p>£250 household contribution required towards the cost of works.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Home visit where appropriate to assess which measures would be beneficial and to offer additional energy efficiency advice. • Signposting to accredited contractors to obtain quotes • Review of quotes and check of contractor's accreditation and public liability insurance • Follow-up after installation including an energy performance certificate (£75 per certificate) • Follow-up after 1 year.
<p>Incentivising replacement of inefficient heating</p> <p>e.g.</p> <p>£10,000 allocation per year</p> <p>This could subsidise replacing around twenty boilers each year.</p>	<p>If under Worcestershire average household income of £37k (County Council profile)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Condensing boilers <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ to replace low efficiency boilers (F or G rated) ○ or to replace boilers broken beyond economic repair • Wet central heating systems where these are not already present. 	<p>£500 grant towards cost of works.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Signposting to accredited contractors to obtain quotes. • Review of quotes and check of contractor's accreditation and public liability insurance. • Follow-up after installation. • Follow-up after 1 year.

Appendix 1 Energy Efficiency Fund

Funding boiler repairs and servicing for vulnerable homeowners e.g. £3,000 allocation per year This could help with around ten repairs and over forty boiler services each year.	In receipt of qualifying benefit or below qualifying income threshold*	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boiler servicing 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of cost up to £35 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signposting to accredited contractors to obtain quotes. Review of quotes and check of contractor's accreditation and public liability insurance.
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Boiler repair for boilers above F and G rating that can be economically repaired 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 50% of costs up to £150 (repairs costing over £300 unlikely to be economic) 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Signposting to accredited contractors to obtain quotes. Review of quotes and check of contractor's accreditation and public liability insurance.

*Qualifying benefits/income threshold:

- Income Support
- Pension Credit Guarantee (not pension saving credit)
- Jobseekers allowance (JSA) (income based)
- Employment Support Allowance (ESA) (income based)

OR

- Household income below threshold after tax, depending on household composition, as per Table 2 below.

Table 2

	0 children	1 children	2 children	3 children	4 or more children
Single adult	£10,720	£13,920	£17,120	£20,320	£23,520
Two adults or more	£16,000	£19,200	£22,400	£25,600	£28,800

Appendix 2 Disabled Facility Grant funding

- The Better Care Fund (BCF) provides financial support from central government for councils and NHS organisations to jointly plan and deliver local services. This includes funding for Disabled Facilities Grants, which is paid directly to local authorities.
- In 2016-17, there has been a specific distribution formula for allocating the Disabled Facilities Grant element of the Better Care Fund to local areas, which has in general resulted in an increased funding allocation. This is partly to address the inequality in local authority supplementation of the government funding (some local authorities do not provide any additional funding on top of the government grant). The increase also aims to encourage innovative measures with health and wellbeing benefits in addition to the standard disabled facilities grants programme.
- As a result, the allocation of £200k of Bromsgrove District Council capital borrowing to supplement the disabled facilities grant budget in 2016-17 can be utilised to support other projects in the District (please see Table 1 for more information). It is proposed that £100k of this fund be utilised for the Energy Efficiency Fund
- Using £100k of this capital saving for an Energy Efficiency Fund should enable the launch of an Energy Efficiency Scheme before Winter 2016-17, tailored to the specific needs of Bromsgrove District and delivered by energy efficiency experts Act on Energy.
- This would also eliminate any need to spend any of the additional Better Care Fund allocation for Bromsgrove District on energy efficiency, enabling all of this additional funding to be spent on other innovative measures. For example, action to address falls in the home has been identified as a priority for Bromsgrove by the Worcestershire Health and Wellbeing Board Joint Strategic Needs Assessment (JSNA). Falls prevention requires a multidisciplinary approach and is therefore well suited to delivery by the Home Improvement Agency (HIA) through the Better Care Fund.
- The good partnership working already practiced by Act on Energy and the HIA should enable the Bromsgrove Energy Efficiency Fund scheme and Better Care Fund Disabled Facility Grants programme to be delivered as complementary aspects of a more holistic service for Bromsgrove residents.

Table 1

Year	Total available for Disabled Facility Grants for Bromsgrove residents	Government contribution (used first)	Bromsgrove District Council (BDC) contribution (used if required)	Disabled Facility Grants – actual spend	Excess funding available for Disabled Facilities Grants above previous annual spend
Previous years	£587,000 (2015-16)	£387,000 (2015-16)	£200,000 (2015-16)	c. £500,000	c. £87,000
2016-17	£709,000	£709,000	£0	n/a	c. £209,000

This page is intentionally left blank

EFFICIENCY PLAN

Relevant Portfolio Holder	Geoff Denaro
Portfolio Holder Consulted	Yes
Relevant Head of Service	Jayne Pickering (Exec Director)
Wards Affected	All
Ward Councillor Consulted	None specific

1. SUMMARY OF PROPOSALS

- 1.1 To present the Councils Efficiency Plan 2016/17 – 2019/20 for Cabinet consideration and to enable Members to decide on the recommendation to Council to request a 4 year financial settlement from Central Government.

2. RECOMMENDATIONS

- 2.1 **That Cabinet recommend to Council that the Efficiency Plan 2016/17-2019/20 as detailed at Appendix 1 is approved for submission to Central Government to enable a 4 year financial settlement to be secured.**

3. KEY ISSUES**Financial Implications**

- 3.1 This document responds to the invitation/offer from the Secretary of State of 10 March 2016 to secure a minimum level of funding for the 4 years commencing April 2016. The aim of the Government is for the deal to increase local authority certainty and be a step towards strengthening financial management and work collaboratively with partners and reform the way local services are provided. The settlement would cover the 4 years from 2016/17-2019/20 and would provide certainty in relation to the Revenue Support Grant . The response from the Government following the New Homes Bonus consultation has not been received and therefore certainty of the NHB funding will not form part of the 4 year settlement.
- 3.2 There has been no specific guidance from Government in relation to the format or detail that needs to be included in the Efficiency Plan however it is anticipated that the basis of the statements will be the Councils Medium Term Financial Plan together and the Council Plan which together will inform the Government how the Council aims to deliver on its strategic purposes to the community within the reducing financial funding it will receive.

- 3.3 It is therefore important that the Efficiency Plan is not purely about the funding and that there are key actions included in the Plan / Council Plan that will be delivered by the available funding. It is anticipated to be a high level plan that will be informed by further detailed savings plans as they are developed.
- 3.4 Officers have considered the funding that is to be received over the next 2 years and the 'Negative Grant' of £750k that will be payable back to Government in 2019/20. The following key themes have been identified to enable officers to manage the shortfalls in funding:
- Identifying opportunities to increase income and growth
 - Identify alternative models of delivery in the provision of services and to consider the most appropriate provider
 - Identify further efficiency by continuing to drive waste out of services and reduce cost
 - Continue to redesign services to provide quality support and service to the customer whilst releasing savings
 - Assessing the value for money of service provided and demonstrating where resources can be realigned note 1
 - Designing services across public and voluntary sector organisations to secure better outcomes and reduce overall spend
 - Resetting future budget to meet prior years expenditure and income
- 3.5 The Efficiency Plan as presented at Appendix 1 is based on assessments made by Heads of Services as to the levels of additional income and reductions in costs that can be made over the next 3 years to meet the shortfalls in funding. More detailed delivery plans are currently being prepared as part of the review of the Medium Term Financial Plan and these will be brought to members later in the year.

Legal Implications

- 3.6 Whilst there is no legislative framework that requires Councils to prepare an Efficiency Plan it is clear that for Councils to secure the most effective financial position over the next 4 years that the production of a plan for this purpose is advisable.

Service / Operational Implications

- 3.7 Officers will develop detailed plans to enable the delivery of the Council Plan within the funding levels available.

4. RISK MANAGEMENT

- 4.1 The risks associated with the delivery of the Efficiency Plan will be addressed by officers and mitigation plans put in place to assure confidence in managing the financial pressures.

Appendices

Appendix 1 – Efficiency Plan

AUTHOR OF REPORT

Name: Jayne Pickering – Exec Director Finance and Resources
E Mail: j.pickering@bromsgroveandredditch.gov.uk
Tel: 01527-881400

This page is intentionally left blank

BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL EFFICIENCY PLAN

2016/17-2019/20

This plan is based on the current Medium Term Financial Plan which was approved in February 2016. This Plan aims to provide relevant information to secure a 4 year deal on Government funding to ensure that the Council has some certainty of the pressures that it faces over the next 4 years.

The Councils faces a significant challenge in addressing its forecasted budget deficit over the next 4 years in an environment where there is significant uncertainty and increasing levels of risk. Over the last 5 years the Council has embarked on an innovative approach to service redesign and releasing savings based on systems thinking methodology. In adopting the principles of this approach the Council will consider the following themes when addressing how to manage the shortfalls in funding :

- Identifying opportunities to increase income and growth
- Identify alternative models of delivery in the provision of services and to consider the most appropriate provider
- Identify further efficiency by continuing to drive waste out of services and reduce cost
- Continue to redesign services to provide quality support and service to the customer whilst releasing savings
- Assessing the value for money of service provided and demonstrating where resources can be realigned ^{note 1}
- Designing services across public and voluntary sector organisations to secure better outcomes and reduce overall spend

In delivering the savings to ensure Bromsgrove can meet its financial pressures over the next 4/5 years the Council will focus on its Strategic Purposes to maximise the value of the funding it retains to support its customers and communities. These are :

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

Note 1 – Value for money is an assessment of the customer value of the service not purely the cost v demand

Background

For Bromsgrove the financial settlement gives a much lower than anticipated level of revenue support grant from the Government with a potential unexpected repayment to Government in 2019/20 of £750k. Consultation has also started on planned changes to New Homes Bonus, which will see a reduction in the amount we receive towards the end of the five year period. The Council currently receives £1.7m of this grant and allocates £100k for community funding to support projects in those areas affected by housing growth.

Government grant funding will be some £5m per year less in real terms by the end of this plan than it was in 2010/11. This equates to losing funding for just under half of the Council's net budget.

The Council does not accept a methodology of 'negative grant' which would be payable by 2019/20. Whilst the payment is included in the projected financial gap faced by the Council there is an expectation that this will be offset by changes to Business Rate Legislation that will be released later this year.

The Council has a proven track record in delivering cost and efficiency savings. Since 2010/11 the Council has made savings from sharing services with other Councils of £4.3m and generated other savings of approximately £2.648m from additional income and increasing efficiencies. With the continued cuts to our funding we will have to find more innovative ways to meet the on-going financial pressures that the Council faces and we are working with partners to achieve savings across the public purse that will ensure that valuable front line services continue to be delivered to our communities. The financial funding available will be aligned to our purposes as detailed in this document to ensure we meet customer and community need.

The Efficiency Statement should be considered alongside the Council Plan 2016-2020 as this demonstrates how the Council will utilise its resources to deliver the strategic purposes and outcomes to the community.

The monitoring of the plan will be undertaken through the Councils Management Team, Cabinet and Audit & Governance Committee. Associated risks of delivery of savings and outcomes will be reported through the performance and financial reporting mechanisms to ensure early action can be undertaken to address any concerns.

EFFICIENCY STATEMENT – BROMSGROVE DISTRICT COUNCIL

Area	Cost reduction / Additional income growth/ Alternative Service Delivery	2016/17 £'000	2017/18 £'000	2018/19 £,000	2019/20 £'000
ALREADY APPROVED					
Across all services	Efficiencies realised from : - Removing waste processes from service following redesign - Deleting vacant posts - Reset budget to previous year - Service review to realign management and staffing structures	307	307	307	307
Members Expenses	Reduction of number of Councillor and therefore reduced associated member allowance and other expense costs	44	44	44	44
Development Control	Increased trend in planning application income across the District	50	50	50	50
Balances	Use of balances following review of requirement	0	500	500	-
Reserves	Use of reserves following review of requirement	849	539	222	222
TOTAL ALREADY APPROVED		1,250	1,440	1,123	623
SAVINGS / ADDITIONAL INCOME PROPOSED					
Leisure Services	Additional income from the redeveloped Leisure Centre		106	422	422
Cross Organisational	Alternative Models of Service Delivery - Reviewing the provision of services with the aim to redesign and work with other partners to deliver savings		140	245	345
Customer Access & Financial Support	Improved efficiencies by moving to a new system for Revenues and Benefits		80	90	90
Cross Organisational	Increases in income and growth (including compliance		75	200	300

	in relation to Council Tax)				
Cross Organisational	Organisational Management Review		35	235	285
Cross Organisational	Reduce waste in system		90	100	150
Cross Organisational	Reset budget from baseline of 2015/16		50	100	100
Additional Business Rate Growth			50	100	150
Balances	Additional use of balances			229	919
TOTAL NEW SAVINGS PROPOSED			628	1,721	2,761
TOTAL ALL SAVINGS		1,250	2,066	2,844	3,384
Budget Pressure to be funded		1,250	2,066	2,844	3,384
Shortfall / (surplus)		0	0	0	0